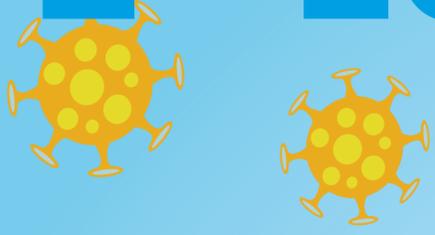




Summer 2020

PlumbHeat



Our new look

Revamped SNIPEF website launched and updated logo revealed



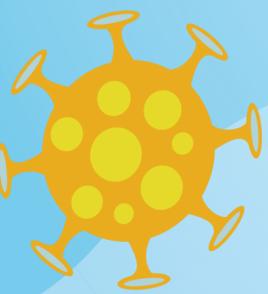
Back in business

How we've been supporting members through the restart



Sound advice

What you need to know about the rules on noise transmission



Lifting the lockdown

Helping you return to work safely as the industry adapts to life in the new normal



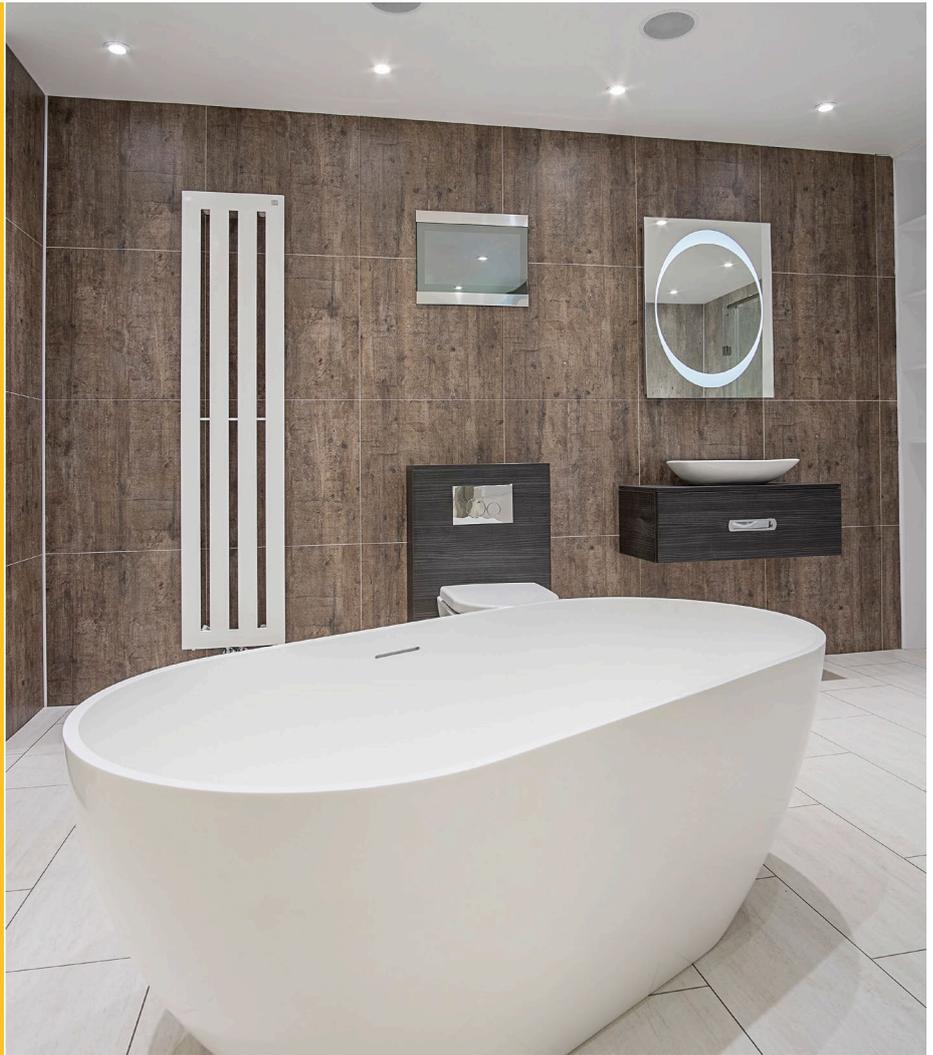
Opening times

Mon-Fri

7.30am-5.00pm

Saturday

8.00am-12.00pm



■ Free design service

Take advantage of our bathroom and kitchen design service where our design experts can make your bathroom or kitchen dreams a reality. Every design comes with a free no obligation to buy quote

■ Plumbing and Heating

Every Plumbstore branch stocks a vast range of plumbing and heating fittings and products available for collection or delivery

■ Showrooms

All of our nine branches host stunning bathroom display areas featuring up to date displays from leading brands like Roper Rhodes, Grohe and Vitra

Call or visit us:

Aberdeen

01224 891932

Edinburgh

0131 4423478

Galashiels

01896 754521

Bellshill

01698 744107

Fife

01383 427470

Inverness

01463 248579

Dundee

01382 831010

Glasgow

0141 3527220

Kilmarnock

01563 578866

Freephone: 0800 046 7979



Contents

Summer 2020



Join SNIPEF

SNIPEF members can access a range of services designed to help their business run more efficiently and profitably.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



Coronavirus

Click here for the latest information about the coronavirus and other helpful advice about dealing with the pandemic

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



SNIPEF Schemes

SNIPEF operates a number of approved plumbing and heating certification schemes to help raise standards throughout the industry.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



Need a Plumber

Using a SNIPEF member gives you peace of mind that you've chosen a reputable contractor with qualified operatives.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

18



30

Campbell keeps to the physical distancing rules



32

>> NEWS

- 06 The latest news from across the industry
- 08 Introducing the new SNIPEF logo

>> MEMBERSHIP

- 14 Meet one of our associate members
- 16 Membership Officer Andy's update

- 17 Find out how Business Assist can help you
- 18 The new-look SNIPEF website is launched

>> TECHNICAL

- 20 Water treatment in heating systems
- 22 Sound advice about noise transmission
- 24 News and updates from WaterSafe

>> TRAINING

- 25 Keeping apprentices on the right track

>> COVID

- 26 How SNIPEF has been helping our members
- 28 One member's safe return to work
- 30 The latest support from the CICV Forum

>> ADVICE

- 32 Rudi Klein on the retentions fight
- 34 Len Bunton discusses the chance for change
- 36 Insurance advice from Marsh Commercial

>> PROZONE

- 39 Explore seven pages of advice and ideas

Editor Cassandra Gowans
cassandra.gowans@snipef.org

Editorial Offices

Bellevue House, 22 Hopetoun Street,
Edinburgh EH4 7GH

Tel 0131 556 0600 ■ Fax 0131 557 8409

■ Email contact@snipef.org

www.snipef.org

Follow us @SNIPEFnews

Published on behalf of SNIPEF by
Connect Publications
Studio 2001, Mile End
12 Seedhill Road, Paisley PA1 1JS

Advertising Sales David Hughes
davidh@connectcommunications.co.uk

Design & Production Ryan Swinney
ryan@connectcommunications.co.uk

The views and opinions expressed in PlumbHeat are not necessarily those held by the Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation. PlumbHeat is circulated free to plumbing, heating and building contractors who are members of the Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation, and also to plumbing merchants, architects and surveyors.

Subscriptions Annual Subscription (4 issues) United Kingdom: £40
Overseas surface mail £30 Airmail (according to destination)

© 2020 Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation. All rights reserved.

Comment

FROM FIONA HODGSON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, SNIPEF

The challenges of the future

If recent months have taught me anything, it is that business, like life, is uncertain and just when we think we are in control, a new challenge arises which changes the goalposts and we need to re-prioritise.

The year 2020 started very much like any other year, with financial budgets set and plans made. After the long recession which followed the financial crisis of 2008, our sector had picked up and order books were looking good. All we needed to worry about was Brexit and the repercussions it might bring. How wrong we were! Brexit paled into insignificance when faced with the challenge of a pandemic.

The governments, just like the rest of us, were very much working in the dark and reacting to circumstances as they arose – this was not planned and there was no plan A, never mind a plan B. Guidance issued could be, and was, interpreted in so many different ways and running a business was almost impossible.

Construction was one of the industries hardest hit by the pandemic and one where many of the devolved nations took a different stance to the UK Government. While in England and Wales many plumbing and heating businesses continued to work, in Scotland and Northern Ireland the majority were closed, staff furloughed and only emergency work undertaken.

I am extremely proud of the way in which our members have adhered to the guidance issued by government and also the way in which our sector as a whole has led the support of frontline workers in supporting the daily delivery of essential services including hospitals, utilities and essential maintenance of care homes and vulnerable housing.

On 20 April, the Health and Safety Executive NI said that construction work could continue "if done in accordance with the PHA (Public Health Agency) and PHE (Public Health Executive) guidelines on hygiene and social distancing". It was

not until the 15 July that the construction sector in Scotland received the news it was waiting for – the move to Phase 4, which meant that close working could now take place, with appropriate PPE use if necessary. Returning to work however, would bring new challenges many of which would add time and money to already tight margins.

From the very beginning of lockdown, SNIPEF has worked with other like-minded organisations to support member firms, interpret guidance and provide employment advice. Health and safety advice has been an integral part of this, as well as producing Construction Operating Guidance to underpin Site Operating Procedures published by Scottish Government and also by the Construction Leadership Council (CLC). Further health and safety guidance, in the form of seven documents, has been produced to offer practical information on a range of subjects, including advice for non-essential domestic work.

In addition to the safety of the workforce, we need to ensure that there is a pipeline of work to provide much needed certainty to members and enable them to retain staff and commit to training.

As part of the CICV Forum, SNIPEF has been looking at ways in which our industry can help schools get back and how our high streets can be regenerated. We have been working with the Building Standards Division to promote certification and the Approved Certifier of Construction Scheme (ACCS) which has involved the production of an animation about



Fiona Hodgson,
Chief Executive,
SNIPEF

“From the very beginning of lockdown, SNIPEF has worked with other like-minded organisations to support member firms interpret guidance and provide employment advice”



certification and a webinar to be used with clients to highlight the benefits. Climate change targets set by the UK and devolved Governments present many opportunities for our sector and SNIPEF has been working with the Scottish Government to inform who we believe is competent to undertake the work, what skills will be required and how funding should be targeted to incentivise this sector. Unless the industry can see a clear pipeline of work, it is unlikely it will commit to the upskilling required.

Based on the work undertaken in Scotland, we also had a meeting with the Department for the Economy in Northern Ireland to establish how we can contribute to Northern Ireland's energy strategy.

