



Autumn 2019

PlumbHeat



The bug issue

What you need to know about new Legionella risk assessment rules



Cost of conflict

Our guide to avoiding potential pitfalls in the adjudication process



Hot topic

InstallerSCOTLAND explores the impact of climate change

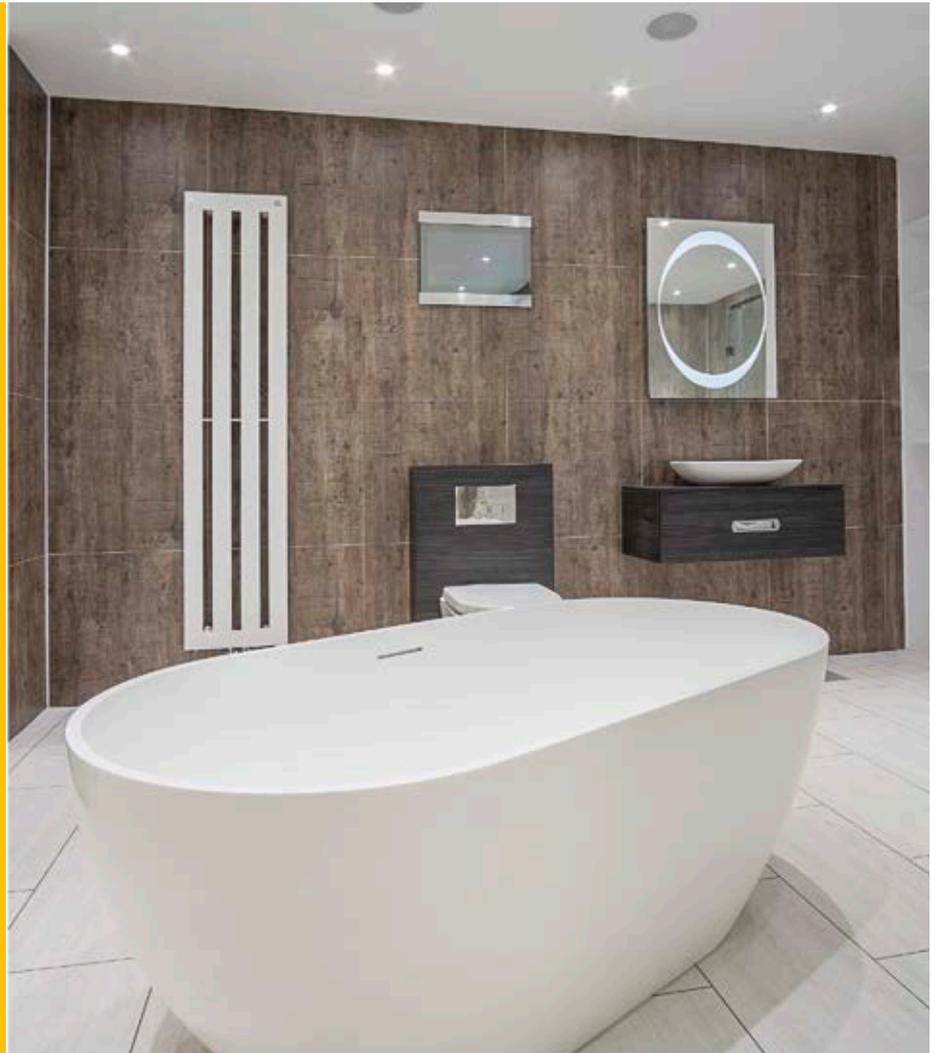
Basin instinct

Learn the risks and rewards of installing submerged inlets in sinks and baths





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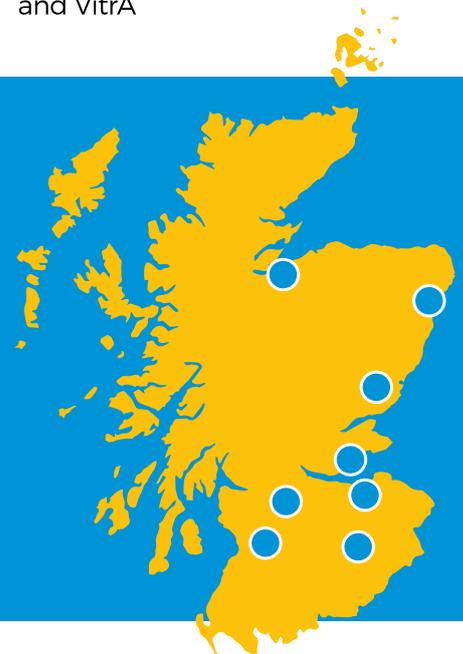
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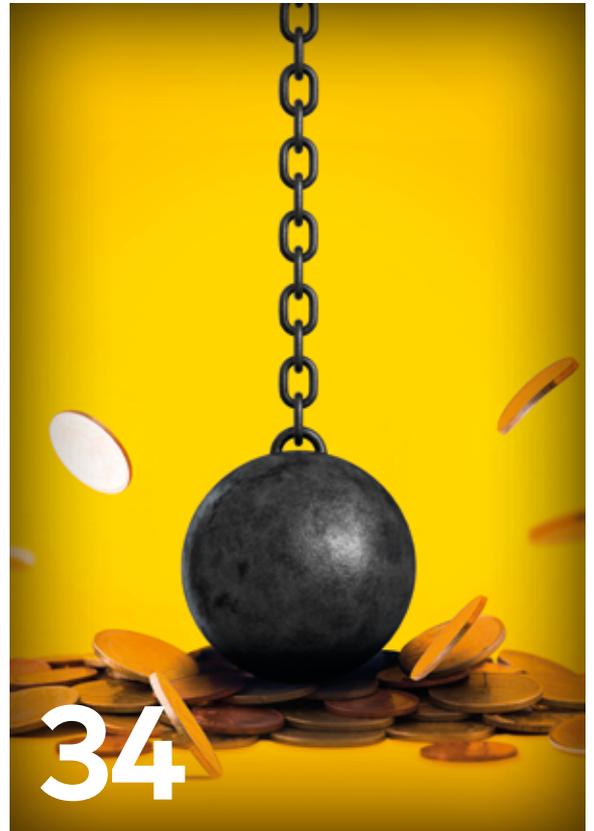
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Comment

FROM FIONA HODGSON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, SNIPEF

Protecting standards is vital for our industry

The Brexit deadline looms ever closer, and at the time of writing the UK's future is very uncertain.

Headlines talk of 10% rises in the price of food and a 30% reduction in house prices, drug shortages, labour shortages and travel restrictions.

It is hard to believe something which was supposed to be good for the UK now seems to be a situation where we are trying to get the best out of a bad deal.

In the last *PlumbHeat*, I wrote of the need to address the skills shortage in our industry. It has never been more important to hire, retain and train talented people. However, that becomes harder against a changing UK employment landscape.

The companies who need to recruit to grow and develop their businesses will find it harder to attract skilled labour. This shortage is envisaged to get worse as the supply from the EU decreases. Additionally, these same employers may find the salaries demanded significantly higher. This is the reality of a skills shortage.

It is essential only properly trained people work in our industry. But herein lies the problem; limited availability of skilled labour results in the employment of workers without the requisite skills. This leads to poor quality, unsafe and non-

“Much has been done to get rid of unscrupulous cowboys, but there is a need for government legislation”



Fiona Hodgson,
Chief Executive,
SNIPEF

compliant work. This is why it is essential to set and enforce quality standards.

SNIPEF operates a voluntary Licensing Scheme where businesses that meet certain criteria can join our Approved Contractor Scheme under the WaterSafe banner. The scheme is supported by government watchdogs, the Drinking Water Inspectorate in Northern Ireland and the Drinking Water Quality Regulator in Scotland. Plumbers approved through WaterSafe have specific training in the Water Fittings Byelaws and Regulations.

The SNIJIB Grade Card is affiliated to the Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) and provides proof that individuals have appropriate training and qualifications. Holding a card, however, is not a legislative requirement.

In Scotland, certification schemes are helping to raise standards but are not mandatory. Approved Certifiers of Construction have the authority to certify that the work they undertake is compliant with building regulations. The Scottish Government Building

Standards Division manages the Certification Register and SNIPEF manages the scheme for drainage, heating and plumbing (ACCS).

While much has been done over the years to improve standards and rid the industry of unscrupulous and unqualified “cowboys”, most schemes (with the exception of Gas Safe Register) are voluntary. However, in order to have a real impact there is a need for government legislation.

Following the Edinburgh schools scandal in 2016 and the Grenfell Tower tragedy in 2017, various independent reviews were undertaken. Both the Dame Judith Hackitt report into England's building regulation system and Professor John Cole's report into compliance and enforcement of building standards in Scotland recommended consideration be given to the licensing of contractors to demonstrate their competence.

With a plethora of voluntary schemes already in the industry, and with the Republic of Ireland Government already operating a licensing-type scheme, there is no shortage of ideas to draw upon. The Government must support this change and legislate mandatory licensing.

The question is, will the Government have the time and willingness to do so, or will it be too busy dealing with the consequences of Brexit? ■

Future depends on finding new talent

It is widely acknowledged that many businesses in our industry are currently facing issues in finding high-quality skilled labour. This problem is only due to worsen in the coming years.

Recruiting properly skilled tradespeople has never been more difficult, with the demand for these skills increasingly outweighing the supply. This issue is even more magnified in regional and remote areas.

The skills shortage means businesses must spend far more time and resources on recruitment and searching for properly qualified staff. This is a difficult task when many businesses are already so busy and time poor.

We all take great pride in running our own businesses. SNIPEF members have spent years building strong reputations around their standard of work and professionalism. A shortage of properly skilled labour can compromise this work and put strain on company resources.

Bringing a new employee into your business can have such a positive influence with their enthusiasm, energy and willingness to learn – it is a shame this is becoming harder for employers to find.

It seems that the construction industry is not as popular a career choice as in previous generations, meaning the number of incoming plumbers is not matching the number of retirees. In an industry with an ageing workforce, a lack of incoming skilled workers is worrying for the whole construction sector.

As an industry, it is important to change this perception.

As all SNIPEF members will know, a career in plumbing and heating can be very rewarding and the number of career

paths within the sector has never been more diverse.

As we all see, continual advancements in technology ensure that the products and procedures are forever changing, meaning that installers are forever learning.

These aspects of plumbing are perhaps unknown to young people choosing a career, as well as potential mature apprentices, and could be very appealing.

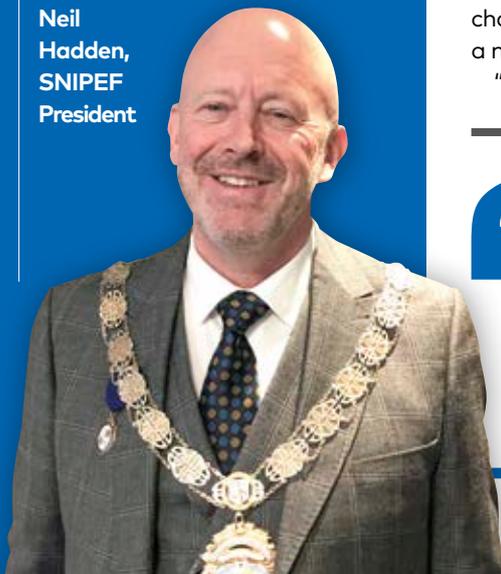
It is also important we attract and encourage those looking for a career change to consider a career in plumbing. Mature apprentices can be valuable contributors to a plumbing business, bringing in a wide range of skills from other sectors that can be highly beneficial and allow them to hit the ground running.

If we are able to promote these different aspects of the industry, as well as making the work space welcoming to people of all backgrounds, we can increase the talent pool.

Having a diverse pool of skilled labour to choose from can only be a good thing for employers and the wider industry.

This requires continual investment in training and making sure plumbing is seen as an attractive career option to all people.

Neil Hadden, SNIPEF President



News

LATEST FROM AROUND THE FEDERATION

💡 INDUSTRY NEWS

VAT change delayed after SNIPEF joins demand for action

SNIPEF has welcomed the decision by the UK Government to delay the implementation of reverse charge VAT by 12 months.

The news, announced on 6 September, was positively received by leading UK trade bodies who had pressed for a postponement amid concerns over the negative consequences a premature introduction would have on the construction industry.

A coalition of 15 construction organisations, including SNIPEF, wrote to the Chancellor of the Exchequer requesting a delay of at least six months to allow time for the industry to properly prepare for the move.

Reverse charge VAT was originally due to come into force from 1 October 2019 but will now be introduced in October 2020. The changes will affect any plumbing businesses that are registered for VAT and the Construction Industry Scheme and supply services to larger contractors.

Fiona Hodgson, SNIPEF CEO, said: "I am very pleased the UK Government has made the sensible decision to delay the implementation of reverse charge VAT until a time when it will have less of a negative impact on the businesses affected.

"It is reassuring that the Government has

“It is reassuring that the Government has listened and acted on the serious concerns voiced by SNIPEF and the other construction trade associations”



Got a story?

Email us on
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Bug standard

What you need to know about updates to Legionella risk assessment rules / [Page 26](#)



Mates in Mind

How you can help improve mental health among your workforce / [Page 38](#)



listened and acted on the serious concerns voiced by SNIPEF and the other construction trade associations.

"Many businesses in the construction industry are already suffering due to rising material prices, high labour costs and payment issues.

"If introduced in October 2019, just ahead of Britain's expected departure from the EU, reverse charge VAT would have only added to this burden by severely restricting cashflow.

"The new implementation date will give the construction industry time to properly prepare and ensure all businesses are aware of and ready for the change."

INDUSTRY RESEARCH

Firms feeling confident despite challenges

Sector-wide survey reveals growth staying steady but problems remain

Engineering service businesses are feeling cautiously optimistic about the future despite facing a string of challenges, the latest sector-wide survey reveals.

Growth has remained steady while rising costs and persistent payment problems continue.

More than eight out of ten firms reported turnover had stayed the same or increased in the second quarter of this year, with less than a fifth saying it had gone down.