The future supply Repair, Maintenance and Improvement (RMI) work is critical for our members and we believe that changes to VAT would help invigorate the market. Research is currently under way via funding from the Innovation Centre to establish how a VAT rebate

system might work as well as studies undertaken by FMB at a UK level on a reduction to the VAT rate itself.

We recently met with the Hydrogen Fuel Cell Association to establish closer links to ensure that our members are at the forefront of this technology and ensure that training is available to upskill those working in our sector.

It is a worrying time for many and the next few months will continue to bring boundless challenges testing us to our limits. We are already hearing of redundancies, business closures and clients looking for discounts in already agreed contracts or postponing or cancelling work. It will undoubtedly be a difficult time, but we are an industry with a future and one which has shown repeatedly that it can adapt and rise to the challenges put in front of it.

Whatever challenges remain, remember that you are not alone and SNIPEF is here to help wherever we can. Please keep engaged, keep informed and keep talking to us. ■



A step against payment abuse

In the last issue, I discussed the difficulties that cash retentions bring when it comes to payment terms. It is common in the industry for non-payment or late release and the UK Government found that small businesses are the ones that suffer the most hardship as a result.

Since then, we have asked the Scottish Government to introduce a 14-day payment period when the industry fully returns to work. We made it clear that the use of Project Bank Accounts (PBAs) are of benefit to our industry and that PBAs should be expanded in their use. The issue of retentions has remained a longstanding issue for the sector.

The recent decision of HS2 to support its supply chain across its rail contract by agreeing to PBAs for key projects in Phase 1 is welcomed by SNIPEF. By using PBAs, payment is quicker and more transparent for companies at all levels across supply chains. As payments are made from one pot, this means companies get payment faster as opposed to going through multiple tiers of contractors.

This is excellent news for our industry and is the result of many years of campaigning against payment abuse. The HS2 project will also generate an estimated 400,000 contracts across its supply chain and two thirds of these will be with SMEs. We hope that the acceptance of PBAs by such a flagship project will act as a model for all construction projects in the future.



Neil Hadden,
SNIPEF
President

“ Health and safety should be of paramount importance in the coming weeks and months”

As the industry slowly returns to work, we have been working to produce clear and practical guidance to help our members through the phased return. It is vital that we all continue to work together as the construction industry moves forward.

Health and safety should be of paramount importance in the coming weeks and months. It is positive to see members returning to work, but health and safety must remain a priority due to the uncertainty that Covid-19 brings. Close adherence to health and safety measures is more important than ever and SNIPEF is continuing to play a key role in the vital work being done by Scotland's Construction Industry Coronavirus (CICV) Forum.

Lastly, I would like to thank all of our members for their continued support and encouragement during these difficult times. We have been providing regular updates to keep members informed as the industry makes a steady recovery back into work. I wish every member and their family good health. Take care.

News

LATEST FROM AROUND THE FEDERATION

💡 INDUSTRY NEWS

Changes to the SNIJIB Grading Card Scheme

The Construction Leadership Council has announced some important changes which will affect the SNIJIB Grading Card Scheme with effect from 2020 across Scotland and Northern Ireland. These new rules will apply to existing cardholders and those wishing to apply to the Grading Scheme for the first time.

RENEWAL OF GRADED PLUMBER, ADVANCED PLUMBER AND TECHNICIAN PLUMBER GRADING CARDS

In line with changes in the Construction Leadership Council's criteria and in order to retain the industry recognised CSCS logo on SNIJIB Graded cards, individuals wishing to renew their Graded Plumber, Advanced Plumber and Technician Plumber cards must provide evidence of plumbing occupational qualifications.

From 1 January 2021, the SNIJIB will not be able to renew the SNIJIB/CSCS Graded Plumber, Advanced Plumber and Technician Plumber cards without either the SVQ Level 2 or 3 Certificate or City and Guilds Craft Certificate in plumbing.

Active registered plumbers wishing to renew their Grading card, who previously qualified under the historic 'Grandfather Rights', must achieve and submit plumbing occupational qualifications before the expiry of their current card if they wish to renew the SNIJIB/CSCS Grading card.

If these individuals cannot provide evidence of qualifications, the last opportunity to seek a SNIJIB/CSCS Grading card will be in December 2020 and the card will expire in 2025 (currently Grading cards have a five-year lifespan).

💡 CAMPAIGN

Celebrating a decade of safety

Gas Safety Week is celebrating ten years of keeping the nation safe.

This year's campaign runs from 14 – 20 September and thousands of

+ Website launch
We reveal our great new online look with even more advice and info / [Page 18](#)

+ Support in a crisis
How SNIPEF has continued to help members during the pandemic / [Page 26](#)

+ Time for change
Len Bunton on how the whole industry could start to work differently / [Page 34](#)



APPLYING AND RENEWAL OF THE PLUMBING RELATED OCCUPATION GRADING CARD

Individuals wishing to apply or renew their Plumbing Related Occupation card must provide evidence of plumbing-related qualifications at SVQ Level 2 Certificate or City and Guilds Craft Certificate.

From 1 January 2021, the SNIJIB will not be able to issue the SNIJIB/CSCS Plumbing Related Occupation card without evidence of occupational qualifications.

Active registered plumbing-related occupation operatives wishing to renew their Grading card, who previously did not require qualifications, must now achieve and submit occupational qualifications before the expiry of their current card if they wish to renew their SNIJIB/CSCS Grading card.

If a plumbing-related occupation operative cannot provide evidence of the necessary qualifications, the last opportunity to seek a SNIJIB/CSCS Grading card will be in December 2020 and the card will expire in 2025 (currently Grading cards have a five-year lifespan).

DOES THIS AFFECT YOU?

Please note that as of 2020, the SNIJIB will request copies of all qualifications.

This is in preparation for the criteria changes the Construction Leadership Council have set to retain the CSCS logo on the SNIJIB Grading cards. If you are concerned that these changes to the SNIJIB Grading Card Scheme will affect you or your employees, please get in touch to find out more by emailing info@snijib.org or calling **0131 524 1225**.

The rules covering Grading cards are about to change

organisations are supporting the event.

It creates a platform for the gas industry, consumer organisations and individuals to focus their communications on

gas safety in one week leading to a greater impact among the public.

Each year, the campaign creates a toolkit of materials, including social media content, articles

and images, to help spread the word about safety.

To find out how you can get involved, go to www.gassaferegister.co.uk/gassafetyweek



💡 SNIPEF NEWS

We are excited to introduce our new and improved SNIPEF logo. While our previous logo served us well, we felt that it was time for a refresh to better represent our organisation and the direction our industry is going in.

It has better readability and will be recognised instantly from a greater distance. The shorter text makes it sleeker and cleaner, while the vibrant colours are eye-catching to customers.

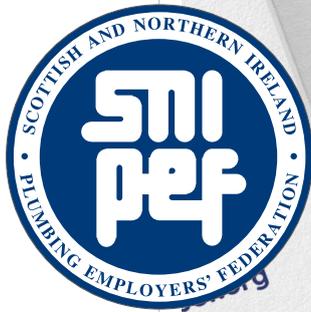
The logo stands out straight away and lets people know that members are trusted and professional.

We wanted a new user-friendly logo that our members can use on their websites, social media, print material and vans.

The revamped design is a simple horizontal format with a clean illustration. The blue water drop and green flame are to illustrate our industry's work with water and heating. We chose a green flame to represent green energy – something that is going to become increasingly important over the coming years, especially with the climate change targets set by the UK Government as well as the devolved administrations.

We went through a lengthy process to get the right logo, with many discussions and a lot of different designs being created before we finally settled on the finished look for our brand.

Alicia Allen, SNIPEF's Membership and Communications Manager, said: "There were some application issues with the old SNIPEF logo, so we took the opportunity with the launch of the new website to refresh it. The result is a simple



Bellevue House, 22
t: 0131 556 0600 (option 1)

SNIPEF
Plumbing and heating association

Andy Furnevel
Membership C

Say hello to our new logo

We've got an eye-catching new look which reflects our vision and values and will help the public instantly recognise our trusted, professional plumbers

“The logo stands out straight away and lets people know that members are trusted and professional”

design which we hope will be immediately identifiable with SNIPEF.”

Alongside the new logo is a new tagline. We have replaced 'Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation' with the shorter 'Plumbing and Heating Association'. We feel



“ We chose a green flame to represent green energy – something that is going to become increasingly important over the coming years, especially with the climate change targets set by the UK Government as well as the devolved administrations”



that this better represents the various occupations in our industry and shows the public who we are and what we do. The word 'association' reflects the way we bring together people for a joint purpose – we want our members to feel like a collective that

The new logo has a modern look and reflects our work with both water and heating

is encouraged by SNIEPF. Our Chief Executive Fiona Hodgson said: “This is an exciting time for SNIEPF, with both a new website and logo being launched.

“We are proud of our rich history and deep roots, but the new design better reflects who we are today and symbolises our dynamic future. It demonstrates our purpose, vision and values. I look forward to seeing the new branding being used by members.”

The logo change will be rolled out slowly, so please don't feel that you have to

update all your branding straight away.

The new design will soon be available to download from our website, but you can request it before then by contacting us at membership@sniepf.org

A set of brand guidelines explaining how to use the logo correctly and new van stickers will also be available on request. Over the next few months you will see other SNIEPF visuals aligning with our new look as we roll out the revamped design.

We hope you like the new logo as much as we do.



STAFF NEWS

Richard Graves retires from SNIPEF

SNIPEF Complaints Liaison Officer, Richard Graves, retired on 31 July.

Richard has been with the company for many years and his contributions and knowledge have been invaluable. Richard will be succeeded by Technical and Skills Officer, Mel Shepherd, below, who will take up the role.



INDUSTRY NEWS

SNIPEF welcomes HS2's PBA adoption

HS2 to support its supply chain by agreeing to use project bank accounts

The decision by HS2 to support its supply chain across its massive rail contract by agreeing to use project bank accounts (PBAs) in Phase 1 has been welcomed by SNIPEF.

The use of PBAs provides more transparent and speedier payments for companies at all levels of the supply chain.

Payments are made from one pot and do not have to cascade through multiple tiers of contractors.

Fiona Hodgson, Chief Executive of SNIPEF, said: "This is excellent news and something that the construction industry in Scotland has been calling for over many years. It is especially

welcome since the HS2 project will generate an estimated 400,000 contracts across its supply chain and that two-thirds of these will be with SMEs.

"It is our hope that the acceptance of PBAs by such a flagship project will act as an exemplar for all construction projects, major and minor, in future."

Fiona added: "The announcement is also, I believe, an acknowledgement of the hard work done by the Specialist Engineering Contractors (SEC) Group, of which SNIPEF is a member, which has been lobbying for PBAs over recent years."

The use of PBAs can help cashflow

MEMBER EVENTS

Further events cancelled

Due to Covid-19, we will not be hosting any of our planned events for the remainder of the year.

This includes the annual clay pigeon shooting and angling competitions, which would usually be

held in August. We were also hoping to host some regional events later in the year to touch base with members face-to-face and to introduce them to some of our associate members,

however, these have now been postponed until next year.

We are disappointed to cancel these events but the safety of our members and staff is our first priority. We are

looking forward to next year and, hopefully, all our planned events can go ahead. It's important to us to not only network with our members but for members to network with each other.

💡 SNIPEF NEWS

SNIPEF becomes a limited company

SNIPEF has made the change to become an incorporated company and move to a corporate structure.

SNIPEF has been an unincorporated association since 1923 when it was first established. In common with many organisations, it has been carrying out a review of its governance structures and, in particular, considering whether its unincorporated status remains appropriate in the modern age.

As an unincorporated association, SNIPEF is an aggregate of its individual members who are bound to

each other on the terms of the rules of the association. Unlike an incorporated company, SNIPEF is not a separate body with limited liability and as a result there is no particular protection for members.

SNIPEF's Council and Office Bearers felt it prudent to move to a corporate structure as the best way forward for the organisation. At the SNIPEF AGM on Friday 22 May 2020 it was agreed to wind down SNIPEF with its assets, undertaking and liabilities being

transferred to a newly created company SNIPEF Limited.

This will not affect your membership but does give significantly more protection to members, Council and Office Bearers. The existing SNIPEF Council and Office Bearers are the Directors of the new incorporated company and Fiona Hodgson as CEO has become Managing Director but with no voting power.

If you have any questions about this please contact us at membership@snipef.org

Our change will help protect you



SNIPEF

Plumbing and heating association



Legionella Risk to Re-opening Businesses

During the COVID-19 pandemic many businesses, schools and colleges have been closed. Water services may have been left at a standstill and become stagnant, increasing the risk of Legionella developing in the systems.

Many businesses may not be aware of these potential risks.

Plumbing and Heating Engineers

Why not undertake the BPEC Legionella Cold Water Risk Assessment and Disinfection Training Programme and you could identify these risks, carry out risk assessments and offer courses of action for control and prevention.

Find out more on BPEC's website at www.bpec.org.uk

Are you a training centre interested in offering this course?

Please contact BPEC for further information. Centre approval can be undertaken remotely.



Industry Leading Provider of Qualifications, Assessments, Short Courses and Learning Materials

simPRO



Take control of your plumbing and heating business

- ✓ Gain full operational visibility
- ✓ Streamline processes
- ✓ Connect the office and field
- ✓ Improve first time fix rates
- ✓ Reduce operating costs

Book a free consultation

simpro.co.uk

0800 622 6376



💡 IN MEMORIAM

Tributes to Glasgow Association ex-President Gerard Woods

Gerard Woods, a SNIPEF Past President of the Glasgow Association, sadly passed away in May aged 90. Gerard established his G Woods plumbing business in 1960, which his son Gerard Jnr now runs as a family firm with his two sons, Tony and Michael.

Gerard Snr's last wish was to raise money for Alzheimer Scotland due to the support they provided to him and his family when his wife Anne was diagnosed with the disease at age 58. Gerard asked for

any donations at his funeral to go directly to Alzheimer Scotland's Paisley base.

Gerard Jnr said: "My father was a lovely man and looked after her like a true gentleman. We set up a JustGiving page and its already up to around £1,800. We'd love to get that total to reach over £2,000 to show how much we appreciate everything they did for our family".

To donate, visit the Just-Giving link at www.justgiving.com/fundraising/woods-family-paisley

💡 CAMPAIGN

Petition on payments

SNIPEF is urging members to back a campaign to ensure that rules on payment are being adhered to.

A petition has been launched calling on the Scottish Parliament to make sure the 30-day supply chain payment policy for

government work is complied with. The time limit is meant to prevent contractors from being forced to wait unacceptably long periods for payments and to protect their cashflow.

But the petition claims there has been a lack of

Survey examines gender split

The British Pump Manufacturers Association (BPMA) – the organisation which represents the business interests of UK and Irish suppliers of liquid pumps and related equipment – has recently surveyed its members to better understand how the organisation can help and encourage companies to attract and keep more women engineers.

The Office of National Statistics data shows that women currently make up 25.6% of those employed in the manufacturing sector.

This figure has grown quite considerably over recent years, but with women making up at least 50% of the total UK workforce, there is still improvement to be made in the engineering world.

The BPMA sent questionnaires to a cross-section of its member companies, asking for them to be

completed by female employees. The results revealed that the key drivers for women entering a career in engineering are a desire to solve problems and learn new things, as well as having an interest in knowing how things work and also following in family members' footsteps.

Everyone who participated in the survey agreed that engineering is still a male-dominated industry.

The BPMA survey highlighted the fact that it's important that the pump industry and wider engineering sector lets women know that they can make a difference. Women have much to offer and there is plenty of room for skilled, trained professionals, regardless of gender.



Number One for Plumbing & Heating Supplies

Welcome back!

We've been working hard to make sure all our customers get the service and experience they've come to expect from William Wilson. We've fully complied with Scottish Government guidelines and introduced many new protocols which will help keep our colleagues and customers safe.

We look forward to welcoming all our customers as we begin to return to more normal methods of working.

William Wilson

PLUMBING • HEATING • BATHROOM • SUPPLIES

- ABERDEEN 01224 877522
- GLASGOW KINGST. 0141 418 2611
- AYR 01292 286381
- GLASGOW STH. ST. 0141 434 1520
- AVIEMORE 01479 811567
- INVERNESS 01463 237391
- CUMBERNAULD 01236 868710
- INVERURIE 01467 629853
- CUPAR 01334 655700
- KIRKCALDY 01592 653295
- DUNDEE 01382 880044
- KIRKWALL 01856 871282
- EDINBURGH 0131 657 5151
- PERTH 01738 638323
- ELGIN 01343 543181
- PORTREE 01478 612577
- FORT WILLIAM 01397 705375
- STORNOWAY 01851 704046
- FRASERBURGH 01346 514474
- THURSO 01847 891685

www.williamwilson.co.uk



monitoring to make sure it is being followed. It states: "The policies are a really good idea. It was the wish of Alex Salmond and Nicola Sturgeon that fair payment should be complied with, yet it appears no one has consistently audited this".

The petition asks people to add their name if they agree that "the 30-day supply chain payment for government work should be audited to ensure it is being adhered to".

Supporters have until 29 September to sign up online at bit.ly/2YwwCXg

Meet a member

In our latest personal profile, we catch up with one of our associate members, Russell Armstrong, Managing Director at RA Tech UK Ltd

HI RUSSELL, TELL US ABOUT YOUR COMPANY.

The company was formed in 2014 after I invented the hotun tundish, the world's first in-tundish water detection, temperature-sensing, audible and visual alarm system. The company was formed with sales processes put in place and all other activities that are needed to form a company structure.

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE WITHIN THE COMPANY?

I am the Managing Director, and inventor responsible for marketing, sales, research and many and any other roles that are required to help steer the ship.

HOW DID YOU BECOME INTERESTED IN THIS TYPE OF WORK?

I was working on a plumbing project for a client who required an unvented under counter water heater to be connected to a macerator. I needed a product with a visible point of discharge that provides backflow preventions so as not to contaminate the wholesome water in the water heater and to stop smells coming back up from the macerator. At that time, I could not find a single product solution, so I took the inspiration and invented what

is generically called a dry trap tundish. It is the only dry trap tundish to have open sides and be a WRAS-approved air break to drain designated product.

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

I started out on a drawing board for a ductwork manufacturer, a year after I passed my OND in building services design. I joined a major mechanical and electrical design consultancy, Oscar Faber, and went on to gain my HND in HVAC (design) Building Services qualification.

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

Apart from inventing hotun and having some major sales successes (selling £1.2 million worth of close controlled air conditioning units into a Canary Wharf project) my best remembered project was as an apprentice project manager, designing the HVAC system for a nuclear bunker. For obvious reasons I can't say what its intended use was. There were so many technical challenges to

QUICK FACTS

NAME: RA Tech UK Ltd

BASED: Nottingham

WEBSITE: www.hotun.co.uk

Russell has won a string of awards for the hotun



Russell's quick-fire questions

COFFEE OR TEA?

Both, depending on the time of day

SWEET OR SAVOURY?

Almost 100% savoury

FAVOURITE FILM

The Shawshank Redemption

LAST THING YOU READ?

PlumbHeat magazine!

WHICH SUPERPOWER WOULD YOU CHOOSE TO HAVE?

Flying

MORNING PERSON OR NIGHT OWL?

Night owl

FAVOURITE HOLIDAY DESTINATION?

My parent's villa in Portugal, peaceful and beautiful and great cycle riding

DREAM CAR?

Lamborghini Aventador in yellow



“My best remembered project was as an apprentice project manager, designing the HVAC system for a nuclear bunker”

and just before the point of succeeding, I was thinking, why can't I remove this easily? My next thought was, ah there is pressure behind it. At just the time of realising the consequences of 'pressure behind it' (ie the pipe was live), I succeeded in removing the end stop to get a jet of water straight into my face, then I ran to get it isolated in double-quick time. I never made that mistake again.

WHAT ARE YOUR AMBITIONS FOR THE FUTURE?

Having pioneered the hotun tundish into the industry, which has now become an industry-standard method of installation, I am about to launch another product that

will once again revolutionise the way that PRV discharges are noticed. Moving from a passive system (visual only) to an active alarm, audible and visual. I can see why no one has done it before but we have now developed the technology to provide an effective solution.

WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE ABOUT THE INDUSTRY?

I would want to change from a 'you can't do it that way' view (because we have never done it that way before) to a 'let's see if this is fit for purpose' view and look to see how something could work rather than reject it before doing all the good research.

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

Being part of the Scottish Federation shows our commitment to help and support the industry and installers working north of the border. It also gives RA Tech a direct line of communication with the technical team at SNIPEF as well as being able to chat with the rest of the team. ■

overcome in creating an uncontaminated environment.

WHAT IS YOUR FUNNIEST PLUMBING MOMENT?