And the vast majority (85%) said they expected more or the same turnover in Q3 2019, according the Scolmore-sponsored Building Engineering Businesses Survey.

Fiona Hodgson, SNIPEF CEO, said: "While it is promising to see signs of steady growth, the sector still faces challenges. Issues with poor payment practices and growing costs continue. It is important these problems are addressed."

The survey, which included data from industry trade bodies SNIPEF, ECA, BESA and SELECT, received almost 500 responses. Steve Bratt, CEO of ECA, said: "With the uncertainty

“The sector still faces challenges and it's important issues like poor payment practices are addressed”

of Brexit casting a shadow, it's vital the Government injects some impetus by backing major infrastructure projects and ensuring prompt payment."

More than half of people who responded (52%) reported an increase in labour costs, while almost two thirds (62%) had seen rising material costs.

Prompt payment remained a major challenge, taking more than 30 days in nearly two thirds of public sector jobs – in breach of the regulations. This comes despite 56% of businesses saying clients promised below 30-day payment within contractual agreements. David Frise, BESA CEO said: "It's reassuring to see how resilient the industry is."

Keep an eye on your inbox – the Building Engineering Business Survey for Q3 will be sent out in October. Take a moment to complete the survey – we rely on your participation to ensure we have accurate data for our industry in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

AWARDS

Renewable Heat prize

SNIPEF member firm Renewable Heat is celebrating after being Highly Commended at the Scottish Regional Energy Efficiency Awards.

The firm's Casper Derek collected the award at the ceremony at the DoubleTree in Glasgow on 7 June.

The company was given the prize in the Renewable Heat Installer and Contractor of the Year section of the awards.

The category recognises the efforts of businesses involved with the installation, implementation or maintenance of energy efficient heating systems that qualify for the Government's Renewable Heat Incentive. These systems include biomass boilers, solar water heating and ground/air/water source heat pumps.

The awards were set up in 2014 and are a way of recognising the proactive work being carried out across the energy and efficiency industry.

They were created to bring more public recognition for the work being done in the sector while supporting best practice for the future.



Casper collecting company's award

STAFF NEWS

SNIPEF says goodbye to Duncan Wilson after 40yrs

SNIPEF's Deputy CEO Duncan Wilson said farewell to colleagues as he retired after almost 40 years of service.

Duncan finished his last day of work at the end of August and marked his long career with a celebratory lunch.

Colleagues and associates paid tribute to the "invaluable contribution" he has made to the industry over the decades.

Fiona Hodgson, SNIPEF CEO, said: "Duncan has been a key part of the organisation, providing much needed guidance and encouragement to those of us who worked with him. SNIPEF has benefitted from his knowledge and commitment and to say Duncan will be missed seems like an understatement. His contribution to both SNIPEF and the wider sector has been invaluable."

Duncan joined SNIPEF in September 1980 as an Industrial Relations Officer and since then has been heavily involved in managing the Scottish and Northern Ireland Joint Industry Board (SNIJIB), taking on the role as its CEO in 2016.

In 1983, SNIPEF Training Services Ltd was established to act as the managing agent and training provider of the Modern Apprenticeship in Plumbing.

As well as his involvement in its establishment, he has been responsible for apprentice training ever since.

Duncan's knowledge and commitment to the industry have been evident



throughout his long career with SNIPEF. He became a Director of the BPEC Group of companies in 2006 and will take on the role of Chairman of the Group from December 2019.

In 2017, Duncan played an instrumental part in setting up the Plumbing and Heating Skills Partnership (PHSP), an agreement between SNIPEF, APHC, and BPEC to lead and support the development of standards, qualifications and apprenticeships across the plumbing and heating industry.

In the same year, Duncan became a director of BSE Skills Ltd, a joint venture between SNIPEF, SELECT and BESA to oversee vocational training in the building engineering services sector.

Duncan's retirement lunch was held on Friday 23 August, and included some of the colleagues and associates

INDUSTRY NEWS

Support to solve conflict over contracts

One of Scotland's leading dispute resolution consultants, Len Bunton, is embarking on a new venture to help plumbing and heating companies navigate "contractual minefields". The regular *PlumbHeat*

contributor is offering a consultancy service to help contractors identify potential issues before they become serious.

Len said: "I'm fed up of seeing the increasing costs of adjudication, and the

whole uncertainty of the process, so I'm now looking at other avenues.

"My associate and I will help clients through the contractual minefield at tender stage, and iron out any potential



Duncan celebrated his retirement with SNIPEF colleagues and was presented with a caricature of himself as a leaving present



he has worked closely with over the years. He said: "It is difficult to believe that my time with SNIPEF and the SNIJIB has come to an end.

"It has been challenging and interesting being closely involved in the wide range of work for which SNIPEF has responsibility. It has also been satisfying working for an organisation that seeks to represent the needs of employers and all those working in the plumbing industry and with colleagues and employers from the wider building services sector.

"I wish Fiona, the SNIPEF staff and everyone working on behalf of SNIPEF all the best for the future and I hope that my continuing role with BPEC will mean that I continue to contribute to the future skills of the plumbing industry."

problem clauses. We'll also become closely involved in early intervention during the contract, so if a client sees a problem looming, we'll talk it through and work out a resolution strategy.

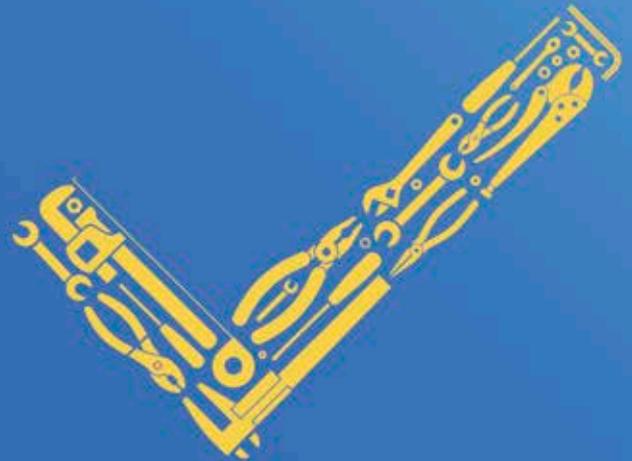
"I feel this is a more positive impact to make in the industry and think many companies

need a 'non-executive' type adviser to talk through and assist with any issues.

"I'd just like to see organisations resolving issues without having to go to adjudication."

You can call Len on 07769 670 089 or email len@buntonconsulting.co.uk for further details.

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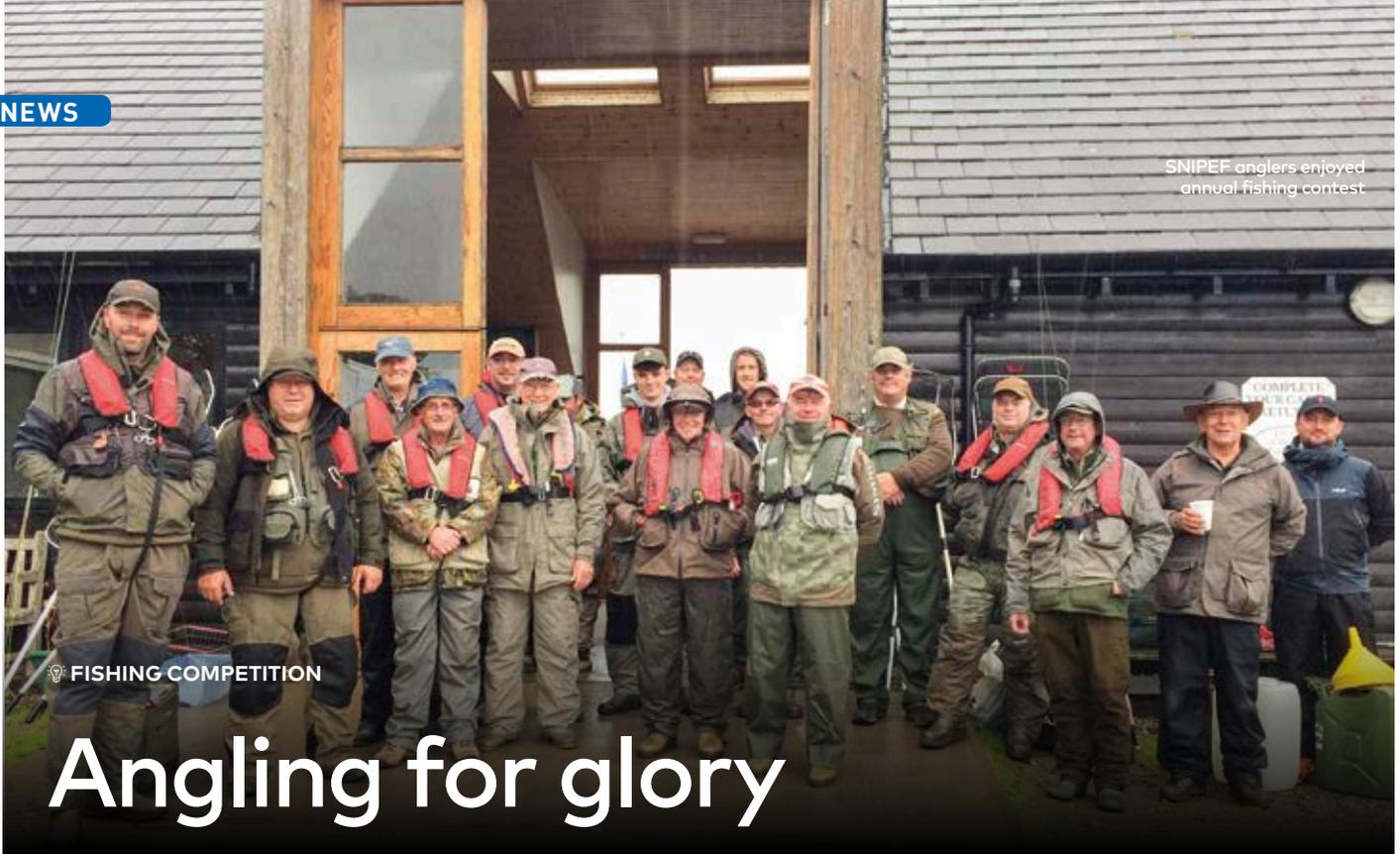
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SNIPEF anglers enjoyed annual fishing contest



FISHING COMPETITION

Angling for glory

Members and associates hit the water at annual SNIPEF fishing contest

Fishing fans braved tricky weather conditions to head out on the Lake of Menteith for the 2019 SNIPEF Angling Competition.

Members and associates battled for bragging rights at the contest near Stirling on 29 August.

With 16 boats hitting the water, participants competed to land the heaviest catch, with more than 50 fish hooked between all competitors.

Roddy Potter took home the top prize with a basket weight of four fish coming in at 13lb 12oz and a biggest fish of 4lb 1oz.

Syd Low's 12lb 9oz catch secured him second place – his biggest fish was 3lb 6oz. And Steven Laing hooked the third spot with a catch of 10lb 9oz and a biggest fish of 3lb 3oz. The biggest fish

overall on the day came in at 4lb 8oz and was caught by Alan Comrie who received a generously donated prize from ATAG Heating.

After a long day out on the water, all the competitors enjoyed a high tea at the Forth Inn where the prizes were presented by SNIPEF President Neil Hadden. Martyn Raine, SNIPEF

Technical Manager and fishing enthusiast said: "It was great to see our members having a relaxing time out on the water, mixed with some fierce competition as everyone wanted to take the top spot.

"Congratulations to all of our winners and thanks to ATAG Heating for their support of the day."



Winning anglers Alan, Roddy, Steven and Syd

OBITUARY

Tributes to ex-President Campbell

Campbell Stuart, a SNIPEF Past President and active Council

Member, sadly passed away in August. A service was held at Mortonhall Crematorium in the Pentland Chapel with many of Campbell's family, friends and colleagues in attendance.

Campbell was the President of SNIPEF in

1999, and a long standing member of Council from 1989 until his retirement in 2005. SNIPEF Vice President Robin Hall said, "Campbell was a dedicated family man who was always there to help. He was a no-nonsense character

who carried this across into his work in the plumbing industry where he worked tirelessly for his business and SNIPEF."

Campbell's family also passed on their thanks to the SNIPEF members for all their kind thoughts and words.

STAFF NEWS

Meet our new starters

① Michael Costello – Regional Training Officer

Michael has taken on the Regional Training Officer role for South Lanarkshire, Glasgow Kelvin and Forth Valley colleges. He's from Perthshire, is married with two children and has a background in logistics.

② Naomi Blyth – Training and QMS Coordinator

Naomi previously worked in the financial sector. She returned to Edinburgh last year after working in South Korea, where she managed to travel to Vietnam, Japan, Singapore and Malaysia. Outside of work, Naomi enjoys interior design and is a massive animal lover.



L-R, Michael Costello, Naomi Blyth, Markus Donachie, Ruby Harrison and Graham Kay

③ Markus Donachie – Membership & Communications Administrator

Markus is from a small town near Loch Lomond. Before joining SNIPEF, he studied law and worked in the legal sector as well in the modelling industry. He also likes to write music.

④ Ruby Harrison - Receptionist/Administrator

Ruby comes from Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear. She studied genetics at the University of

Glasgow and moved to Edinburgh about a year ago where she was working in retail before joining SNIPEF. A keen traveller, Ruby has visited approximately 30 countries.

⑤ Graham Kay - ACCS Administrator

Prior to joining SNIPEF, Graham worked in the public sector and is looking forward to building strong links with everyone in the ACCS scheme. Graham is a keen golfer and enjoys music, reading and the outdoors.

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CLAY PIGEON CONTEST

Our shooting stars take on clay pigeon challenge

SNIEPF's top guns had a blast at annual sporting competition

Sharp-shooting SNIEPF members took aim at victory as they competed in the annual clay pigeon contest.

A total of 18 participants teamed up to take on a string of tricky challenges during the day at County Clays in Dunkeld.

The overall winner was Mike Davis, who received a Sporting Club Membership, kindly donated by County Clays. Roddy Potter and his teammate Bob Hannam, from Potter



Contestants line up at this year's shoot

“ It was an enjoyable day for everyone to test their skills and participate in some friendly competition.”

Mike Davis with SNIEPF President Neil Hadden, below, and, right, Roddy Potter, Bob Hannam and Jamie Fisher of Monument Tools

Plumbing & Heating, were the top team on the day, while Ian Morrison and Lewis Bramwell were the flush winners.

Lee Taylor was recognised as the best rookie shooter while Colin Scobie and Ade Freeman from TradePoint took home the 'Clay Preservation Award'.

The event was generously supported by SNIEPF Associate



BSE SKILLS

Delight at contract

SNIEPF has welcomed the news that BSE Skills Ltd has been awarded another contract by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) to undertake reviews of the BSE modern apprenticeship frameworks

in Scotland and Northern Ireland. As a key player in the joint venture, the association says it is "delighted" at the announcement of the Building Services Engineering Modern Apprenticeships and Scottish Qualifications contract.

The new contract will allow BSE Skills to review the current qualifications and modern apprenticeship framework and help

modernise and future-proof the frameworks and qualifications across the BSE sector.

BSE Skills Ltd is a joint venture between SNIEPF, SELECT, and the Building Engineering Services Association (BESA).

Created to replace SummitSkills, it manages and develops apprenticeships, qualifications and National

Occupational Standards (NOS) for the building services engineering sector across the UK.

BSE Skills received its first contract from SDS in 2018, when it was appointed as a delivery partner to oversee and manage the review and updating of NOS, on which sector qualifications are based. Fiona Hodgson, SNIEPF CEO, said: "This is



Members Monument Tools, TradePoint, Pegler Yorkshire and ATAG Heating.

SNIEPF Membership Officer Andy Furnevel, who was at the clay pigeon shoot on 21 August, said: "It's great to see our members away from the job site enjoying some downtime.

"It was an enjoyable day for everyone to test their skills and participate in some friendly competition. It was also great to see the event so well supported by our Associate Members. Congratulations to all our winners."

great news for BSE Skills Ltd and the excellent work carried out for SDS and the wider industry so far. We are excited to continue this joint-venture and work with the other organisations to help deliver the type of skilled people that employers are looking for. SNIEPF members, and the wider industry, will only benefit from consistent qualifications and standards across the UK."



Fiona Hodgson



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Upcoming events and training

Keep an eye out for the following member events:

 **Low Carbon Forum**
10 October, SNIPEF Office

 **Larger Contractors Meeting** 11 October,
ESP, Stirling

 **Water Byelaws Course**
30 October, The Mercure
Inverness Hotel, Church
Street, Inverness

 **SEC Health and Safety Forum**
6 November, SELECT, The
Walled Garden, Penicuik

 **Approved Certifier of Construction Scheme (ACCS)** 13 November,
The Mercure Inverness
Hotel, Church Street,
Inverness

 **Approved Certifier of Construction Scheme (ACCS)** 3 December,
SNIPEF Office



Out and About

On the road with SNIPEF's
Andy and John / [Page 18](#)



Bug standard

Changes to Legionella risk
assessments / [Page 26](#)



Network know-how

How to be a success at
social media / [Page 40](#)

Meet a member

In our latest personal profile, we catch up with **Jason Walsh**, Commercial Director at James Frew Ltd

HI JASON, TELL US ABOUT YOUR COMPANY.

We carry out all sorts of work – plumbing, heating, mechanical services, modernisation works and boiler maintenance and installs. The company was formed in 1911 by the great grandfather of the present managing director, Roddy Frew. I'm the Commercial Director and I deal with business development, quantity surveying and estimating.

HOW DID YOU BECOME INTERESTED IN THIS TYPE OF WORK?

While I was doing my surveying degree at Glasgow Caledonian University, I must confess that the sight of pipes and ducting in a lecture sent me packing. Numbers were always my first love. But, 25 years later, I find myself reading up on the best pump sets and press units and I wouldn't have it any other way.

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN THE PLUMBING AND HEATING INDUSTRY?

I started with John Laing Construction in Elderslie Street in 1988 and then in 2000 I followed my old mentor Neil McKay on to ECG Group. That's where I really picked up the bug for building services. From there I moved to James Frew in 2006 where I've been fortunate enough to witness and be involved in the amazing growth of this great Ayrshire company.

WHAT IS THE BEST PROJECT YOU HAVE BEEN INVOLVED WITH, AND WHY?

The Blythswood Hotel in Glasgow. I was involved in the transformation from the old RAC Club into the city's finest hotel which was a memorable and exciting experience. It was a beautiful project and one that I have always been proud to have worked on. It was also the first project that we collaborated with Thomas Johnstone Ltd, they were placed in the position of main contractor following the unfortunate demise of Chard. The match-up with Thomas Johnstone Ltd was initially to get the Blythswood completed, but it turned out to be a relationship which has flourished to this day.

WHAT IS YOUR FUNNIEST PLUMBING MOMENT?

James Frew carried out the M&E works for Graham Construction at St Joseph's College in Dumfries. While on site I had to crawl through an undercroft where I



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WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE ABOUT THE INDUSTRY?

Payments to be made on time and the end of retention in its current form. As a QS, I have seen all the attempts over the past 30 years, from the Egan report, the Latham Review and the many amendments to the HGCR Act but very little has really changed. At James Frew we are very selective in who we work with. The majority of our clients and contractors are fair and fully honour the terms of the contract. Unfortunately, there will always be those who basically use sub-contractors as their running overdraft. Something has to change, but I can't see it happening overnight.

WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A SNIPEF MEMBER?

The knowledge that we are part of a Federation that has been around for almost as long as James Frew and includes around 750 members all working towards the same goal.

We place a very high value on training and bringing through the next generation of skilled workers. We have 45 apprentices and that is something we have involved SNIPEF in throughout this growth. Their support is invaluable. ■

Jason's quick-fire questions

COFFEE OR TEA?
Coffee (Flat white)

SWEET OR SAVOURY? Sweet

FAVOURITE FILM?
So I Married an Axe Murderer

LAST THING YOU READ? Lad Bible

WHICH SUPER POWER WOULD YOU CHOOSE TO HAVE?
Speed

MORNING PERSON OR NIGHT OWL?
Both

FAVOURITE HOLIDAY DESTINATION? Ibiza

DREAM CAR?
McLaren F1

was confronted with a full-size statue of the Virgin Mary (it was full size to me!). The guys on site said that there were various spooky goings on surrounding the statue and that unusual things had happened in her presence. I then turned around to make my way back out of the undercroft and I smacked my face off a low-lying pipe.

WHAT ARE YOUR AMBITIONS FOR THE FUTURE?

We are in an evolving market with challenges ahead for a new approach to plumbing and heating. This is something we want to be at the fore-

front of, particularly in the use of gas, electricity, the reduction in carbon and more environmentally friendly methods of heating. For the past seven or eight years we have been at the frontline of many district heating installations – these projects allow us to combine the very best strengths of our housing and buildings services teams.

We also want to continue crossing over our modernisation and building services. Our customer offer has served our success well, but no matter which one the client deals with, we want to ensure that they


CONTACT

For more about membership, call 0131 556 0600 or email membership@snipef.org

NEW MEMBERS

MEMBERS

- G X Plumbing & Heating
- D D Plumbing Services Ltd
- Heat Centre (Wick) Ltd
- Simply Bathrooms & Heating
- John Menzies Plumbing and Heating Services

- Romech Facilities Management Ltd
- N R G Scotland Ltd
- Cowe Plumbing & Heating
- 3rd Degree Plumbing & Heating
- Alistair Matheson Plumbing
- M Tait Plumbing & Heating

- North East Oil and Gas Services Limited
- A B C Plumbing and Heating
- Severn Trent Services Operations UK Ltd
- Mike Watt Construction Ltd
- V Q Contracts Ltd
- McGill Scotland Ltd

- Andrew Munro Plumbing & Heating Services Ltd
- Fotheringham Homes

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

- Roman Ltd
- Marley Alutec
- Grant Engineering (UK) Ltd
- Safesol Ltd
- Salus Controls

SNIFE member **Lluis Dalmau** talks us through the unique challenges of replacing a 200-year-old building's heating system

Church service

When Bishopton Parish Church needed a new heating system, Lluis Dalmau was the answer to their prayers.

It was the biggest job Lluis and his LCD Heating Services firm had taken on and working in the historic building presented a string of challenges.

But after designing and fitting a system tailor-made to meet the congregation's needs, the project became a springboard to more work with the church – including replacing the boilers at their community centre.

SYSTEM SOLUTIONS

Lluis said: "Doing a church was definitely out of the ordinary for us. They had the old cast-iron pipework which the water went through at low level and whatever heat that gave off, that was their heating.

"Some of the original system was easily more than 100 years old and the boiler had last been changed 40 to 60 years ago.

"It was a complete replacement. They wanted two boilers in case one broke down and they wanted the temperatures not to exceed 60°C in case anyone touched the radiators or pipes.

"We fitted two boilers, linked them together and put in new radiators – it was a full system."

Removing the original system without damaging the building was one of the main problems Lluis had to overcome. "My

biggest concern was getting the old system out", he explained. "There were four-inch cast-iron pipes running along the walls and ceilings and we had to take it out without damaging or dirtying the place.

"The system was absolutely ancient – we took out 2.5 tonnes of cast iron. The only way of getting it out was by smashing it. The sludge had built up for years and would spray everywhere. We had to put polythene in the area then use a hammer and chisel to break the pipe, then tape the ends up and get them out. It was such a relief when it was done."

The church was still being used for services while Lluis and his team carried out the work – meaning every Friday they would have to tape off the area and make it safe before removing it again on Monday.

The specific temperature requirements presented another challenge. Lluis said: "We had to make sure that the radiators

we'd got would be at the lower temperature they'd asked for.

"The concern is that you fit the radiators and they don't heat the church – reduced temperatures mean the radiators won't get as hot so the church won't get as hot.

"To compensate for that, we spoke to Stelrad, the manufacturers, and they advised us to add 25 per cent on to the size of the radiators. Because the temperatures were going to be lower, the radiators had to be oversized to provide the same heat at a lower temperature."

FINISHING TOUCHES

Lluis designed the system himself and made sure it would be a perfect fit for the 200-year-old church and the needs of its congregation.

Since most of the pipework would be visible, Lluis decided to use copper with brass clips in order to maintain the traditional



BELOW: Lluis and his firm also fitted two new boilers at the Cornerstone Community Centre after church work





look of the building. A cupboard was converted into a boiler room where they sheeted the wall to create a clear canvas to work on. Two Worcester-Bosch boilers were installed and linked up to the pipework through a low loss header and efficient controls.

Multiple valves were also fitted to make sure future maintenance and repairs could be done easily with no need to drain the full system.

Lluis also added in an extra safety feature. He said: "It's an LPG system and we fitted a gas alarm – a first for us. LPG sinks to the bottom and there were a couple of steps down so we decided to put the gas alarm in, especially with it being a church.

"We also put in smart controls so the property director can control it from his house. If there's a cold spell then he can put the heating on and keep an eye on things." Lluis's ideas – and his good relationship with the

people involved with the church – have proved very useful since his team successfully completed the project.

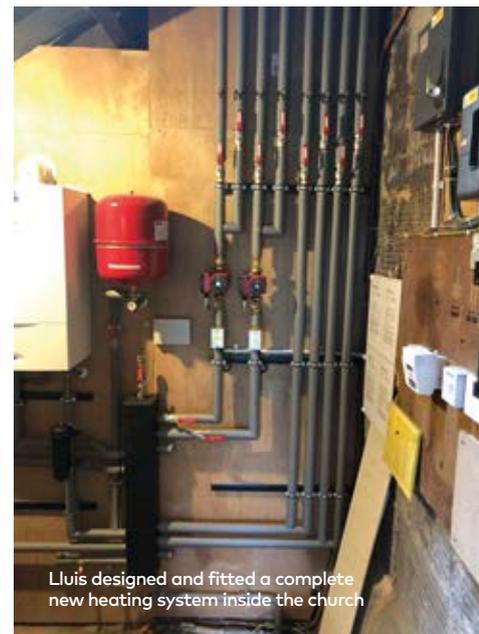
His firm fitted a new boiler at the minister's house and he recently finished installing two boilers in the Cornerstone Community Centre, where he put into practice what he had learned on the church project.

FUTURE PLANS

"We used the same set-up in the community centre on their two boilers, the way we blended them together," Lluis said. "We used the same smart controls as well.

"We've also done the Radnor Park Bowling Club – they had air conditioning units and two boilers in there and we used the same kind of set-up with some more zones.

ABOVE: Bishopton Parish Church was the biggest project Lluis and his team had ever taken on



Lluis designed and fitted a complete new heating system inside the church

It wasn't exactly the same, it was tweaked to suit them, but it was the same idea.

"This time it was linking two different types of boiler – a system boiler and a combi because they had an undersized combi supplying the whole club."

Lluis added: "We've used the church as a benchmark. I might be biased, but it's a cracking job. We've even had Worcester-Bosch out taking photos of it.

"It's great to stand back and see it all working and everyone being so pleased with it. It was a real team effort and we're really proud of it."

During the three-week church project, Lluis was delighted to discover he'd won the Screwfix Top Tradeperson title.

So, does he think there could have been some divine intervention at work to help him win the award?

He laughed: "I was in the church when I got the call, so who knows? It was a great job, great fun and a new experience for us. I enjoyed the challenge of the design, keeping the building pristine, and the actual fitting and maintenance of it.

"We've priced another couple of churches since then, but they take a long time to get back to you because it all goes through committees. It's something I'd really love to do again." ■



Lluis Dalmau

We catch up with our Membership Officer and Technical Inspector to find out where they've been and what they've been up to...

As a bit of a change from my normal *PlumbHeat* article, this time I'm focusing on the InstallerSCOTLAND trade show that was held at the SEC in Glasgow.

I've been talking about the show all year, encouraging associate members to exhibit and members to come along, so it was great to finally get to the big day on Thursday 12 September.