Fighting to get a stop end push fit fitting off a cold pipe, thinking that it was isolated but not having made sure that it actually was. I kept on trying to remove the fitting

Russell with his invention

NEW MEMBERS

- HTC Mechanical Services Ltd

- Vaillant Group Ltd
- Ultimate Gas and Plumbing Services Ltd

- M F Heating & Plumbing Ltd
- Enviroliance Limited
- West Energy Services

- McMurdo Plumbing & Heating Ltd
- Daikin UK Ltd

Andy's update

By Andy Furnevel,
Membership Officer,
SNIPEF

SNIPEF Membership Officer
Andy Furnevel tells us how he's
been getting on during Covid-19

I am pleased that many member companies are now starting to get back to work and it must be a sense of relief for both employers and employees. With that comes a new range of issues, including health and safety regulations, delayed projects, lack of productivity and new costs to consider. Just remember that you are through the toughest times and know that SNIPEF is on hand for you whenever you need help or guidance.

LOCKDOWN EXPERIENCE

Living on my own during the pandemic has been a challenge and thankfully I have a garden to keep me occupied. I have

been able to paint the fence, jet wash the paving and weed the grass, among many other things I wouldn't normally get up to. My role within SNIPEF is home-based and this usually means that four days of the week I'm on the road and I also stay away from home on an average of five weeks per year. While I am thankful for the technology which keeps me in contact with members, I do miss the travel and face-to-face appointments.

HELPING MEMBERS

During the many telephone conversations I've had during the pandemic, I have been able to help SNIPEF members get the information they need on a range of services and benefits, along with details of the Government Job Retention Scheme and what this means for our members. I would encourage you to visit our website and, in particular, the members' section which is regularly updated, for relevant guidance and information regarding Covid-19.

FUTURE

I would love for life to be how it was pre-Covid-19 and I'm looking forward to getting back on the road visiting members and potential new members. We were hoping to run more local events for members this year but unfortunately these will have to be postponed till next year.

The events were to be formatted along the lines of a 'Pie and Pint' evening. The informal events would also have been open to Associate Members and having experienced the Kilmarnock Association Pie and Pint night over the last three years, they are very worthwhile. It would be great if we had three or four of these nights along with our sporting days on the go in 2021 and I'm always open to suggestions for other events if you have any.

GET IN TOUCH

Remember you can follow me on Twitter @SNIPEFandy where I will announce my plans and if you would like a membership update or have any questions then please call me on **07801 741 346** or email on **andy.furnevel@snipef.org** I am here to support you through this difficult time. Stay safe and see you soon. ■





Fife College
Training & Development

National Gas Training and Assessment Centre

- Fully equipped workshops offering Domestic, Commercial/Industrial and Commercial ACS training
- Call now to enquire about course dates and prices

business.fife.ac.uk
0344 248 0134
gas@fife.ac.uk

**Based in
Dunfermline, Fife**



Make the most of your SNIPEF membership with the online health and safety service from Xact

Business Assist

We believe that all SNIPEF members should have access to competent support, to assist them in the many managerial functions required to operate an organisation. The support should be accessible at all times, provide value to the organisation and save the time and effort of having to do the work internally. To help with this, Xact provides SNIPEF members with Business Assist, which is an online health and safety service that gives:

- Sector specific guidance
- Risk assessments & RAMS packs in all relevant areas
- Template documentation relevant to your business.

This service is here to provide support where you need it most. Housed within its Mercury Platform, Xact's online Business Assist offers a simple and cost-effective approach to managing health and safety compliance. It is designed to provide businesses with a robust and proactive service to minimise their risk of claims and disputes.

As part of your membership, SNIPEF members will get:

- Unlimited access to the sector-specific web portal
- Online health and safety assistance including the full range of sector-specific risk assessments with guidance notes on completing them, detailed specimen action plans and sections on food safety and work equipment
- Ongoing support – the alerts service highlights forthcoming changes in



legislation and approved codes of practice. The website is continuously updated to reflect changes in legislation and best practice to ensure compliance at all times and new legislation will always be highlighted in advance.

The online service has step-by-step guides which deal with all issues, including:

- **Getting Started:** This area contains all of the general information required on health and safety and provides an introduction to:
 - key legislation
 - key activities
 - required competency
 - enforcement of health and safety.
- **Premises:** Provides detail on all subjects relating to the occupation of your premises, including guidance and documentation on:
 - fire
 - electricity
 - legionella
 - asbestos.
- **People:** Provides all relevant

The online service is available to all SNIPEF members

information on subjects relating to your employees and subject matter and documentation on:

- young people and apprentices
- foreign workers
- working time
- alcohol and drugs in the workplace
- first aid
- lone working
- stress and mental health.

● **Risk Planning:** This section focuses on business continuity, the foresight needed for disaster planning and planning for continuity if you lose a key piece of equipment, person, facility or can't operate as normal. It provides:

- risk management and disaster recovery guidance
- business continuity templates and plans.

● **Work Equipment:** What you need to know in relation to hazards related to equipment used on-site, namely:

- abrasive wheels
- hot work, welding and cutting
- knives and blades
- lifting equipment
- noise
- vibration
- personal protective equipment
- pressure equipment.

● **Procedures:** Information on activities carried out as part of your profession namely:

- driving
- manual handling
- accident investigation and reporting
- hazardous substances and COSHH
- infection control
- working in confined spaces
- working at height.

All of these topics are supported by a detailed A to Z and easy to use search facility.

Finally, the service also provides an Alerts System which updates you when:

- The website is updated to reflect changes in legislation.
- News stories relevant to your sector are published. ■



Introducing our new look

The SNIPEF website has been transformed with a revamped design that makes it even easier for you to find all the advice and information you need

We're thrilled to reveal our new-look website, packed with even more information and advice for our members.

Digital resources have become increasingly important throughout the coronavirus pandemic as more people turn to online sources of help.

Our new site is easier to navigate so it's simpler for you to quickly find the support you need – with a special section on advice for dealing with issues around Covid-19.

SNIPEF CEO Fiona Hodgson said: "I am delighted to announce the launch of our website. It is long overdue and will provide our members and the general public with easy access to relevant and up to date information specific to our industry. It offers our members an enhanced user experience and better reflects a modern organisation."

The revamped site is mobile responsive, meaning you can check in with us wherever you are by using your smart phone.

SNIPEF Membership and Communications Manager Alicia Allen said: "This project required a complete revamp of the design and content of the website. We are hopeful that our members and non-members, both contractors and members of the public, will find this new website easy to use, with all the information

at their fingertips. One of the major issues with our old website was it wasn't mobile responsive. With this new website, all users can access it on their smart phones and receive the exact same experience as they would by using a computer."

The clean and modern design is sleeker with a fresh look that shows off our new logo and makes it easier for you to find what you're looking for.

The site includes all the vital information and guidance you'd expect from SNIPEF, as well as some great new features.

There's a members-only section giving you extra support, as well as pages where the public can learn more about why they can trust our members.

It's also the place to find out about all the latest events and training courses.

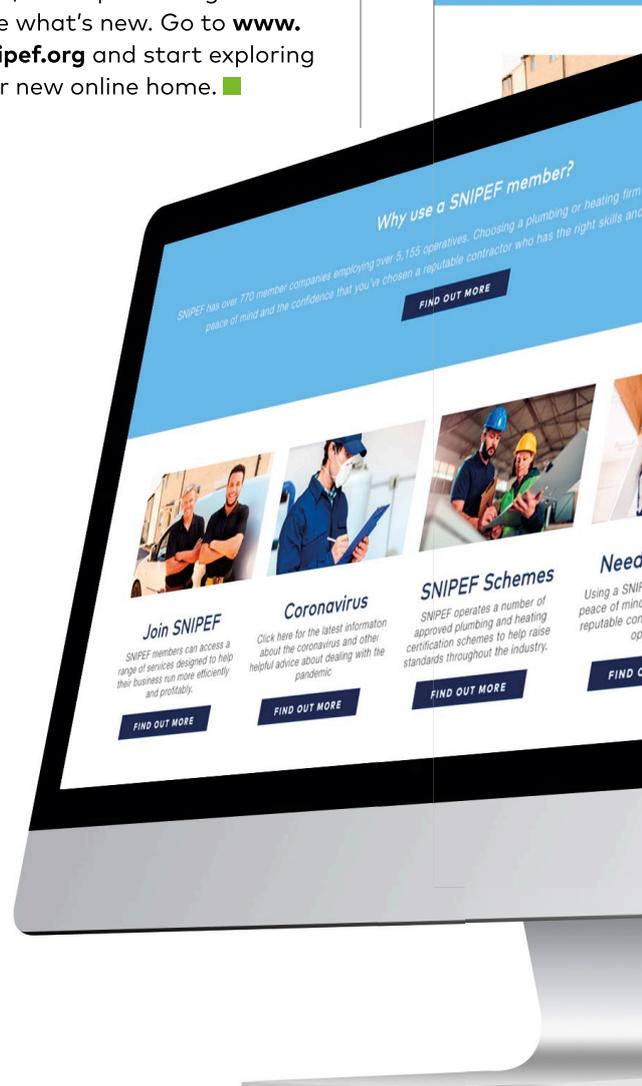
It covers information on the Approved Certifier scheme we run and how we're helping raise standards in the industry.

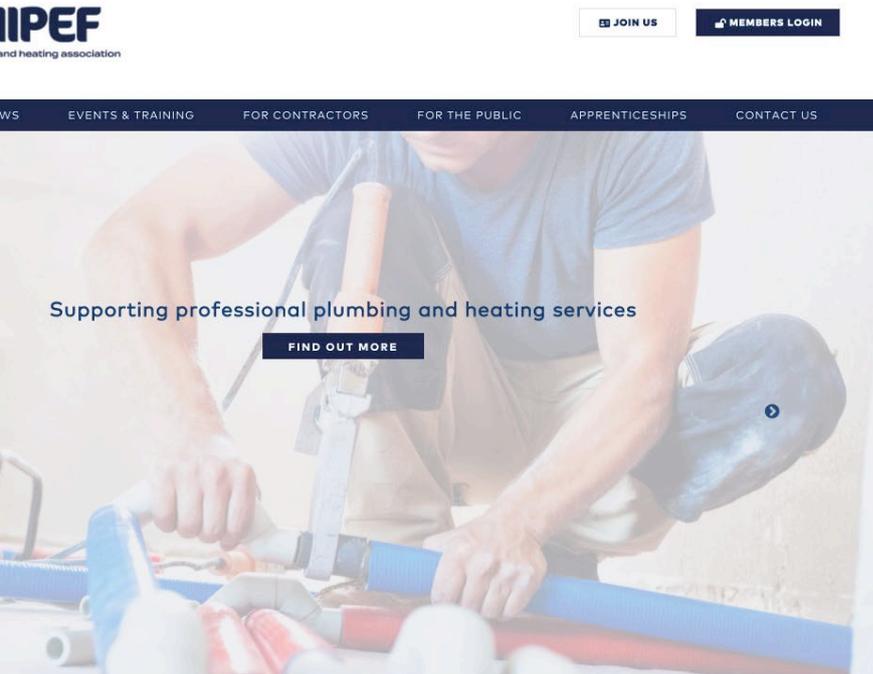
And you can find guidance on a wide range of employment issues, from holiday and sick pay to case studies explaining how to hire new workers.