Along with many of the other exhibitors, I was at the venue the day before, getting ready for the show. There was a great buzz about the hall during set-up and there were some familiar faces I caught up with, all looking forward to the show the next day.

UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY

On the day itself I arrived at the venue early to set up. This was great as I didn't fancy being in the visitors' queue which was busy before the doors even opened at 10am. This was a good sign and I didn't stop for a break until 2.30pm with lots of visitors stopping by the SNIPEF stand.

I didn't have as much opportunity as I would have liked to visit exhibitors around the hall on the day, a good number of which were SNIPEF associate members.

The ones I did manage to speak to all confirmed that they'd had a good day and one of the merchants had completed a number of new account applications. I also



By Andy Furnevel, Membership Officer, SNIPEF

spoke to some manufacturers' representatives who weren't exhibiting but told me they definitely will next year. This was great to hear as the more exhibitors we have at this unique Scottish event then the better the opportunity for InstallerSCOTLAND to become a regular fixture in the calendar. That has to be a good thing.

Many thanks to the *Installer* magazine team who worked tirelessly to organise the event. It was a privilege to work alongside them and my colleagues to promote the event with our member firms and associate member organisations. ■

GREAT DEBATE

Though the SNIPEF stand was positioned directly across from the presentation area where the Great Debate was held, I only caught a few snippets of the action. It was great to see our members participating on both panels and a decent audience listening to the arguments.



Andy at the stand with SNIPEF's Martyn Raine, Fiona Hodgson and Sarah Fitzpatrick

KEY:

○ Andy visit

△ John visit

OUT

LATEST TRENDS

I've seen a lot more air source heat pumps being fitted recently. Feedback from members is that these heat pumps have been improving over the years and are only getting better. However, there are still many members who prefer gas as their main source of heating a property.



There's been an influx of new SNiPEF members over the past few months which means I've been busy arranging inspections. It has been great to be able to meet our latest members and let them know how the technical team can help.

These visits also allow us to gauge the standard of work our new members carry out and pass on any advice and support if needed. And a visit from Andy or me within the first months of joining gives members a point of contact in the membership team and the technical team.

It's great to see that the industry is in such good hands – every member I have met, whether they are new or current members, wants to produce the best quality work that meets the regulations.

HIGHLIGHTS

One of the most enjoyable inspections I had recently was when I visited new SNiPEF member Premier Gas. They were installing a heating system in a Glasgow church where one of their directors, Davie, showed me around the installation.

Davie explained the complete workings of the project and the various challenges they had to deal with along the way. Davie was using Viega Megapress



fittings on the heating pipes – these fittings are a great product and they looked good too. I had a great chat with Davie and I honestly could have listened and talked to him all day about plumbing and heating. It was a pleasant visit and great to talk to someone so passionate about the industry.

I also attended the SkillPlumb apprentice competition at West College Scotland and was lucky enough to be asked to be a judge for the lead contest. It's really promising to see the high standard of skills of these apprentices – the future of the industry looks in good hands.

TEAMWORK

Andy and I will occasionally team up to go and see a member together and long-serving member Ralph Shaw had the pleasure of a visit from both of us.

When we visit together, Andy will discuss the benefits of membership and find ways he can help, while I carry out an inspection and highlight how the technical department can assist the member.

Ralph was installing a new heating system in a Masonic Hall in Edinburgh. Interestingly, the property still had gas lights before Ralph removed them, something plumbers wouldn't see very often these days.

I think members benefit from a tag-team visit as it enables them to have all their queries answered at once. ■



By John Somerville, Technical Inspector, SNiPEF

& ABOUT

Celebrating QUALITY

SNIEF is proud to have supported Quality Plumber Week, championing the diverse skills of plumbing and heating contractors and celebrating the essential role they play in keeping people healthy and safe.

This year's focus was on raising awareness of mental health in the construction sector and what can be done to help the wellbeing of plumbing and heating operatives.

Male site workers in the construction industry are three times more likely to take steps to end their life

than the national average. Fiona Hodgson, SNIEF CEO, said: "We all know ours is a challenging industry to work in. This means it is all the more important to acknowledge the great work plumbers and heating operatives do and the



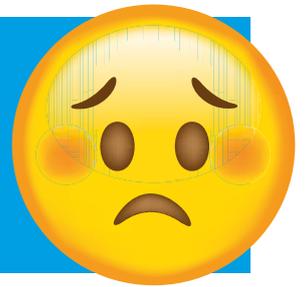
vital role they play in society. Quality Plumber Week is an excellent opportunity to do this.

"However, it is perhaps more important that we acknowledge the pressures from working in this industry and ensure our people feel supported.

"It's essential our industry gives serious consideration to mental health and improving the wellbeing of business owners and their employees."

Quality Plumber Week – which this year ran from 7-13 October – was started in 2014 by the Association of Plumbing & Heating Contractors Ltd. ■

World Mental Health Day took place during Quality Plumber Week, on Thursday 10 October. SNIEF joined the conversation on Twitter to help raise awareness of the symptoms of poor mental health. SNIEF also asked Mates in Mind to provide information on the impact of mental ill-health within the construction industry – see pages 38 and 39 for details.



PATENTED
Patent No. GB2522634

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5
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The greatest show in town

InstallerSCOTLAND brought the industry's top brands together as hundreds of visitors checked out the latest products, had a laugh with pals and heard about how climate change could impact the future of the industry

The InstallerSCOTLAND show, organised in partnership with SNIPEF, was hailed a resounding success after more than 700 visitors attended the event.

Sixty of the industry's top brands were at Glasgow's SEC as installers got the chance to get hands-on with products and meet manufacturers and suppliers face-to-face. The show also featured the Great Debate

about the industry's future and the unveiling of the UK's Plumber of the Year.

SNIPEF's Membership and Communications Manager, Sarah Fitzpatrick, said: "SNIPEF is proud to have partnered with *Installer* on this fantastic show that brought the industry together from across Scotland.

"The Great Debates were a particular highlight for

us, looking at the future of plumbing and heating in light of climate change targets. If you weren't at the show, you missed out – we're already looking forward to the next one."

Eoin McManus, Managing Director of *Installer*, added: "We're delighted the show was such a success. We're now focusing on big plans for Installer2020 in Coventry next May." As well as the chance

Dale York and his students from Forth Valley College joined the fun at the event



“ It was a great show. A good range of manufacturers, from finance firms and lead generation software to tools, boilers and trade essentials.”

Gavin Bridgeford - JCL Plumbing and Heating Ltd

“ We really enjoyed the show. It was great to take our apprentices along to give them a taste of what big events are like. Roll on next year and I might try to get down to the show in Coventry as well.”

Ian Chapman - CHAPS
Heating and Plumbing Ltd



to check out the industry's top brands, there was plenty of fun, including a motorbike simulator and a crazy golf hole. Apprentices attending the show loved the Hep2O challenge where they raced against the clock to fit pipes together to create the number 40. And Forth Valley College students were delighted to complete the task more quickly than their lecturer Dale York.

Martin Warnes was crowned the 2019 UK Plumber of the Year in the nationwide contest run by JT, Bristan and Wolseley – picking up a £15,000 prize.

One of the highlights of the September show was the Great Debate, where experts discussed the impact of climate change.

The future of heating is a hot topic right now. Legally binding carbon reduction targets have been set by the UK Government requiring net-zero emissions to be achieved by 2050. However, the target for Scotland is five years ahead of that date.

Hydrogen boilers, low-carbon biofuels, heat pumps, district heating and energy storage are some of the options that have been discussed but, as yet, there is no clear path forward.

InstallerSCOTLAND was the perfect place to see what the industry thinks. SNIPEF brought together two expert panels to debate the issue and the future of heating for Scotland.

Chaired by sustainability expert Tim Pollard, the first



PANEL MEMBERS

Debate One: How will this impact installers who predominately work with gas?

- Duncan Sharp – Installer, Grange Energy Services
- William Tennant – Technical Manager, James Frew Ltd.
- Martyn Raine – Technical Manager, SNIPEF
- Paul Lynn – Building Services Curriculum & Quality Leader, West College Scotland

debate looked at how the net-zero targets will impact installers who predominately work with gas, while the second explored the question from the view of installers already working in the renewables market.

DEBATE ONE

The immediate question on everyone's lips was: Is this target achievable? According to installer Duncan Sharp, of Grange Energy Services, it is. He believes we need to set a target in order to achieve it. William Tennant,



Technical Manager of James Frew Ltd, agreed we have been moving towards a low carbon economy but said what hasn't been moving as fast is the focus on ensuring the housing stock is suitable for renewables.

Consumers themselves also pose a challenge. While some are asking about renewables, Duncan insisted there was more the industry could do to push towards low carbon choices.

Like the war on plastics, he said we need to get government, manufacturers, merchants and installers all singing from the same songbook.

While the industry can see what is coming, there are opportunities to encourage installers into renewables. SNIPEF's Technical Manager Martyn Raine argued there's currently too much bureaucracy in place for installers to easily move into the sector. Duncan and Paul Lynn, Building Services Curriculum and Quality Leader



- PANEL MEMBERS**
Debate Two: How will this impact installers already working in the renewable market?
- Shaun Scott – Installer, Derek Scott Plumbing & Heating
 - Barry Sharp – Installer, Renewable Heat
 - Rob Berridge, Director, Heat Engineer Software
 - Richard Moncur – Regional Business Manager Renewable Systems, Vaillant Group
 - Paul Lynn – Building Services Curriculum & Quality Leader, West College Scotland

at West College Scotland, both saw education as the way forward – ensuring there is a qualification structure in place will both raise standards and provide a clear route of entry.

District heating has been suggested and our panel agreed there was a place for this. For many areas of existing housing it wouldn't be practical but with good planning, it's a viable option for new developments.

Looking at the effect on gas installers over the next five years, the panel agreed there was no quick fix but change needs to happen. It has to be a priority to ensure there are apprentices coming into the industry and that skills are taught to maintain the gas network while also moving into renewables – whatever they may be.

DEBATE TWO

The question of whether enough knowledgeable and skilled tradespeople are available was

“ I thought it was brilliant. It was great to see so many top manufacturers in an ideal location. ”

Mike Stuart - W & M Stuart LTD

raised a number of times – we need to upskill existing installers not only for new builds but for refitting existing housing. We

Apprentices tried the pipe challenge, top, while other visitors flocked to hear the debates

SNIEPF's Andy Furnevel, Martyn Raine, Fiona Hodgson and Sarah Fitzpartick



also need to ensure apprentices are trained for this work.

Another issue the industry faces is that there's no one size fits all solution, it will require a number of different approaches.

The focus moved on to what the panel thought were the biggest risks in the domestic renewable sector. Installer Shaun Scott, of Derek Scott Plumbing and Heating, highlighted fears the electrical grid wouldn't cope with all of the renewables.

Heat Engineer Software Director Rob Berridge and Richard Moncur, Vaillant Group's Regional Manager for Renewable Systems, also mentioned the lack of awareness on how much energy people use. There's an energy wastage problem that needs to be addressed.

The panel had a long list when asked what their wish for the renewables market would be. Public education featured several times with Richard wanting more understandable technology. Paul called for better education on energy wastage. Improved legislation and realistic public incentives to invest in renewables topped the list for installer Barry Sharp from Renewable Heat, while Shaun wanted more consistency on the sizing of systems. ■

Go with in

Submerged inlets mean you only need one component to fill an appliance and remove excess water – but it's vital to consider all the possible risks before installing them

The submerged inlet used in baths is fast becoming a regular fitting in high end bathroom installations. This is due to the increase of bathrooms following a more minimalistic style. While this design may suit the demands of the modern market, it can pose a substantial risk to the water supply if not installed correctly.

WHAT IS THE RISK?

The combined overflow and bath filler does as its name suggests – it uses a single component to both fill the appliance and remove excess water by being connected to the water supply and the waste pipe. It's important the overflow is not mistaken as the spillover level of the appliance. The overflow and the spillover level are two separate functions. The overflow is to allow excess

water to escape, preventing it from overflowing out of the appliance. The spillover level of the appliance is the level where water would spill over and out of the appliance.

Due to their dual functionality, combined overflow and bath fillers are located below the spillover level, where you would expect to find the waste overflow hole. This type of inlet to the appliance is classed as a submerged inlet – the water inlet is below the spillover level of the appliance. This is where the risk of contamination lies.

HOW CAN THE RISK BE MINIMISED?

Submerged inlets are not only used in baths, they may be present in other appliances such as bidets, dishwashers, appliances used for industrial processes or tap spouts that terminate below the spillover level. An industrial setting may present unique situations where the water system designs have been created to deal with specialist requirements.

Typically, within a domestic setting a bath or wash basin with a submerged inlet will be classed as a Fluid Category 3 risk, meaning double check



By Martyn Raine,
Technical
Manager,
SNIPEF



the flow

valves will be required (or another suitable device). If the submerged inlet is situated in an appliance used for other than domestic purposes the risks will be higher. An assessment of risk will be required to ensure the correct backflow protection is used.

In order to determine a suitable configuration of backflow prevention, the plumber should carry out an evaluation of the site, how the appliance will be used and what risks will be present, as well as consulting the client or building owner.

WHAT CONSIDERATIONS NEED TO BE MADE FOR RISK ASSESSMENT?

When making a risk assessment, one of the first factors that should be considered is the type of building the installation is in. This is due to the different risks created by different buildings.

For example, a bath in a domestic house that is used for typical domestic purposes would usually be a Fluid Category 3 risk. The use of double check valves on the water supplies to the appliance (or other devices that can achieve the same level of protection) would be

Clause G15.14 of the Water Regulations Guide states:

Submerged inlets to baths or washbasins in any house or domestic situation are considered to be a Fluid Category 3 risk and should be supplied with water from a supply or distributing pipe through a double check valve. Submerged inlets to baths or washbasins in other than a house or domestic situation, and sinks in any location, are considered to be a Fluid Category 5 risk and appropriate backflow protection will be required.

suitable protection for the situation. However, if the bath was situated in a care facility or hospital, the risk would increase to Fluid Category 5 due to the type of building and the contaminants that would be present in the appliance.