Our associate members are also included in a special directory, and there's a selection of exclusive deals and discounts for members. Plus, there's all the information

you need to know about apprenticeships, whether you're an employer looking to take on a trainee or a potential plumber starting a new career.

We'll be adding new sections as we continue to develop the site, so keep checking back to see what's new. Go to www.snipef.org and start exploring our new online home. ■

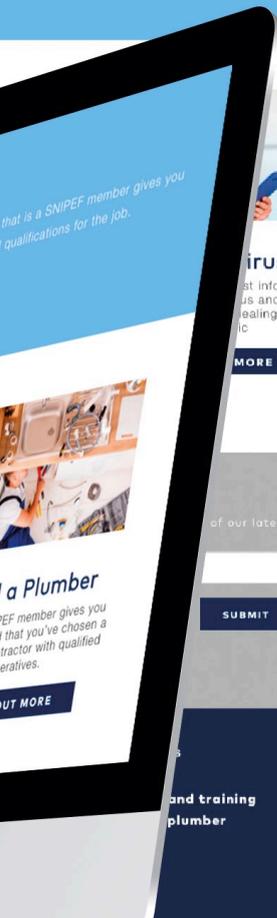




Why use a SNIEPF member?

Member companies employing over 5,155 operatives. Choosing a plumbing or heating firm that is a SNIEPF member gives you the confidence that you've chosen a reputable contractor who has the right skills and qualifications for the job.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



[MORE](#)



SNIEPF Schemes

SNIEPF operates a number of approved plumbing and heating certification schemes to help raise standards throughout the industry.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)



Need a Plumber

Using a SNIEPF member gives you peace of mind that you've chosen a reputable contractor with qualified operatives.

[FIND OUT MORE](#)

of our latest

[SUBMIT](#)

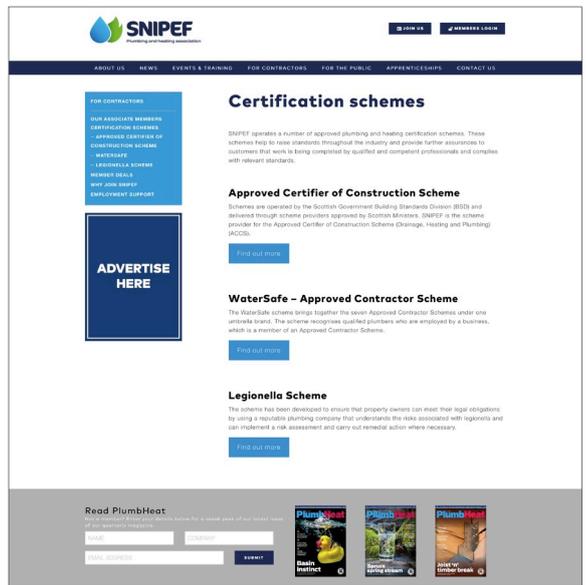


About us

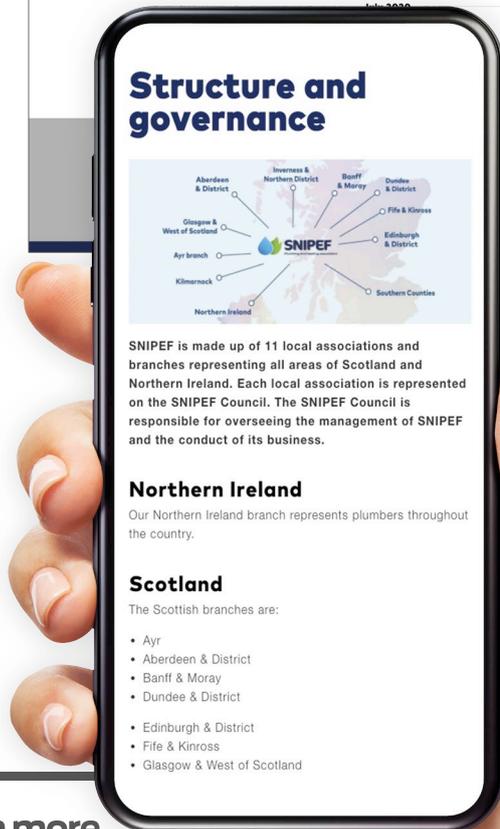
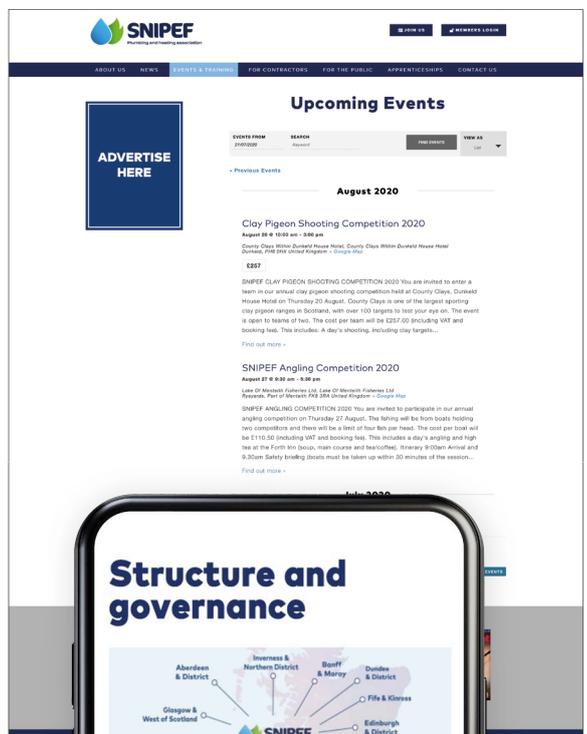
- Who we are
- Structure and governance
- Our Associate Members

Join SNIEPF

- Why join us
- Why use a SNIEPF Member
- Training Courses
- Apply to join



The new site is packed with information



Structure and governance



SNIEPF is made up of 11 local associations and branches representing all areas of Scotland and Northern Ireland. Each local association is represented on the SNIEPF Council. The SNIEPF Council is responsible for overseeing the management of SNIEPF and the conduct of its business.

Northern Ireland

Our Northern Ireland branch represents plumbers throughout the country.

Scotland

The Scottish branches are:

- Ayr
- Aberdeen & District
- Banff & Moray
- Dundee & District
- Edinburgh & District
- Fife & Kinross
- Glasgow & West of Scotland

“Digital resources have become even more important during the coronavirus pandemic as more people turn to online sources of help”

Our Technical and Skills Manager, **Martyn Raine**, talks to Richard Crisp, Head of Chemistry at Fernox, about BS 7593 and water treatment in heating systems.

Keeping it clean

AS THIS BRITISH STANDARD IS DEEMED 'BEST PRACTICE', IS IT A REQUIREMENT THAT I FOLLOW IT IN ALL SITUATIONS?

The guidance outlined in BS 7593:2019 is not a legal requirement. However, it is considered best practice for a reason.

As you will know, when water in the central heating system and the metal pipework come into contact, corrosion can occur. Eventually, corrosion can lead to a build up of sludge and scale, which then settles in radiators (leading to cold spots) and causes blockages in pipework – making the system far less efficient.

This inevitably results in the boiler (no matter how new) having to work harder to heat the home, which means key boiler components such as the heat exchanger or pump are at risk of damage. In the worst-case scenario, complete system breakdown occurs.

Complying with BS 7593:2019 in all situations and adopting a best practice approach to central heating system maintenance will ensure that these issues are prevented and system efficiency is maintained.

HOW MUCH MORE EFFICIENT CAN A TYPICAL HEATING SYSTEM BECOME WHEN THE WATER IS TREATED AND THE SYSTEM IS PROTECTED BY AN INHIBITOR AND A MAGNETIC FILTER?

If a heavily sludged and dirty system is cleaned using a good quality cleaner – and that level of cleanliness is maintained by dosing with the high-quality corrosion inhibitor – gas savings of up to 15% can be achieved every time you heat up a room. The inclusion of an in-line system filter further protects the boiler against damage from any circulating debris and, in combination with chemical water treatment, maintains optimum efficiency and extends the lifespan of the system.

WHEN DETERMINING THE MOST SUITABLE METHOD TO CLEAN, TREAT AND PROTECT A HEATING SYSTEM, WHERE DO I GET THIS INFORMATION?

The BS 7593:2019 standard itself is of course the best source of information on what to do. However, when you are out on site, this might not be the most practical solution. Fernox has taken the main messages from the standard and relayed them in easy to



“The BS 7593:2019 standard itself is of course the best source of information on what to do”



By Martyn Raine, Technical and Skills Manager, SNIPEF

digest formats on our website, with handy 'how to' guides and videos.

IS IT OK TO USE A TYPICAL CENTRAL HEATING INHIBITOR IN HEATING CIRCUITS GENERATED FROM A HEAT PUMP?

Yes, this type of inhibitor will be suitable to treat heat pump heating circuits, provided that no frost protection is required. Biocide should be used in conjunction with inhibitors to prevent bacterial slimes, algae and other biofilms forming and causing blockages and potential health hazards.

The Fernox five step approach to professional compliance



Richard Crisp and advice from Fernox on central heating systems

temperatures of 60°C or above, thermal disinfection occurs and therefore microbiological contamination and biofilms don't tend to be an issue in traditional heating systems (wall hung boilers). Dosing low temperature, underfloor heating systems with a biocide will prevent the reoccurrence of jelly-like deposits and keep systems working at optimum efficiency.

HOW OFTEN SHOULD INHIBITOR LEVELS IN HEATING CIRCUITS BE CHECKED? IS THIS THE SAME FOR ALL DOMESTIC BUILDINGS?

BS 7593:2019 recommends testing all domestic central heating systems during the annual boiler service. An annual test of the system water will tell you whether the correct levels of inhibitor are present. In addition, every five years you should either re-dose with inhibitor or conduct a full laboratory analysis of the system water (and re-dose with inhibitor if required).