The next consideration in any risk assessment would be to identify any other possible contaminants that could impact the water supply.

For example, a domestic house would usually pose a low risk. However, if the house changed its primary use and was being used as a shop, business or healthcare facility, this change in use would need to be taken into account. Any activities or processes occurring within the building would need to be identified as they may create a higher risk to the water supply. In particular,



any manufacturing processes that use specialist chemicals or materials may pose a risk to the water supply.

Further guidance on submerged inlets and the required backflow protection can be found on the WRAS website or in the Water Regulations Guide. ■

The BSI's guidance on carrying out risk assessments for Legionella has been updated. We explain how to make sure you comply with the new rules when you're checking a water system for any potential dangers



By Martyn Raine,
Technical
Manager,
SNIPEF

Earlier this year, the British Standard Institution (BSI) published an updated version of their guidance on conducting Legionella risk assessments, BS 8580-1:2019 – *Water quality. Risk assessments for Legionella control. Code of practice.*

The publication provides guidance and recommendations on carrying out Legionella risk assessments on water systems, which are a legal requirement. Following the recommendations in the standard will provide a

suitable method to comply with current regulation.

WHY HAS THE STANDARD BEEN UPDATED?

The guidance was first published in 2010 and since then the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has published a revised Approved Code of Practice and guidance for Legionella control (ACoP L8) and updated technical documents. This separated the ACoP into specific parts

addressing different water systems, including hot and cold water systems, cooling towers and other water system types.

The updates to BS 8580 bring the standard in line with the changes by HSE to the ACoP and associated guidance documents. It is expected that with the standard being called BS 8580-1, there will be a BS 8580-2 sometime in the future that will focus on *Pseudomonas*, a pathogen that is found in soil and water.

Bug standard

WHAT HAS CHANGED?

There have been numerous changes to the standard, with the most significant being made in Section 5.1, which deals with competence of risk assessors, and Section 9, dealing with preparation for risk assessments. Other areas of attention are Section 8, covering 'Evaluation of Risk', and Section 10, 'Risk Review and Re-assessment'.

There have also been updates to the annexes that support the standard.

Section 5.1 – Competence of the risk assessor

Section 5.1 focuses on the competence of the person who will be carrying out the risk assessment, known as the risk assessor. This section is now more prescriptive of the competence required by the assessor. BS 8580 2010 insisted on an assessor being able to demonstrate that they have specialist knowledge of Legionella bacteria, but did not state how competency should be proved. BS 8580-1:2019 lists in more detail what is good practice to prove competence.

An assessor must have good knowledge in:

- the factors affecting the colonisation by and growth of Legionella
- the evaluation and assessment of risk from Legionella and the controls in place
- the procedures necessary to complete surveys, measurements and sampling
- the corrective actions that can be applied to reduce or eliminate the risk

Important areas for inspection

- Dead legs, cap ends and infrequently used outlets
- Low water throughput, such as oversized storage tanks
- Imbalanced water flow from systems in parallel
- Routes for possible contamination
- Cool areas of cylinders and calorifiers
- Areas of possible heat transfer
- Cross connections where fluid category 2 can pass into fluid category 1 zones
- Materials that could harbour nutrients for bacterial growth
- Scale, sediment, biofilm or corrosion
- Any changes to the system that could promote conditions for bacterial growth

- the relevant control measures that can be applied e.g. water treatment, inspections, monitoring
- the type of water system(s) and associated equipment to be assessed.

Competence should be proven formally through a recognised assessment process. This is a requirement for membership of scheme providers. Proof of competence should also be readily accessible for inspection when carrying out risk assessments.

Section 9 – Preparation of the risk assessment report

There have been several significant changes made to Section 9 (previously Section 8 in BS 8580 2010), which focuses on risk assessments and how information is recorded. There is an increased focus on the type of information recorded and the terminology used. As with the previous standard, all reporting should be carried out in a concise manner. There is more emphasis on creating a risk assessment that can be understood by the person it is intended for, e.g. a building

NOTE

While this article has highlighted several changes to the standard, any person carrying out this type of work should take the time to understand all of the updates in BS 8580-1.

owner who may not have technical knowledge. This can be achieved by ensuring all information is relevant and specific to the purpose of the risk assessment. Excessive information can distract from the purpose of the report and may lead to the end user misunderstanding the important factors of the risk assessment report. Large extracts from industry documents, such as ACoP L8, should also be avoided as too much technical information could be confusing for the user of the risk assessment.

ANNEX CHANGES

The annexes of the document have also been updated with adjustments. They provide details relating to various systems including hot and cold water systems, evaporating cooling systems and spa pools.

For example, Annex B of BS 8580-1:2019 deals with hot and cold water systems. The standard has been adjusted to incorporate low-carbon technology, such as stored water heated by heat pumps or solar where lower water temperatures are achieved in a pre-heat function. Annex B.8 also gives guidance on the elements of the system to be inspected. See the table above for the important areas highlighted by Section 9. ■

Round-up of latest WaterSafe® activities and events

Keeping drinking water in tip-tap condition

WaterSafe is urging homeowners to do their bit to protect Scotland's high-quality rated drinking water by checking for lead pipes – with the help of approved plumbers.

WaterSafe has teamed up with Scottish Water and the Drinking Water Quality Regulator (DWQR) to help homeowners take action, and recommends asking an approved plumber to identify and safely replace lead pipes with ones made with copper or plastic.

The latest report from the DWQR shows that drinking water in some homes is still being affected by lead pipes, which are mostly found in homes built before 1970.

The use of lead plumbing has been banned in the UK for more than 25 years because lead

dissolving in drinking water can be harmful if it builds up in the body – especially for babies and children, whose development can be affected.

However, research by WaterSafe shows nearly two-thirds of homeowners in Scotland have never checked to see if they have lead water pipes.

Replacing lead plumbing inside homes, and to the property boundary, is the responsibility of the homeowner, although WaterSafe's research shows only half of households are aware of this.

WaterSafe, Scottish Water and the DWQR produced a film to raise awareness and help homeowners deal with lead pipes – take a look at watersafe.org.uk/lead ■

For more information visit watersafe.org.uk/news



WaterSafe returns to HIP Apprentice of the Year judging panel

Welsh Water's Gareth Harris will represent WaterSafe for the HIP Apprentice of the Year 2020 competition, with guest judge duties getting underway between January and March next year.

Eight regional heats will be held across the UK, visiting Northern Ireland on 12 March and Scotland on 9 April.

Gareth said: "This competition is great

for showcasing how the next generation of apprentices are developing in their training. It also tests their skills under pressure and this results in some outstanding work."

WaterSafe is encouraging level 2 or 3 students to enter the competition by signing up through their lecturer by 30 November. For details visit hip-magazine.co.uk/events



Gareth Harris (right) with North East Regional Finalist 2019 Ben Fairbairn

➤ For more information and advice about how you can benefit from your membership of WaterSafe, please visit www.watersafe.org.uk

Fighting for a Gas Safe nation

SNIPEF backs bid to improve safety in homes and businesses

SNIPEF proudly supported Gas Safety Week to help raise awareness about the importance of gas safety and taking care of gas appliances in homes and businesses.

The ninth annual event saw organisations from across the UK work together to raise awareness of the dangers of poorly maintained gas appliances, which can cause gas leaks, fires, explosions and carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning.

ESSENTIAL ADVICE

Over the week, SNIPEF reminded our members of the small things they could do to ensure their customers know how to keep themselves safe around gas. Our social media campaign across Facebook and Twitter shared five gas safety actions for members to keep their customers safe:

- Check customers have an audible CO alarm and they know where it is located.
- Check customers know the six main symptoms of CO poisoning.
- Ensure customers know the warning signs that could indicate their appliances are not working properly.
- Remind customers to have their gas appliances checked at least once a year.
- Always show customers their Gas Safe ID card so they know they are Gas Safe registered and qualified.



During Gas Safety Week, which ran from 16 to 22 September, SNIPEF attended a reception at the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh which was hosted by the Institution of Gas Engineers and Managers (IGEM).

SNIPEF CEO Fiona Hodgson was a guest speaker at this year's event. Fiona said: "Gas Safety Week is an excellent opportunity to remind people

SNIPEF's Fiona Hodgson with Jonathan Kane, CEO of Kane International, and below, her speech at Parliament

about the importance of gas safety and the disastrous consequences when things go wrong.

TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

"However, we believe that SNIPEF and our members have a broader responsibility to educate the public about gas safety in homes and businesses – not just on Gas Safety Week but at any time of the year.

"Our members, and gas engineers in general, are uniquely positioned when in a customer's home or business to ensure their customer has the knowledge to be safe around gas.

"We strongly encourage engineers to take the time to show their Gas Safe ID card and pass on gas safety information – it will make all the difference." ■



We catch up with apprentices Sasha and Connie a year after they appeared in *PlumbHeat* to find out how the last 12 months have gone

Setting the a-gender

At colleges across the country, this year's new apprentices are settling in to their courses and starting their careers.

This time last year, *PlumbHeat* met teenagers Sasha Mathers and Connie McNaughton as they took their first steps to becoming professional plumbers.

And twelve months on, they're both certain they made the right decision about their future.

Connie, 17, was thrilled to be named her class's apprentice of the year at Fife College and has seen her confidence – and her skills – soar.

She said: "I can't believe it's been a year – it's gone so quickly. I certainly didn't think when I started that I'd be winning best apprentice.

“You won't have any regrets and you'll love it”

Connie McNaughton

"I was so nervous about going to college but as soon as I got there it all fell into place. I'm the only girl on the course but everyone's been really welcoming and we're all treated the same."

Connie's boss Robert Walker is no stranger to taking on female apprentices. His former trainee, Demi Glen, has now been with him for more than 12 years and she's been a great support to his new apprentice.

"Before I went to college



QUICK FACTS

NAME: Robert Walker
Plumbing & Heating Engineer

BASED: Cupar, Fife

PHONE: 01334 654 966



Connie with boss Robert, far right, and local MP Stephen Gethins, centre

she told me about all the stuff she used to do and calmed me down", said Connie. "Having her there helps and we all get on so well it's like a little family."

When she's not in college, a lot of Connie's daily work involves jobs like fitting taps and helping with boiler services.

She said: "I do all the basic stuff and I've been doing a lot of digging. It's tough work but once you get the pipes in and it's all working, that's the best feeling. It's so satisfying when you know there are no leaks and everything's running smoothly."

NO REGRETS

Connie urged anyone else thinking of a plumbing apprenticeship to "not have any doubts and go for it".

She added: "You won't have any regrets and you'll love it. I want to get my qualifications and eventually have my own business. In the future there will be a lot more women in plumbing. A lot of my friends

TRAINING'S NOT JUST FOR TEENAGERS

It's not just teenage girls who are taking on apprenticeships – West College Scotland recently welcomed Karen Kilpatrick to start her training at the age of 47.

SNIEPF Training Manager Dale Thomson said: "It's great to see that the work SNIEPF Training Services has undertaken to encourage more females into the plumbing and heating industry is producing a greater intake of female apprentices. I would like to

congratulate Karen on starting her Modern Apprenticeship. Not only is it great to see another female apprentice start the training programme, but it is also great to see another mature student start the Modern Apprenticeship as well.

"Karen will be able to bring her life experiences to the industry and we look forward to working with her to become a qualified and graded plumber."



QUICK FACTS

NAME:
Sanctuary Group
BASED:
Aberdeen
PHONE:
0800 131 3348
WEBSITE:
www.sanctuary-scotland.co.uk

starting her apprenticeship. She said: "I've learned so much about bathroom and kitchen replacements, as well as lots about drainage and lead work.

"I've learned practical skills and a lot of working with my hands, as well as problem solving and team work.

FUTURE PLANS

"I enjoy most things, however kitchens are my favourite because I can make the pipe work aesthetically pleasing and I can probably make up a sink with my eyes closed now!

"I also did a couple of months of day-to-day work like fixing dripping taps, blocked toilets, that sort of thing.

"I want to stick in with plumbing and hopefully keep working up and taking every opportunity I get on the way."

Sasha also echoed Connie's encouragement for anyone considering an apprenticeship.

She said: "It was never a path I thought I'd go down but it's the best decision I've made. It's good to learn a trade and get stuck in to some hands-on work.

"And for other girls thinking about it? I'd say that it might be a little daunting at first, but just go for it. I've never felt discriminated against at work and most of the time people

actually think you'll probably do the job better." ■

are thinking about getting into a trade after seeing me do it."

The customers are also glad Connie wants to continue with her plumbing career. Boss Robert said: "They all know about Demi so when I arrive with Connie they just say, 'Oh, you've got another one!'. People ask for Demi now, especially elderly people in flats.

"They'd rather have the girls than the blokes."

Robert also had some advice for anyone thinking of taking on their own female apprentice.

He said: "Be brave and do it. Focus and go for it."

Fellow apprentice Sasha, 19, started her training last year at North East Scotland College, Aberdeen, and works for the city's Sanctuary Group.

And she's also had a warm welcome from both her classmates and customers.

"Sometimes I forget I'm the only female on the jobs – I'm just one of the guys," she said. "Tenants are always really

“ I want to stick in with plumbing and hopefully keep working up and taking every opportunity I get along the way”

Sasha Mathers

pleased and surprised when I walk in. I often hear, 'It's really good seeing a female plumber – that would never have happened in my day'.

"Being an apprentice has been much more fun and not nearly as scary as I thought it would be. I now feel so much more confident in my work and my abilities."

Most of Sasha's work involves replacing kitchens and bathrooms and fitting medical adaptations to homes. And she's certainly learned a lot since



Sasha loves working on kitchens with Sanctuary



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ABERDEEN

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Tel: 01224 663322 • nhsaberdeen@williamwilson.co.uk

www.williamwilson.co.uk



We're ready to take on the world

Five Scottish apprentices are in the running to land this year's SkillPLUMB UK title as they compete at WorldSkills UK Live

Talented Scottish plumbing apprentices have swept the 2019 SkillPLUMB UK National Final – claiming five of the eight finalist spots.