IS THERE A RECOMMENDED PERFORMANCE STANDARD FOR ALL CHEMICALS USED TO CLEAN AND PROTECT HEATING SYSTEMS?

Inhibitor products should be certified by an industry approved body such as the NSF (formerly BuildCert) to comply

with Building Regulations, Part L. There are currently no industry standards for testing system cleaners and so supporting accreditations or manufacturing quality standards used by premium brands may guide purchasing decisions.

CAN I USE TOO MUCH INHIBITOR?

Putting too much inhibitor in a central heating system is not going to do it any harm. However, issues do arise if systems are underdosed as it could mean that sludge and debris are still able to form.

To prevent this, always calculate the quantity of chemicals needed for each individual system.

DOES INHIBITOR HAVE A LIFE SPAN?

If inhibitor levels are correctly maintained in line with BS 7593:2019, then the system will be protected throughout its lifetime. Always conduct your annual system tests to check that the correct levels of inhibitor are present – and, if not, make sure you re-dose.

HOW CAN I CONTACT FERNOX FOR MORE INFORMATION?

Call the team on **0330 100 7750**, contact your regional Fernox sales representative or visit **www.fernox.com** ■

Where frost protection is required, and for ground-source heat pumps with pipework in the ground, there are products available that have been specifically designed for this type of application.

WHY DO LOWER TEMPERATURE HEATING CIRCUITS REQUIRE BIOCIDES?

As heat pumps tend to operate below 50°C, they are at higher risk from bacterial slimes, algae and other biofilms – which can cause blockages and result in a sluggish, less efficient system or even system breakdown. In systems that regularly reach

Our Technical and Skills Officer, Mel Shepherd, updates us on the standards surrounding sound levels and explains the issues you should be aware of

There have been several amendments over the years to the Technical Standards and Building Regulations regarding noise transmittance within properties. This article explains various problems that can occur when a breach of the sound insulation occurs while working on a property, and what remedial action may be required.

It is important to note that the Technical Standards, Section 5.0 – Noise, and Technical Booklet G – Resistance to the Passage of Sound, cannot guarantee unwanted sound transmission but they aim to limit the effects on sound levels between attached properties.

The purpose of the standards is to limit the transmission of sound created by normal domestic activities to an acceptable level, but not from excessive noise from power tools or audio systems played at high level and even raised voices. These may be emanating from attached buildings as well as sounds from within the same dwelling.

Cavity wall and floor insulation were first introduced during the 1970s, becoming compulsory in the 1990s for all new UK buildings. If you currently stay in a 1970s style flat or house, the chances are you will hear your neighbours due to the lack of insulation installed. Any property built after the 1980s should already have cavity wall and intermediate floor insulation fitted, but in older homes, this may not always be present.

There are several terms used within the Technical Standards regarding sound, including:

- **Airborne sound:** Generated through air, an example could be speech or TV sounds
- **Direct Transmission:** Refers to the path of either airborne or impact sound through elements of construction
- **Impact Sound:** Generated through a direct medium, such as footfall on a floor.

The thermal efficiency of timber frame is legendary, creating homes that are naturally warm in winter and cool in summer. Additional benefits also include greater soundproofing that many traditionally built homes lack.

On the downside, the timber frame method of construction has also been used to build many of

“The thermal efficiency of timber frame is legendary, creating homes that are naturally warm in winter and cool in summer”

Drown out the



By Mel Shepherd, Technical & Skills Officer, SNIPEF

the new “budget” hotels. If you have ever stayed in one, you will be familiar with the noise transfer from adjoining rooms, with TVs and people talking being easily audible.

Noise transmission is a particular problem in blocks of flats and terraced houses. Solid concrete floors are much better at reducing the amount of noise transmission between dwellings than timber floors, even with the latest floating floor and noise isolating detailing, as shown below and right.

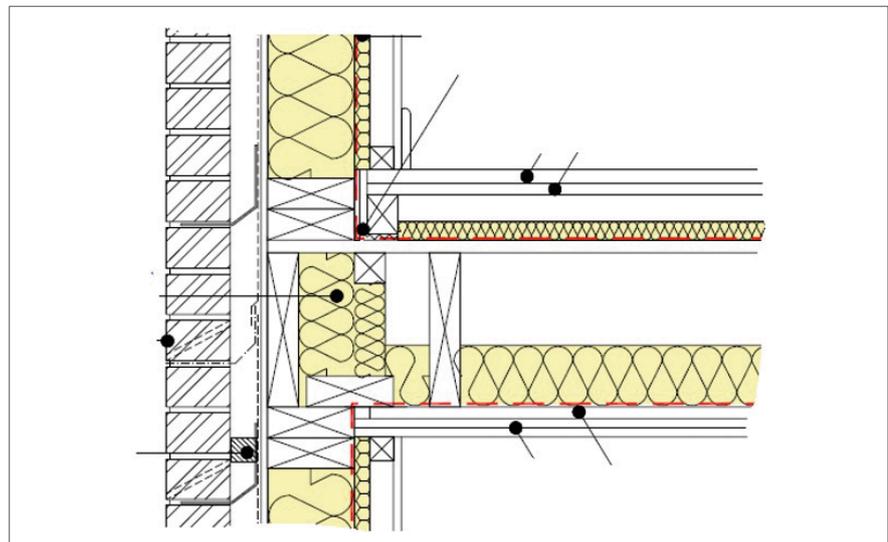
Any noise generated within the dwelling is down to the occupants, therefore sound-absorbing insulation between rooms assists in reducing the everyday noise. This may include insulation within stud partitions or include ‘Soundbloc’ or similar plasterboard as well as sound insulation between floor levels.

NOISE FROM SERVICES

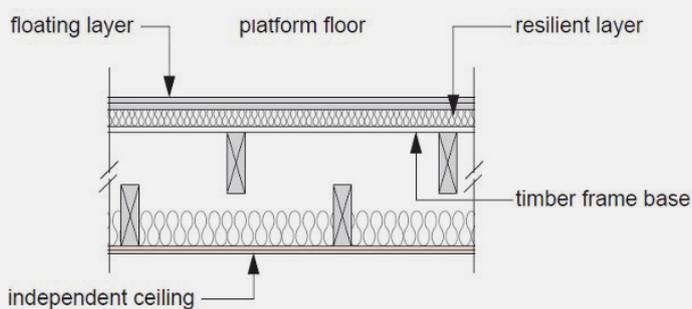
Service installations that serve common areas in buildings can be a source of noise nuisance. Some examples could be air conditioning units or ventilation systems and drainage pipes in blocks of flats can also be a problem. Service pipes or ducts should not pass through a separating wall unless they are small bore, such as gas or water supply pipes and they only serve a single dwelling.

Only service openings for ducts or service

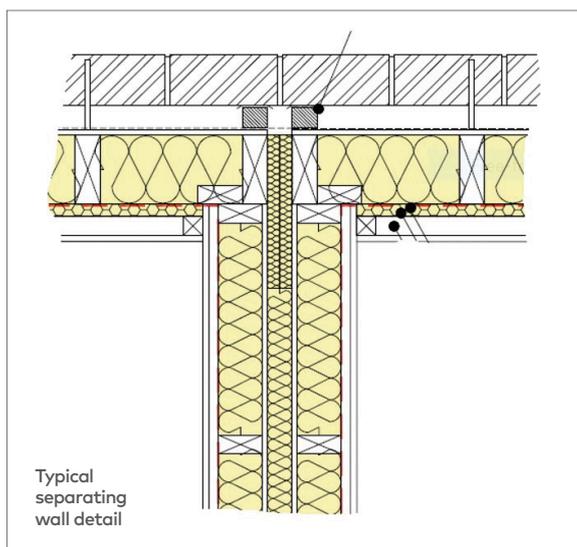
Typical separating floor detail, Scotland



ing e noise



pipework may be formed in a separating floor. These services should be properly enclosed to allow noise reduction as shown in regulation 5.1.2. In a new building, the correct design of these systems would position them in such a way that they are



Typical separating floor, Northern Ireland

easily accessible and also do not create undue noise. The current NHBC standards give a very good example of how sound insulation should be installed around a soil waste pipe. Find out more information at nhbc-standards.co.uk/8-services/8-1-internal-services/8-1-6-soil-and-waste-systems/

All new-build properties will have the current standards incorporated into their design and examples of generic constructions can be obtained

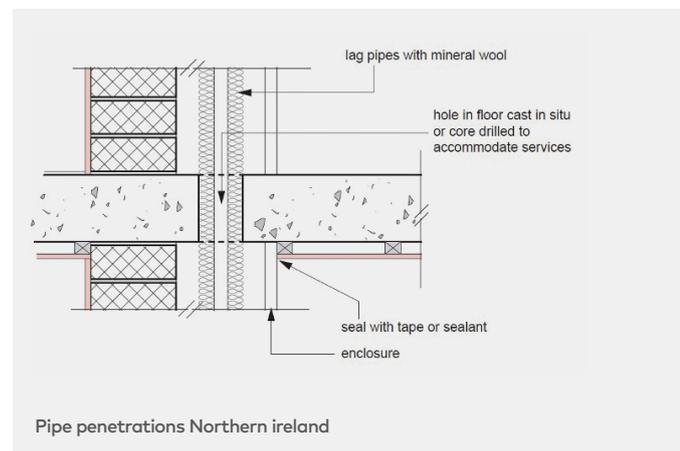
from www.gov.scot/publications/building-standards-list-of-guidance/pages/key-supporting-technical-guidance

CONVERSIONS

When converting an existing property, contractors face a lot of issues. Many of the wall and floor constructions will be made from materials that are no longer in use, one example being lath and plaster, so trying to achieve a suitable level of noise reduction may prove difficult.

If, for instance, new heating pipework or drainage system is installed through 'ash type' floor insulation then this should be reinstated, as far as possible, to its original state after the installation.

Trying to achieve suitable design performance will present challenges for the designer, for instance hidden voids and cupboards. This means that 'standard' detailing may not be possible to achieve a suitable performance, therefore the



levels for traditional buildings are less demanding than new-build and conversions.

CONCLUSION

When work is being carried out on any property, contractors have to be aware that any alterations to the fabric or internals of the building that would have an impact on the passage of sound must be reinstated to their original integrity. This means any service penetration in separating walls and floors will have to be sealed to limit noise transmission with an appropriate material.

If this is not undertaken, then it may affect the ACCS certification.