They won their places after facing stiff competition during a series of challenging regional heats throughout the year. Perth College

Samuel Henderson tackles the copper pipe challenge in the regional heat to win his place





Perth College UHI student Kyle McGeoghie lifted the trophy at his regional contest

UHI's Kyle McGeoghie, who works for William Combe & Son Ltd, Tullos Training Ltd's Samuel Henderson, from Derek Scott Plumbing and Heating, and Moray College student Connor Cruden, of Neil Murray Housebuilders Ltd, will take part in the final. Also competing will be Dundee and Angus College student Cameron Clark, of James Lammond Ltd, and Alexander Clouston, who studies at Inverness College UHI and works for Pipedream Plumbing

Last year's national SkillPLUMB champion, James McCall-Smith of Derek Scott Plumbing & Heating shared his tips for success: "The trick is to believe in yourself and get into the right state of mind for the competition. Practice the things you need to improve on a lot and this will bring your whole game up. You have to be dedicated and put in the hours too."

Ltd. They'll be joined by Anthony Iacovazzo from City College Norwich, Jacob Reid of Southern Regional College and North Regional College's Abigail Reilly.

All eight will go head-to-head in a three-day practical task between 21 November and 23 November for the title of SkillPLUMB Champion 2019. The final will be at WorldSkills UK Live, the UK's largest skills, apprenticeships and careers event, at the NEC Birmingham.

Fiona Hodgson, SNIPEF CEO, said: "I am very proud that so many SNIPEF apprentices will be heading to Birmingham to represent Scotland.

"It is a reflection of the high quality of the apprentice training here in Scotland and well-deserved recognition of the hard work and dedication

of our apprentices. They are a credit to both their lecturers who teach them so well and their employers who provide on the job training. The level of work at our SkillPLUMB heat in June was of an exceptionally high standard and I look forward to seeing this continued."

SkillPLUMB is an annual skills competition designed to promote standards and skills across the plumbing industry.

It can bring invaluable benefits to students, colleges, and employers. The SkillPLUMB Scotland heat is organised by SNIPEF and BPEC, with support from industry partners.

Competitors completed a copper pipework exercise. The eight apprentices with the top scores from across the heats were selected for the final. ■

Firm Frew to the final

SNIPEF member firm James Frew Ltd has been nominated as a finalist in the Large Employer of the Year category in the Scottish Apprenticeship Awards 2019.

The company has also been shortlisted in the Developing Ayrshire's Young Workforce and Ayrshire's Best Business categories in this year's Ayrshire Business Awards.

James Frew Ltd is one of the largest privately-owned building services companies in Scotland. It employs more than 360 people, including 45 apprentices.

In 2017, the firm established the James Frew Academy to develop its young workforce. Fiona Hodgson, SNIPEF CEO said: "SNIPEF has worked

closely with James Frew Ltd for many years and it is fantastic to see them recognised for the work they do with apprentices.

"The extra training and support they provide enhances the Modern Apprenticeship in Domestic Plumbing and Heating experience and sets the apprentices up for a successful career.

"We wish them all the best for the awards ceremonies."

James Frew Ltd Managing Director Roddy Frew added: "I firmly believe the work that we are doing with our James Frew Academy is helping to plan for the future.

"We are working purposefully with our



Some of James Frew Ltd's team of apprentices with the firm's MD Roddy Frew

key partners to provide an apprenticeship programme which supports our strategic priorities."

The Scottish Apprenticeship Awards winners will be announced on 7 November at the Caird Hall, Dundee, with the Ayrshire Business Awards dinner taking place at Ayr Race Course on 11 October.

Is this the end for smash and grab?



As part of a four-page focus on adjudication, our legal expert looks at how a recent court case could affect future decisions over disputes



Rudi Klein,
Barrister and
SEC Group CEO

Over the last few years, there have been complaints from paying parties about so-called 'smash and grab' adjudications. Take this example. A plumbing contractor has submitted an interim application for payment of £50,000.

The application is issued in accordance with the contract (ie with the necessary supporting documentation) and sets out how the £50,000 was built up. The final date for payment is 60 days from the due date. By the 60th day, there hasn't been a valid payment or pay less notice issued by the other party. In fact, there was a pay less notice but the calculation was not shown. There was no build-up showing how the payer arrived at the sum they now say is due.

In the Scottish case of *Muir Construction Ltd v Capital Residential Ltd* in 2017, Lord Bannatyne held that a pay less notice stating that nothing was due was inadequate.

"From none of the information provided could the reasonable recipient work out the basis on which the zero sum figure was calculated. There is no calculation put forward which would allow the reasonable recipient to understand how that figure is arrived at. There is no specification which would allow the reasonable recipient to make any sense of the figure arrived at. The defender sets forth no figures and thus no basis substantiating the zero sum figure in the [pay less notice] or in any of the other documentation on which it relies."

Therefore the plumbing contractor's £50,000 is now due. The payer refuses to pay. The contractor immediately refers the matter to adjudication and the adjudicator confirms that there were no valid payment notices and the amount applied for is due with interest and must be paid immediately. This has been labelled a 'smash and grab' adjudication.

Paying parties caught out by these adjudications have argued that they should have the right to have another adjudication to test whether the sum applied for represented the correct value of the work carried out.

REACTION OF THE COURTS

Last year the Court of Appeal in England applied a brake to these so-called smash and grab adjudications. This was the case of *Grove Developments Ltd v S & T (UK) Ltd*.

The case related to a design-and-build contract for the building of a new Premier Inn at Heathrow Airport. An interim application in the sum of £14 million had been submitted by the contractor.

The court had to answer the question (summarised by the judge in the court below): "Can a paying party pay the sum stated as due in an interim application (following an

adjudicator's decision that there was no valid payment or pay less notice) and then start another adjudication to obtain the true value of the sum due?"

The Court of Appeal answered yes and supported the reasons given by the judge in the court below. One of those reasons was as follows: A contractor could go to adjudication to challenge an underpayment by the client. So why can't the client challenge an overpayment?

Going back to our example involving the plumbing contractor, the first adjudication was concerned with the validity of the notices. In the *Grove* case, the court explained that the dispute referred to the second adjudication which was about the true value of the works covered by the application. The second adjudication, therefore, concerned a different dispute.

IMPACT ON CONTRACTORS

This decision overrules earlier judgments in the English Technology and Construction Court. These judgments indicated that the paying party should only have the right to challenge in adjudication the true value of the work at the stage of final payment (or, possibly, beforehand by simply recovering an overpayment in subsequent payment cycles).

How does this impact on the plumbing contractor? There may be an increased incidence of adjudications relating to the true value of the work or threats to adjudicate in cases where the sum in an application has been upheld by an adjudicator because of the lack of valid notices from the paying party.

It remains to be seen whether the outcome in this case will be the same in Scotland. But the case has now been referred to the Supreme Court; the judgment of this court will apply to Scotland.

The Court of Appeal's judgment seems to undermine the cash flow certainty promoted by the amendments to the Construction Act in 2011.

A new section 111 was inserted in the Act. This states [section 111(1)] that: "The payer must pay the notified sum (to the extent not already paid) on or before the final date for payment."

A valid application becomes the notified sum in the absence of any valid notices from the paying party. The paying party can have two "bites of the cherry". They can issue a payment notice and a pay less notice. If they fail to do either, but can then go to adjudication to establish the true value, this seems to undermine section 111(1) above. Furthermore, enabling the paying party to have a third "bite of the cherry" enables them to take advantage of their breaches of contract in not issuing the requisite notices.

We now await the judgment of the Supreme Court. ■

Counting the cost of conflict

Our industry expert gives his warning about adjudication and how you can prepare for disputes

In my last article I mentioned my increasing concerns about the adjudication process, and I have been asked to elaborate on these. It was a great idea to introduce adjudication into construction contracts more than 20 years ago. You were not being paid, there was a dispute, so you kicked off an adjudication and 28 or so days later you had a decision which meant that, hopefully, you were paid what you were due, or most of it anyway. However, things have moved on and the adjudication process has altered radically, and not for the better. Let me tell you why.

PAYING THE PRICE

I think the fundamental problem now is that even if a referring party is successful in the adjudication, there is absolutely no guarantee that they will be paid what they are due (or what the adjudicator decided) and they will need to revert to the courts to enforce the adjudicator's decision. That costs money, such as legal fees, and will take time, maybe three or four months. So, the question is: "What is the point of going to adjudication?"

More and more adjudicators see jurisdiction points being raised by respondents from the outset of the process and these

are sometimes put in place simply to give the respondent some basis upon which to challenge the adjudicator's decision at a later date in an enforcement action. In my view, many of these challenges are manufactured and half-hearted, but nonetheless they have to be considered by the adjudicator who issues a non-binding conclusion after considering them.

CHALLENGING ISSUES

The challenges are wide, varied and imaginative – there is no crystallised dispute; the wrong Adjudicator Nominating Body [ANB] made the appointment; the Notice of Adjudication was not issued to the other party before an application was made to the ANB etc.

Now some of these can sound

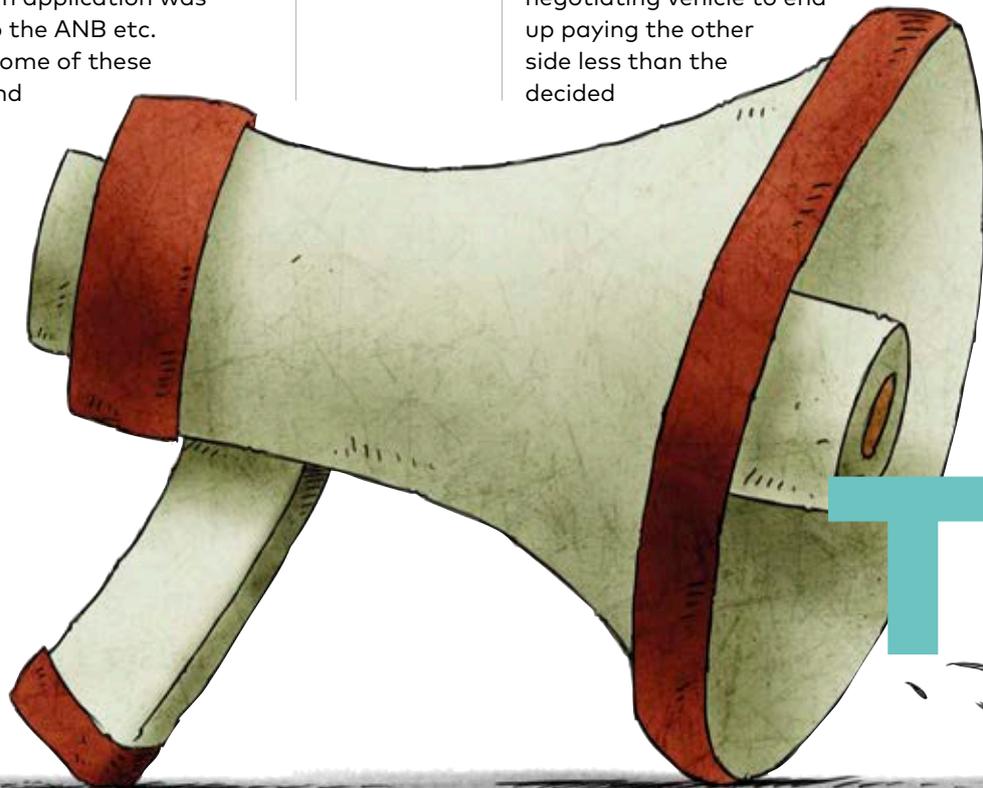


Len Bunton
FRICS FCI Arb,
HON FRIAS
SEC Group
Scotland

flimsy and you may say, 'So what? Let's just get on with it'. When I am advising clients, my advice is to dispose of the jurisdiction point and just recommence the adjudication but, in my view, it is incredible how many times the referring party will respond to the jurisdiction point with the request that the adjudicator does not resign. If there are no jurisdictional challenges, there are few grounds for resisting enforcement.

DEALS AND DECISIONS

The other issue I have seen emerging in the last three or four years is that even after the adjudicator's decision is issued in favour of the referring party, the respondent does not pay the decided sum and uses the adjudicator's decision as some sort of negotiating vehicle to end up paying the other side less than the decided



sum. I am not being critical, but this is just the way it is.

So, jurisdiction is a big issue in adjudication, and I wholly support Rudi Klein's position that the sooner adjudicators are able to decide on their jurisdiction, the better. There are provisions in the TeCSA Rules for this and it should be universally adopted as soon as possible.

BE PREPARED

I want to touch on the issue of preparing your case for adjudication. This does not happen overnight and there are too many contractors who rush into adjudication without having fully developed their arguments and submissions – that can be fatal.

I had a client on the phone recently who had received a pay less notice which had put a very big hole in the payment he was expecting. He was screaming down the phone: "I want to start an adjudication tomorrow."

After calming him down, we agreed on a reasonable period to get the show on the road. I understand the frustrations of people running businesses

where they are owed significant sums of money and they can't get that in their bank to keep the business

going, and they want to get in front of an adjudicator ASAP. But they have to be fully prepared before they commence the process.

So, given my lack of enthusiasm for adjudication, what are the options?

As I have hammered out in previous articles, do all you can to mitigate a dispute. Get the dates of your applications for payment agreed in advance, and stick to them; provide fully detailed and backed-up applications for payment to avoid money being stripped off; hound the other side for payment, if not made on time; keep on top of cash flow. Suspension remains your most useful tool if you are not paid by the final date.

POSITIVE STEPS

Regarding the increasing costs of adjudication, which is another issue that Rudi Klein has been very concerned about, I am attracted to the recent proposals from the RICS and TeCSA to have a low-cost scheme for adjudications relating to payment issues. I think this is a very positive move for the industry. However, that is only one aspect, and the other aspect is the cost of legal

“The challenges are wide, varied and imaginative – there is no crystallised dispute”



advisers representing parties. It is beyond my comprehension why parties engage lawyers to become involved in 'Final Account' disputes where the issues are purely measurement and valuation. There is absolutely no reason why a senior commercial manager and/or a commercial director of a construction organisation, cannot run and manage the process. Contractors should consider preparing the submissions and then pass to the advisers (not always lawyers) to ensure compliance with the procedure.

PROTECT YOURSELF

Finally, another anecdote – speaking to another client recently, he was due about £120,000 in respect of an interim application which was not paid by the final date for payment. He did a deal and accepted £105,000 on the basis of cash in the bank to pay the wages. If he had gone to adjudication, it would have cost him at least £20,000 of non-recoverable costs and he would have been hung out to dry for four months. That, sadly, is the state of the UK industry just now. I close by saying the best defence is don't get into a mess in the first place. ■

If you have any questions, email jen@buntonconsulting.co.uk



WHY MENTAL HEALTH IS everyo business

With issues such as stress, anxiety and depression having a growing impact on firms, charity **Mates in Mind** explains how you can support your workforce

Mental health is an issue that businesses in the UK increasingly need to consider.

However, it can be difficult for organisations to know how to take action over such a complex and often daunting challenge.

The charity Mates in Mind was set up to support firms of all sizes across the construction industry to recognise and improve their workers' mental health.

Recent reports show that mental ill-health is a common issue costing UK businesses a significant and tangible amount every year.

According to the Health and Safety Executive, 44% of all work-related ill health cases in 2017/18 were attributed to stress, depression or anxiety. What was more telling was that on average this amounts

Suicide rates among construction workers were more than three times the national average, and rates among building finishing trades, including plasterers, painters and decorators, were twice the national average between 2011 and 2015.

(Office of National Statistics, 2017)

to more than 25 working days' absence per case. In 2017, the Centre for Mental Health estimated the overall cost to UK employers of not addressing mental health problems to be almost £35 billion, or £1,300 per employee. For any business considering its bottom line, regardless of size, this adds up.

But with many small and medium-sized businesses, often involving family and friends, it's not just a case of the bottom line – it's also about knowing the impact this issue has on individuals and the people dependent on them.

However, in difficult situations, it can sometimes be hard for managers or owners to know where to start or what they should do.

The evidence suggests that three out of every five employees are experiencing mental health issues because of work. But this can be a complex challenge, which is why Mates in Mind was set up two years ago and has quickly become a leading industry charity. We support businesses across the UK to help their workforces' mental health.

Mates in Mind's approach provides employers with the necessary skills, clarity and confidence to raise awareness, improve understanding and enable positive

action to address the barriers that surround mental health at work. Our work with businesses is showing that this can be achieved through existing management, and businesses are often not starting from scratch. And because businesses are made up of people, each business which engages with us is provided with a dedicated Support Manager.

Regardless of where your organisation is in its mental health journey, Mates in Mind can provide the insight and expertise to help both organisations and individuals to understand how, when and where they can get support. We help businesses to structure this with



ne's

a clear plan, supported by skills and awareness training, communication tools, and advice and guidance.

IF YOU SUSPECT AN EMPLOYEE OR A COLLEAGUE MAY BE SUFFERING FROM MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS, WHAT CAN YOU DO?

In line with World Suicide Prevention Day 2019 in early September, we have produced a resource pack that can be downloaded from our website and contains some useful tools and tips for workplaces.

Below are a few general points to bear in mind:

- We are all individuals and therefore our experiences of mental ill-health are varied and different.
- Any conversation needs to be handled sensitively – it's important to think about the words you are using (e.g. simple, non-judgemental) and

where you are talking (e.g. finding a place where you both can be comfortable to speak).

- Be an active listener, and don't feel like you need to provide solutions. But you do need to encourage someone to speak to a professional if more help is needed.
- There may be many reasons why someone is struggling – work, financial worries, health issues affecting a loved one or a relationship breakdown are common factors. It may be appropriate to signpost someone to a support service like their line manager or encourage them to speak to their GP. It may also be useful to signpost them to their work's employee assistance programme, or an independent and confidential helpline such as Samaritans, B&CE or the Lighthouse Club. ■

MENTAL HEALTH IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY



1 in 4

will experience a mental health problem each year

(Mind)



£35

billion

was the overall cost of mental health problems to UK employers

(Centre for Mental Health, 2017)



73%

felt that their employers do not recognise the early signs of mental health problems (Randstad, 2017)



1/5

of UK employees who reported having a physical health condition also reported having a mental health condition

(Public Health England, 2019)



FIND OUT MORE

To find out more about Mates in Mind, you can reach us on 020 3510 5018, visit www.matesinmind.org or email support@matesinmind.org



Follow our tips and learn how to build your business's presence online

Managing yo So

Managing a social media account for your business can seem a daunting prospect. After a long day at work, posting an update online often becomes the first thing to drop off the to-do list. But a consistent online presence can bring many benefits to your business and is a great way to communicate with your customers. Here are some basic dos and don'ts to help you get started...

☑ DO MAKE SURE YOUR PROFILE IS UP TO DATE

Ensure the information on your page is up to date with all your current contact details. If a potential customer finds your account, you want to make sure it looks professional and makes it easy for them to get in contact.

☑ DO TRY TO POST CONTENT CONSISTENTLY

Maintaining a constant online presence is a good way to stay in people's thoughts and to help people recognise your brand. However, don't post content if you don't have anything to say – go for quality over quantity. If you are finding it has been too long between posts, share some relevant industry news.

☑ DO RESPOND TO QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

As your social media page becomes more active, more people will begin to engage with your posts. Make sure you respond to questions and comments – it helps show that you value your customers.

☑ DO SHOW OFF YOUR GOOD WORK

If you have a customer who was particularly pleased with your work, ask if they could write a testimonial or review on your social media page. If there is any particular project you are proud of, share it online with plenty of pictures, or even a video.



ur cial life

An illustration of a person in a teal sweater and dark pants holding a smartphone. To the left is a large blue smartphone screen showing a play button icon. Various social media icons are scattered around: a thumbs-up, a heart, a share arrow, and a rocket ship. A speech bubble with a heart icon and the number '125' is connected to the person's phone by a dashed pink line. The background is a light teal gradient with white horizontal lines.

⊗ DON'T MIX YOUR PERSONAL AND BUSINESS PROFILES

Keep your business profile strictly for business. Customers will follow your page to get business updates, not for information about your personal life.

⊗ DON'T IGNORE NEGATIVE COMMENTS OR REVIEWS

It is almost inevitable that any businesses with social media accounts will have to deal with customer complaints online at some point. Don't ignore or delete these comments. Be transparent and start a conversation with them. Provide a contact number or email address to help get the problem fixed offline.

⊗ DON'T POST ONLY TEXT

Text-heavy posts tend to get lost among the other noise on social media. Remember to post pictures or videos with your text to make your content more eye-catching, and don't be afraid to link your website or add contact details.

⊗ DON'T FORGET TO STOP AND ANALYSE

Take the time to see what works for your posts. Try to figure out what particular content your audience likes and what day of the week and what time they are most responsive. Experiment with different times, days and posts to see what works best for your business.

Are you looking to take on an apprentice plumber in Scotland?



SNIFE Training Services Ltd has the right tools to help you train the future fully qualified plumbing operatives that you will need.



REASONS TO HIRE AN APPRENTICE PLUMBER

INCREASED LOYALTY –

When you invest time and money training apprentices, they feel motivated, valued and grateful to join a skilled team. This increases the chance they'll remain with the business longer.

SKILL SWAPPING –

While you teach the apprentice the practical skills they need, the apprentice will bring back the most up to date methods and information gained from their training course.

THEY'RE ENTHUSIASTIC –

Apprentices are generally keen to get stuck in, prove themselves and learn as much as possible, bringing fresh enthusiasm to the business.

WHO WE ARE

SNIFE Training Services Ltd is the Plumbing Industry's Training Provider for plumbing apprenticeships in Scotland.

We deliver the Modern Apprenticeship in Domestic Plumbing & Heating SVQ Level 3 using a network of SQA Approved Colleges & Training Centres across Scotland.

WHAT WE DO

COSTS – Subject to available funding from Skills Development Scotland (SDS) we will meet the full cost of the College/ Training Centre Training Programme.

FINANCIAL INCENTIVE – A grant is available to the business at the end of the apprentice's 4th year, depending on achievement and available funding from SDS.

MONITORING – We monitor all entrants on the Training Programme and provide support to apprentices and employers.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

Once you have found an apprentice please contact us and request the Plumbing Apprentice Application Form which can be posted or emailed to you.

CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information on taking on an apprentice plumber please contact us on 0131 524 1245 or training@snife.org alternatively you can visit our website

www.becomeaplumber.org



ProZone

9 pages of in-depth and insider knowledge from the UK's premier plumbing and heating professionals



45

Winter warmer

Find out how to beat the threat of the big freeze by using solutions from hotun

Fuel in the future

How oil-heating systems can be converted to fit into a low-carbon future and help cut emissions

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Sprinkler skills

Sign up for training courses and learn how to install fire safety sprinkler systems

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Style and substance

Workwear trousers with maximum comfort and footwear to give you extra safety on site

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Appy customers

Hi-tech way to visualise how range of designer radiators could look as part of your next project

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Showing off

New-look showrooms packed with bathroom suites and heating ideas open their doors

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Basement hacks

The perfect products to create stunning conversions in the lower levels of a property

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Contact our team to showcase your business in *PlumbHeat's* ProZone.

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Securing a future for oil installers

Scotland and Northern Ireland's commitment to reach net zero emissions by 2045 and 2050 respectively means that we must move away from our dependence on fossil fuels.

The major changes required to achieve these targets may be causing fossil fuel heating installers – including the 9,000-plus oil heating technicians registered with OFTEC across the UK – to question where they will fit into a new, low-carbon future.

Reassurance is provided by the findings of recent independent, in-depth research, commissioned by OFTEC, which provides clear evidence that the transition for

oil installers need not be as far-reaching as some predict.

Rather than replace existing, trusted and reliable oil heating systems, it may be better to convert them to run on a new, low-carbon liquid fuel alternative to heating oil, with only minor modifications to equipment required.

Simply changing the fuel, rather than the fuel and the appliance, as previously favoured by the UK Government through the roll-out of electric heat pumps, would minimise cost and disruption levels for the 135,000 Scottish and 437,000 households in Northern Ireland which rely on oil heating. The sector's well-



Paul Rose,
CEO, OFTEC



To find out more about OFTEC's work, please visit www.oftec.org.uk

developed infrastructure would be retained and adapted, while the skills and expertise of manufacturers, fuel suppliers and installers would be harnessed and evolved, safeguarding crucial jobs.

The phased introduction of a sustainable biofuel, initially a 30% blend progressing to a 100% renewable fuel during the 2030s, provides the most cost-effective, practical and future-proof solution for consumers, government and industry alike.

Further field trials began this autumn and OFTEC will continue its work with government and industry to turn this compelling solution into reality. ■

A complete registration service for heating technicians



OFTEC competent person registration provides a range of benefits:

- Free technical support via phone, fax or email and regular updates
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- Free marketing material to help you win more customers
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Visit www.joinoftec.com or contact our registration team today:

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The solution to the freeze is a hotun

Heating season has begun and as households across the country fire up the boiler from its summer rest, some may find it isn't quite as eager to start work again as they had hoped, and the only solution will be to call in the experts.

If a plumber has been called out to get things going on a boiler or unvented cylinder, needing to invite them back once the temperatures plummet and it has mysteriously given up again can be a frustration.

Externally terminated pipework freezing over is one of the most common winter plumbing problems, be it condensate or relief valve discharge. While freezing of the condensate pipe can stop a boiler from working, the threat posed by a frozen relief valve discharge pipe is a critical safety issue.

If the relief valve discharge has been routed through the building to

pipework terminating outside and then freezes in cold weather, there is no way to determine if the relief valve has been active.

As part of a heating systems failsafe, it is crucial to be able to easily identify if a relief valve has discharged water. In the case of unvented cylinders, it is also a requirement of G3 regulations.



Using hotun saves time and money as well as cutting risk of frozen pipework



Russell Armstrong, RA Tech Managing Director

However, there is an alternative installation method using the hotun dry-trap tundish, which is compliant, saves time and money and completely removes the risk of frozen pipework.

The hotun is a compact, open-sided tundish that incorporates a unique and patented in-built non-return valve. For the first time, installers have a solution to route discharged water from a relief valve to an internal local drain or waste pipe in one product, instead of having to drill through the fabric of the building for an external route. The inclusion of an internal non-return valve also eliminates the risk of odours returning from the foul drain.

Provided the soil stack is rated to the appropriate temperature and flow rate for the discharge, hotun provides the simplest and quickest solution to terminate the pressure relief valve inside.

For boilers, combining the pressure relief valve discharge with the condensate also provides a single pipe-to-waste connection, ensuring compliance and significantly cutting costs by reducing the length of pipe required throughout the building.

Bringing the visible point of discharge into an accessible place inside an individual dwelling or unit also gives the installer an easy way to check for historical discharges as necessary.

A homeowner's worst nightmare is having no hot water on a chilly morning. Installing a hotun during repair work, installation or annual service safeguards against the cause of a breakdown being frozen, externally terminated pipework.

Simplifying previously complicated installations is why the hotun range of dry-trap tundishes have become hugely useful products for installers. Reducing the cost of materials, products and labour are dividends reaped not just by homeowners, but by installers too. ■



To find out more information, go to www.hotun.co.uk or you can call 01332 702 678.

Stretch your skills with fire sprinkler training

The British Automatic Fire Sprinkler Association (BAFSA) has already established there is a shortage of young people within the industry.

This means that focus is needed now to ensure the industry raises its profile to encourage and show those looking for job opportunities that the fire sprinkler industry is a career to look forward to.

The BAFSA is continuing to raise the awareness and profile of the national qualification for

fire sprinkler installers (Level 2 Certificate in Fire Sprinkler Installation).

And it's pleased to announce that delivery of the qualification now takes place in five locations across the UK, and at various times through the year. The qualification also supports the Industry Skillcard for Fire Sprinkler Installation.