If installing services or back boxes to a separating wall, you must be aware that these locations may affect the integrity of noise transmission and should be avoided if possible.

Full information can be obtained from the relevant building standards websites:

www.gov.scot/publications/building-standards-technical-handbook-2019-domestic/
www.buildingcontrol-ni.com/regulations/technical-booklets ■

Round-up of latest WaterSafe® activities and events

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

WaterSafe shares water-saving advice

WaterSafe was proud to sponsor 'Save Water to Save Carbon' day for this year's Water Saving Week with Waterwise in May.

With household water use increasing due to people spending more time at home in recent months, the need to save water is more important than ever.

Using less water means saving energy, as less power is needed to pump water from underground, rivers and reservoirs, treat it to high quality standards and pump it to taps in homes and businesses.

And by using less energy, we produce less of the carbon dioxide emissions that contribute to greenhouse gases and result in climate change.



With water-efficiency a top priority for its members, WaterSafe shared the following tips to help save water and reduce carbon:

- Shorten your shower –

Saving water can also help stop climate change

it should ideally be around four minutes long

- Wash dishes in a bowl instead of under a running tap to reduce water wastage by 50%

- Research water and energy-efficient appliances – compare bathroom products such as shower-heads and taps by using the Unified Water Label

- Swap your garden hose for a watering can – hosepipes typically use about 1,000 litres an hour, that's more than 12 baths.

WaterSafe also sponsored a free 'Why Save Water' webinar for plumbers, which gave ten reasons to use water wisely in the UK, and how to do it – including the use of approved water-saving devices. ■

Calling Northern Ireland plumbers – WaterSafe wants you!

The UK register of approved plumbers, WaterSafe, is reminding qualified, professional plumbers in Northern Ireland that membership is a great way to stand out from the crowd.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF JOINING?

Promotion for your business – get listed on the largest online directory for approved plumbers in the UK, promoted by Northern Ireland Water to its 1.5 million customers.

Customer reassurance – that you're a qualified plumber supported by Northern Ireland Water and

WaterSafe®
LOCAL APPROVED PLUMBERS

watersafe.org.uk
© Piers Baker | Doodle Whiteboard

the drinking water regulator.

A direct link to Northern Ireland Water – to self-notify plumbing work and access free advice on the water regulations. Only approved plumbers can self-notify their work to Northern Ireland Water.

"It's a great way to show that you are a professional

plumber." **WaterSafe member**

HOW TO JOIN

If you're a qualified plumber currently registered with SNIPEF, find out about joining WaterSafe at no extra charge today. Contact SNIPEF at www.snipef.org or visit watersafe.org.uk/howtojoin for more information.

SNIPEF members can sign up for no extra charge

Staying on the right track

SNIEPF has created a task force to ensure apprentices don't miss out on training during the coronavirus shutdown

In recognition of the vital importance of apprentices to the future of our sector, SNIEPF has set up a task force to ensure they can continue to learn their trade during the Covid-19 crisis.

We've teamed up with colleges and the SQA and SNIJIB, the awarding bodies of the Modern Apprenticeship in Plumbing and Heating, to help students keep up with their coursework.

The task force is supported by SNIEPF staff working in partnership with key stakeholders in a range of disciplines from across the industry and education, including IT professionals.

Since the start of the shutdown, SNIEPF has been proactive in ensuring that the apprenticeship programme has been able to carry on with the minimum of disruption.

GOING ONLINE

Our approach, which has attracted praise from apprentices, employers and colleges alike, has been to create online alternative assessment practices for the theory work the students must undertake.

The task force created eight assessments which were issued to the college network and could be completed safely by students from their homes before being submitted at the end of June.

Dale Thomson, SNIEPF Training Manager, said: "Most apprentices were furloughed and the colleges were closed or running at very limited capacity. As a result, alternative assessment models had to be put in place.

"The plumbing and heating qualification comprises a mix of practical and theoretical work and the online alternative assessments that the task force has created have had positive feedback from the sector."

Alistair Wylie, Head of Technology, Engineering, and Construction Qualifications at SQA, which includes its portfolio of plumbing courses, added: "The collaborative approach adopted by SNIEPF and

its partners to take the necessary action that has allowed Modern Apprentices to continue with their learning and development throughout the crisis is to be applauded.

"This is a fantastic example of educators and industry coming together to support young people throughout this exceptionally challenging period, and I want to thank everyone involved for their collective efforts."

WORKING TOGETHER

SNIEPF has a total of 807 apprentices at 18 colleges across every part of Scotland who are currently in training and we are keen to ensure that they are continuing to engage with their learning programmes during their enforced lay-offs caused by coronavirus.

Fiona Hodgson, Chief Executive of SNIEPF, said: "This has been another inspired collective effort between SNIEPF and its education partners to whom we are extremely grateful.

"As a result of their commitment and co-operation, apprentices will be able to progress with their qualification and reduce the amount of catch-up work required as the sector restarts and colleges reopen."

STAYING UP TO DATE

One of the benefits of the new online assessments is that the content is up to date and coincides with current trends and the latest legislation, technology and practices.

It has also allowed colleges to get involved in the process by giving feedback on the testing, including different methods within different regions.

The task force is currently developing the next batch of theoretical assessments and is also looking at different ways in which practical work can be undertaken and assessed. ■



Fiona Hodgson,
Alistair Wylie and
Dale Thomson



During the coronavirus crisis, SNIPEF has continued to work tirelessly on our members' behalf to keep you up to date with the latest advice and provide extra support in these tough times.

We have increased our communications and launched weekly newsletters and emails dealing with Covid-specific guidance and information.

Our staff have also been making regular phone calls to members to check how they're coping during the pandemic and find out how we can help them if they're struggling.

And the Training team has been working hard to support apprentices and colleges by carrying out surveys and providing advice on assessments.

Members of the SNIPEF executive team have also continued to play a key role in the vital work being done by Scotland's Construction Industry Coronavirus (CICV) Forum. The Forum speaks up for the industry and represents its views on the Covid-19 crisis to the Scottish and UK Governments, the media and other engaged parties.

It has also issued a raft of health and safety guidance to help steer workers through the phased return, including seven new pieces of open-source collateral offering in-depth advice on topics from face coverings to dealing with a case of the virus.

SNIPEF Chief Executive, Fiona Hodgson, is not only a leading member of the main Forum board but also part of its commercial, future planning, skills and client sub-groups.

She said: "The Forum's health and safety sub-group has worked collaboratively to produce clear and practical guidance that is easy to follow and which can be used immediately by businesses of all sizes to help in their ongoing return.

"I am proud of the key role my colleague Martyn Raine,



Tackling the crisis with teamwork

SNIPEF is continuing to play a vital part in the industry's response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Here's how we've been helping members navigate the new the normal

Technical and Skills Manager at SNIPEF, has played in formulating the new health and safety guidelines. He has been instrumental in the development of the documents and our entire sector will benefit from his insight and exceptional contribution."

SNIPEF has played a fundamental role in running webinars for the Forum to help keep people up to date with the latest advice and information.

We have also helped to develop and update the

Forum's comprehensive 42-page *Covid-19 Construction Operating Guidance*, which underpins the Safe Operating Guidance produced by Construction Scotland, Scottish Government and the wider industry.

The document has been updated to reflect the latest developments on face coverings, physical distancing, travel and prevention of cross-contamination, with the new content clearly signposted.

The advice is crucial in keeping people safe as the



industry gets back to work. SNIPEF's Martyn Raine said, "As the construction industry moves to the next stage of the phased return, it is vital that everyone works together to continue the excellent work done so far.

"Health and safety will be vital in the weeks and months ahead, and it's paramount that we don't compromise ourselves or our customers at this crucial time. The sector is relieved to be returning at last, but workers everywhere must be aware that there can be no let-up in health and safety awareness."

Made up of more than 70 trade associations, professional services bodies and companies, the Forum has maintained a steady supply of information and

practical advice to the sector as well as carrying out surveys, producing animations and posters, hosting webinars and making appeals to government ministers.

In addition to Fiona and Martyn, SNIPEF's HR Manager, Stephanie Lowe, is active on the Forum's employment sub-group, Alicia Allen, our Communications Manager, is a member of the communications sub-group and Dale Thomson, SNIPEF's Training Manager, sits on a sub-group concerned with the health and safety provisions for apprentices.

Fiona added: "I continue to be proud of the way my SNIPEF colleagues are playing their part throughout; all of us are determined to give our utmost to pave the way for a



**Fiona Hodgson,
Chief Executive,
SNIPEF**



**Martyn Raine,
Technical and
Skills Manager,
SNIPEF**

SNIPEF's Fiona and Martyn have played key roles in producing the CICV Forum documents, left



Here to help

As the construction industry moves to the next stage of the phased return, SNIPEF will continue to provide essential help to all our members during the Covid-19 pandemic, by delivering information and guidance and being on hand to help with any issues members are currently experiencing.

We have a dedicated team who are committed to continuing the best possible service we can. We have a specific Covid-19 section on our website, www.snipef.org, that features updates, helpful advice and guidance. We encourage you to check this daily along with our social media channels.

If you have any queries or need help with anything, please contact us on **0131 556 0600** or membership@snipef.org.

rapid, and safe return to work. The continuing uncertainty over a second wave of Covid-19 means that close adherence by all SNIPEF members to the health and safety measures set out by the Forum are more important than ever." ■

Advice and support

If you need further advice regarding legal and contractual issues, support is available for our members. We have partnered with an industry expert to provide our members with a free 20-minute consultation. Assistance will

cover the following issues:

- Delays in the completion of ongoing contracts
- Cancellation of projects
- Difficulties in making or receiving payments
- Issues with the supply and delivery of goods
- Suspension of contracts

- Extension of time and loss and expenses notices.

Please send your enquiries to Len Bunton on **07769 670 089** or **01786 880 751**, or email len@buntonconsulting.co.uk. Please copy membership@snipef.org into any email communications.

Prepared and protected

As businesses get back to work, we speak to Lee Paterson, Managing Director of SNIPEF member firm James Paterson Plumbing and Heating, about the changes being made to keep everyone safe on site

HI LEE, TELL US ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS

We are a family run business which was started by my father in 1987. We started off with three staff and now employ 96 people. We have four directors, seven office staff, 65 tradesmen and 20 apprentices. We carry out our work in the east and west of Scotland and cover all aspects of plumbing and heating works in new build properties.

“The number of tradesmen working in a property or using the canteen or toilets has also been restricted to ensure people are kept at a suitable distance”

HOW HAVE YOU BEEN AFFECTED BY CORONAVIRUS?