The Level 2 competency-based qualification (Certificate in Fire Sprinkler Installation) is intended

to show employers, clients, contractors, insurers and the general public what a person has learned and can do as a result of that achievement.

You can take the nationally recognised qualification covering residential and commercial fire sprinkler installation. This course is designed for those who are

Learning to fit fire sprinkler systems can lead to new job opportunities

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Stay sharp with new knife range

Hultafors Tools has launched a new range of Snap-Off Knives for professional craftsmen and women.

With 13 different knives and four long-lasting precision blades, these all-round, ergonomic knives are designed and built to suit a wide range of jobs on site.

From industrial and warehouse applications to specialist work on site, they are the ideal choice for cutting boxes open, shaping plasterboard, trimming flooring and paring cables. Symmetrically

designed so that the blades can be turned over, they're adaptable for both left and right hand use so that left handed craftsmen and women can adapt the knife rather than their own usage. What's more, the blades are available in three widths of nine, 18, and 25mm, with different blends of sharpness and long life built in to suit regular hard work on site.



Getting more information on the Hultafors Tools product range is easy. Call the helpline on 01484 854 788 or check out www.hultafors.co.uk where you can download a digital catalogue.



entering the sector and for those who have less than four years' experience of installing sprinkler systems. The course is delivered in a day release or block release style, depending on college resources.

To achieve the IQ Level 2 Certificate in Fire Sprinkler Installation (QCF) the learner must complete a total of seven

mandatory units covering:

- communicating effectively in the workplace
- establishing effective working relationships
- management of resources
- understanding the fire sprinkler industry
- awareness of regulations in the fire sprinkler

- fire sprinkler installation and handover
- health and safety.

Candidates will require access to sprinkler systems as a portfolio of real work evidence is required as part of the qualification.

For those with more than four years of verifiable, checkable installer experience there is a different path to gaining the qualification, the Experienced Worker Route (EWR). This assessment programme consists of five days of practical assessment, a BAFSA Masterclass on legislation and regulation followed by a short multiple-choice test. ■

British Automatic Fire Sprinkler Association

bafsa

For more information, contact qualifications@bafsa.org.uk or visit the following links:
www.bafsa.org.uk/skills-qualifications/
www.bafsa.org.uk/courses-in-2017
www.bafsa.org.uk/course-dates
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With a range of new AllroundWork stretch trousers, there's plenty of flexibility for every professional to stretch their performance on site.

The men's trousers have a loose fit for a classic Snickers Workwear look and feel, with stretch Cordura for increased durability as well as improved ventilation and mobility.

The slim-fit women's trousers are designed to include wider hips and a narrower waist for a fashionable look with optimal comfort and freedom of movement built in. Check out the



designs – the optimal choice for anyone who needs to get their jobs done comfortably.

For more information, call the Snickers Helpline on 01484 854 788, download a digital catalogue at www.snickersworkwear.co.uk or email info@snickersworkwear.co.uk



Safe choice for comfort

Good safety footwear is part of a comfortable day's work on site – just like good working clothes and quality tools.

Combining maximum comfort and protection with a durable design, Solid Gear's Onyx is available as both a shoe and a boot. This EN-accredited footwear

integrates a seamless upper and Cordura reinforcements with a poured polyurethane midsole, a breathable footbed and rubber outsole for maximum grip. Metal-free protection comes from the fibreglass toecap and penetration board and the BOA Closure System distributes pressure evenly to ensure a glove-like fit.

For more information, visit www.solidgearfootwear.com or call the Hultaafors Helpline on 01484 854 788.



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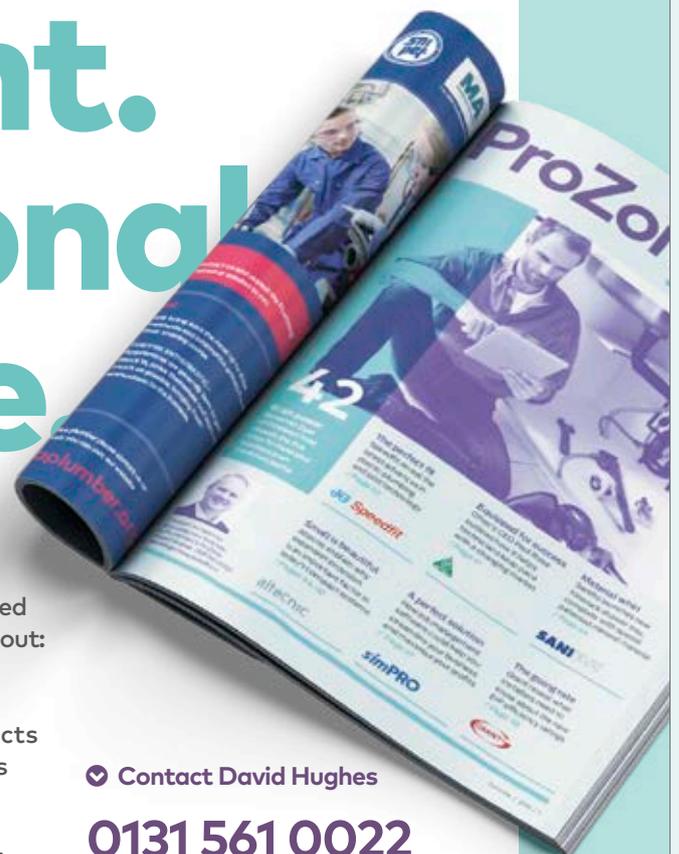
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- Other company news.

✔ Contact David Hughes

0131 561 0022
davidh@connectmedia.cc





Keeping your cool

Stelrad is stepping up its BIM involvement and broadening the range of products available.

The firm has released a free app to help those specifying Stelrad radiators be able to picture them in a real-life setting.

It can be downloaded from the App Store for Apple and Google Play for Android phones by searching for Stelrad 3D.

Stelrad has also added more of its sector-leading radiator products for domestic and commercial buildings – and they are now available to incorporate in designs.

Stelrad Radiators has embraced BIM – building information modelling – since 2014 and has been continually adding to its radiator products on BIMStore, ready for architects, engineers and contractors to integrate into their future projects.

That investment has continued, with the whole range of the UK's best-selling low surface temperature radiators being added.

This includes the latest design release, including its LST Standard Deco and LST i Plus Deco – both featuring its popular Deco horizontal-lined fascia to make the casings for the radiators even more aesthetically pleasing. Stelrad's

Stelrad's low surface temperature radiators are the ideal solution for heating that's safe and stylish

LST range is being widely specified for a host of end uses including hospitals, care homes and schools – anywhere where safe heating is essential and where vulnerable individuals may be living, working, playing or attending.

In addition to the LST range, the Softline Column and a range of other radiators have been added.

Specifying Stelrad radiators has never been easier. Architects and building designers simply select the product they want to use from

Stelrad's designs are a clever and colourful addition to commercial and domestic projects

BIMStore, 'drag it' into their design document and 'drop it' in place.

Stelrad's radiator products will be hosted at www.bimstore.co.uk and www.stelrad.com and are available for subscribers to download and utilise in projects.

The ability to utilise accurate 3D images of real products that provide an extremely accurate rendering of how that building will really appear offers huge benefits to both architects and to the building's owners and funders.

It's now possible to visualise a building, that hasn't moved off the 'drawing board', in its final state – and to switch finishes in real time, to include specified products that are on the system. ■



Stelrad
Radiator Group

Full details of the products available on www.bimstore.co.uk and the wider range for domestic and commercial use can be found at www.stelrad.com, or for further information email marketing@stelrad.com or call 0844 543 6200. Follow Stelrad on Twitter @Stelrad or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/StelradRadiators

Show and sell at Northern

Northern Heating has fully refurbished its showroom with an extensive refit and refresh.

The 100m2 site is packed with heating products, including classic and contemporary multi-fuel stoves and designer radiators. A free heating design service is available.

The firm has also launched a new bathroom showroom at their site in Aberdeen. The exciting new development has a collection of carefully selected bathroom suites, shower cubicles, furniture and accessories on display over 50m2.

Both showrooms have been designed to be valuable assets to SNIPEF members. ■



For more details, visit www.williamwilson.co.uk



New showroom has great range of multi-fuel stoves, radiators and other heating products

STOP THE WASTE

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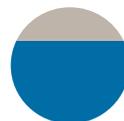
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Getting down to work

Make basement conversions simple with a range of clever solutions for waste water

Basement conversions are becoming increasingly popular, particularly in prime city and built-up urban areas. Lack of building space is one reason, as is the cost of moving.

Homeowners looking to maximise space in their current properties can often add more facilities in the basement than they can by extending into the loft, for example. Of course, such conversions can add value to a property as well.

A basement is also naturally closer to the main living areas and garden than a loft, so a kitchen diner with or without utility space is often top of the list when it comes to reconfiguring accommodation on the lower floors. The new room will usually open out into a garden space where there is plenty of light.

Builders and specialist conversion businesses are well apprised of the most efficient

methods of water discharge from the multiple appliances usually associated with modern basement kitchens including dishwashers, washing machines, sinks and even ice makers and wine fridges.

In most cases it will entail the use of a pump, or multiple pumps, that can take waste water away through small bore pipework.

Pumps are frequently the enablers for such projects as water can't travel upwards. They can also save the time, effort and cost associated with digging up concrete floors to lay new pipes.

Saniflo has a range of solutions that facilitate such projects. The Sanivite+, for example, is popular for installation in a kitchen island. Installed out of sight in a cupboard it can happily take grey waste from up to four appliances.

It is common to feature a cloakroom within a basement conversion and this too will require waste discharge. Saniflo is

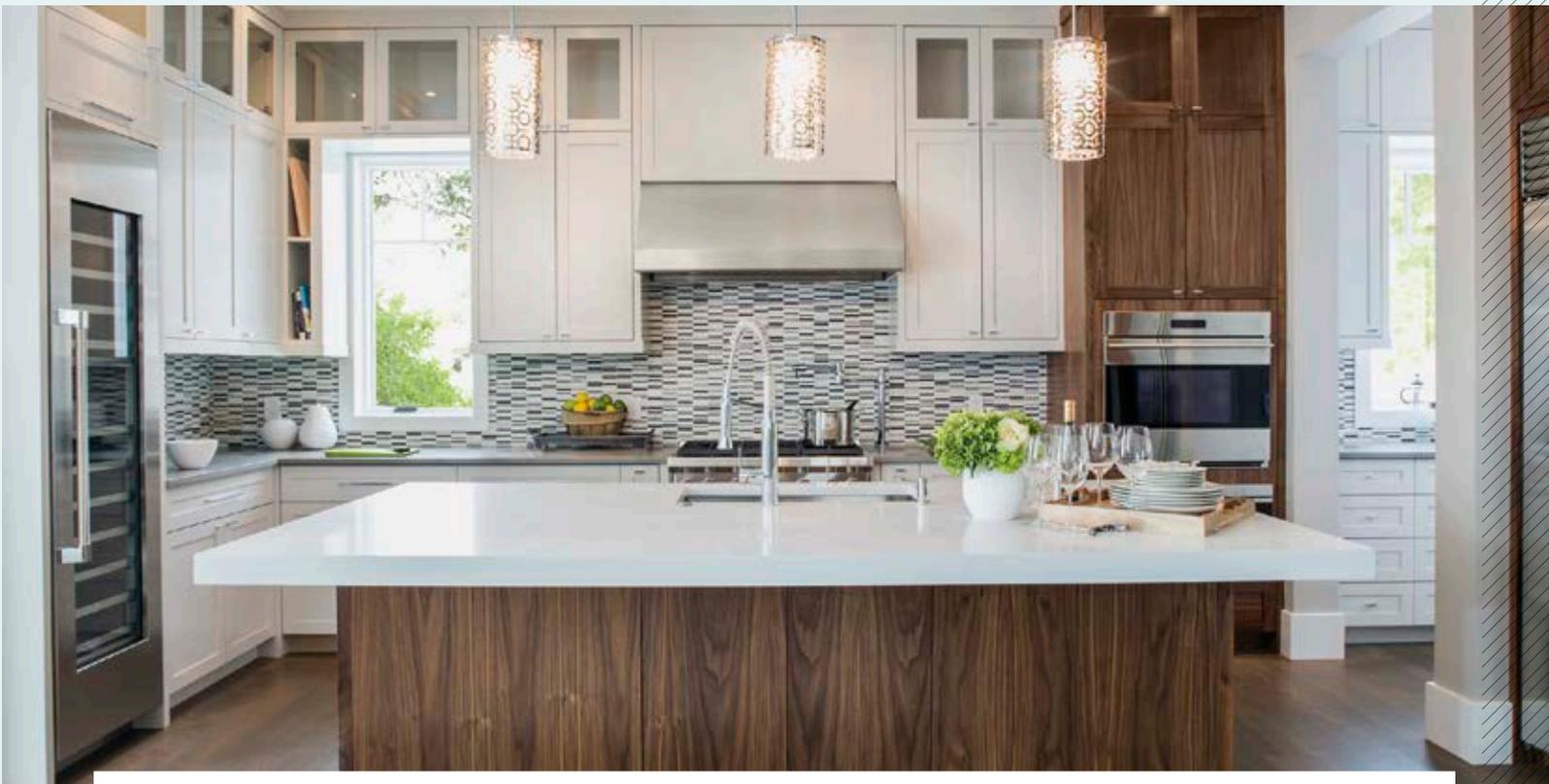


Sanivite+ is perfect for installing inside a kitchen island and taking away waste

famous for its range of macerators that can discharge waste from a single WC or from a WC, basin and shower. The Saniwall Pro Up is a popular choice in contemporary conversions with its built-in frame system designed to accommodate wall hung WCs. The Sanipack Pro Up is designed to be concealed behind demountable panels and can be fitted with wall hung and back to wall sanitaryware. ■

SANIFLO®

For more information on the wider range of Saniflo products that can facilitate basement conversions, please visit www.saniflo.co.uk or call the technical team on 020 8842 0033.



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5.5cm

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Low level shower tray, pump and waste



8cm

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12cm

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