When lockdown started, almost everyone was put on furlough with the exception of myself, another director, our accountant and an emergency plumber. Throughout lockdown there has been a lot of uncertainty, but we've kept in touch with all staff members as much as we could to ensure they knew what was going on. We've also had the worry of whether or not we'd receive payments that were due from clients and when we'd receive the furlough payments. After ten and a half weeks we managed to start a phased return for some of our staff.

WHAT PREPARATIONS DID YOU MAKE FOR RETURNING TO WORK?

We had to prepare method statements and risk assessments to suit Covid-19 which have been issued to all staff. We also purchased the appropriate PPE, which consisted of face masks, disposable gloves, safety glasses, sanitiser and wipes. The staff also had to complete an induction before being allowed on site and emails were sent to them with information regarding their return to work.

WHAT CHANGES HAVE YOU SEEN SINCE BEING BACK ON SITE?

There have been a lot of changes. There are now mobile hand washing stations on site, one-way systems in operation, a new sign-in process which is now electronic, new procedures for working in properties and limited canteen and toilet facilities.

All of these new procedures are being adhered to but they definitely have taken a bit of getting used to by everyone.

WHAT NEW MEASURES ARE IN PLACE TO HELP PEOPLE WORK SAFELY?

The changes I've mentioned have ensured that all employees can work safely. The mobile hand washing stations mean all employees can sanitise their hands as often as they want. The one-way systems and electronic sign-in system work well as they restrict the amount of contact people have with each other.

The number of tradesmen who can work in a property or using the canteen or toilets has also been restricted to ensure people are kept



Find out more about getting back to work

Get advice about how to deal with the pandemic and safely returning to work in the dedicated coronavirus section of our new website at www.snipef.org



Sites have brought in extra health and safety measures to protect workers

at a suitable distance.

There has also been a change with how site meetings are held. These are now done by either a Teams or Zoom call online.

WHAT DO YOU THINK WILL BE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE ABOUT THE 'NEW NORMAL'?

It's obviously been hard to change everyone's mindset to the new way of working but I am really impressed with how everyone has adapted to the situation.

My main concern now is for our apprentices. All 20 of them are still on furlough and have been since 24 March. My worry is that for a lot of them it's going to be like starting again. There's a real concern regarding this and I think that there should be some thought to extending their apprenticeships.

When they do return to work on site, all apprentices under the age of 18 will have to be accompanied by their tradesman at all times.

“All of these new procedures are being adhered to but they definitely have taken a bit of getting used to by everyone”

HOW ARE YOU FEELING ABOUT THE FUTURE?

Almost all of our work is new build houses. There is a lot of uncertainty there just now.

The information I am getting just now is that house sales are going well. My worry is that it only costs a couple of hundred pounds to put down a deposit and that's all potential buyers will lose if it falls through. So even though builders are saying they've got a sale at the moment, all they really have is a deposit.

We are all in this together and have to work as a team to get through this. Communication is going to be the key. ■

To help our members during the pandemic, we've worked with the CICV Forum on a series of animations explaining how to keep yourself and others safe while at work

Putting you in the picture



As the industry deals with the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, SNIPEF, as part of the CICV Forum, has produced a series of engaging animations explaining how to protect yourself, your workers and the public.

The short films have been a huge success, delivering clear and practical advice to our members and their clients and covering topics from emergency domestic work to dealing safely with the restart.

SNIPEF has played an important role in creating the CICV Forum's resources, with our Membership and Communications Manager Alicia Allen joining the Communications Sub-Group.

She said: "It's important to communicate key information to our members in an easily digestible manner.

"We've found that animations and video are a really effective way to engage our audience compared to more traditional methods."

One of the most successful films has been a guide to emergency domestic work which was released during lockdown. It was adapted by a host of other UK and European organisations for their own use.

As the shutdown began to ease, SNIPEF helped the Forum to issue a new film explaining how to navigate the return to work.



Called *Working Together*, it covers the important health and safety steps that people should take to protect themselves, their colleagues and the public.

The 90-second animation gives advice on topics including travelling to work, observing physical distancing and hand washing and hygiene.

And as the lockdown started to lift, we helped the Forum release a timely reminder for workers across the industry not to drop their guard and undo the good work that's been done so far.

Two animations were produced as part of a campaign urging everyone to remember to stick

The first video explained how to carry out domestic work in a safe way



Wear a proper face covering if required



to the physical distancing guidelines in their social lives and continue to stay safe while they're away from work.

The films feature characters called Campbell and Fiona, who observe the coronavirus safety measures in their spare time so their colleagues are safe when they're back at work.

The campaign also includes open source posters which can be printed out and displayed in workplaces.

The animations were created by the team at Connect Communications and can be found on the CICV Forum's website at cicvforum.co.uk

Iain Mason, Chair of the Forum Communications Sub-Group and Director of

Membership and Communications at SELECT, said: "We have made huge strides in getting core safety messaging accepted and applied on site, in depots and in construction offices.

"Trade associations, professional bodies, companies and individuals have come together for mutual benefit and for the sake of the preservation of the sector and shown that, by working together, we can successfully navigate a safe return to work.

"The animations stress the Forum's key message that we are all #InThisTogether and the importance of workers taking personal responsibility to protect themselves, their colleagues and the wider community" ■

Another campaign covered how to keep safe when you're socialising

“We’ve found that animations are a really effective way to engage our audience compared to more traditional methods”
 Alicia Allen, SNIPEF Membership and Communications Manager

Retentions: We must win!



Expert **Rudi Klein** explains why it's vital to keep up the pressure in the campaign to end payment abuse

SNIPEF is now generally acknowledged in Scotland – and beyond – as a major campaigner against payment abuse.

Lobbying of the Scottish Government by SNIPEF and other trade bodies within the Specialist Engineering Contractors' (SEC) Group Scotland secured a consultation by the Scottish Government on retentions which closed at the end of May this year.

But this is only half the story. The Scottish Government favours a statutory retention

deposit scheme (similar to the tenancy deposit schemes) to protect retention monies.

This has not happened by accident. Tenacious and persistent pressure by SNIPEF and others has persuaded the Scottish Government that this is the only realistic option.

Some will ask: Why are we not banning retentions? We do want to see the end of a practice that has bedevilled the industry for nigh on 200 years. Across the UK, firms are losing almost £1 million worth of retentions per working day due to upstream insolvencies. But getting any government to ban retentions



**By Rudi Klein,
Barrister and
SEC Group CEO**

is an impossibility. Westminster has already made clear that this is not on the agenda unless alternative security can be provided. The only alternative is bonds, but the majority of SMEs would not be in a position to provide these.

Nonetheless, if we can ring-fence the monies so that they are protected from insolvency risk, they can't be used and abused. Since they cannot be used and abused, the likelihood over time is that the demand for cash retentions will begin to fall away.

A RETENTION DEPOSIT SCHEME

What is a retention deposit scheme? It is a safe receptacle for the cash, thus protecting it from upstream insolvencies. Moreover, it will ensure that retentions are released on time.

A substantial amount of work has already taken place on developing the framework for a retention deposit scheme. It should be an IT platform that keeps tabs on the retentions deposited in the scheme.

Since the retention handed over by the main contractor to the client is the aggregate of all subcontractors' retentions, the client should be required to deposit it in the scheme. Each subcontractor's portion of the overall retention will be logged by the scheme.

The scheme will release the retention back to the main contractor and subcontractors in accordance with the periods set out in the respective contracts.

In the event of failure by a firm to return to rectify non-compliant work, the paying party will notify the scheme that the retention should not be released. That party must, within a set period of time, seek to resolve the matter with the party waiting on the release of their retention. If any ensuing dispute cannot be resolved, the paying party must refer the matter to an adjudicator.

THE RETENTIONS CONSULTATION

As already mentioned, the Scottish Government's retention consultation closed at the end of May 2020. Alongside the consultation document, there was a published report by Pye Tait, the consultants, which had carried out research into the practice of retentions in Scotland. In the box below, there are some interesting observations from the Pye Tait report.

"Qualitative evidence overwhelmingly shows that the biggest problem with the practice of retentions is the instability it creates for contractors at Tier 2 and below."

"...Tier 1 contractors will ask to be subject to retentions as this makes it easier for them to impose retentions on subcontractors."

"...contractors [having retentions imposed on them] say that the withholding of retentions inhibits their business growth (65%), increases overheads (37%) and reduces investment in equipment and facilities (17%)."

"Over half [of contractors imposing retentions] (53%) use retention monies as working capital, while over a third (29%) use the money as part of their general expenditure. Only 13% say they make no use of retention monies."

"A requirement for retentions to be held in a protected and separate location would meet almost all of the serious criticisms of the current retention systems."

The Covid-19 crisis has now lent far greater urgency to the issue of retentions; cashflow is now vital as never before. SNIPEF members are encouraged to write to their MSPs to put pressure on the Scottish Government to analyse the responses to the consultation as quickly as possible. If the majority favour a statutory scheme to ring-fence the monies then a Bill to implement this should be introduced in the Scottish Parliament without delay.

WE MUST WIN!

We have come so far with this campaign. Now we must win. Use every possible avenue to spread the message that retention monies must be ring-fenced in a scheme. This must be done through legislation. Use social media to get this message out there.

Remember that retention monies legally belong to you and that you want them kept safe; they are not provided for the purpose of boosting the working capital of another business. ■

“A requirement for retentions to be held in a protected and separate location would meet almost all of the serious criticisms of the current retention systems.”

If, for whatever reason, there is a shortfall in the scheme to cover the client in the event of the client being saddled with non-compliant work, the shortfall can be met by an insurance policy devised for this purpose. The cost of administering the scheme (including the cost of the insurance premium) will be £23 per £10k of contract value. This should be paid by the client who, after all, has demanded a cash retention.

A chance for real change

The coronavirus pandemic has forced everyone into new ways of working, but it's also brought an opportunity for the whole industry to think again about how we can do business better

The Covid-19 crisis has presented the Scottish construction industry with a potentially unique opportunity to bring about long-lasting change.

I believe a number of issues, including conflict avoidance and procurement, could be due for a shake-up, while the new culture of collaboration and sharing ideas for the benefit of the whole industry is something that could continue long after the pandemic is over.

As a specialist in dispute resolution, I've been leading a consultation on the future of the sector launched by the Construction Industry Coronavirus (CICV) Forum. The Forum has brought together a number of trade and professional bodies to share advice and information, as well as talk directly with government, and this recent consultation has been asking the Scottish construction industry what they would like to see in the future.

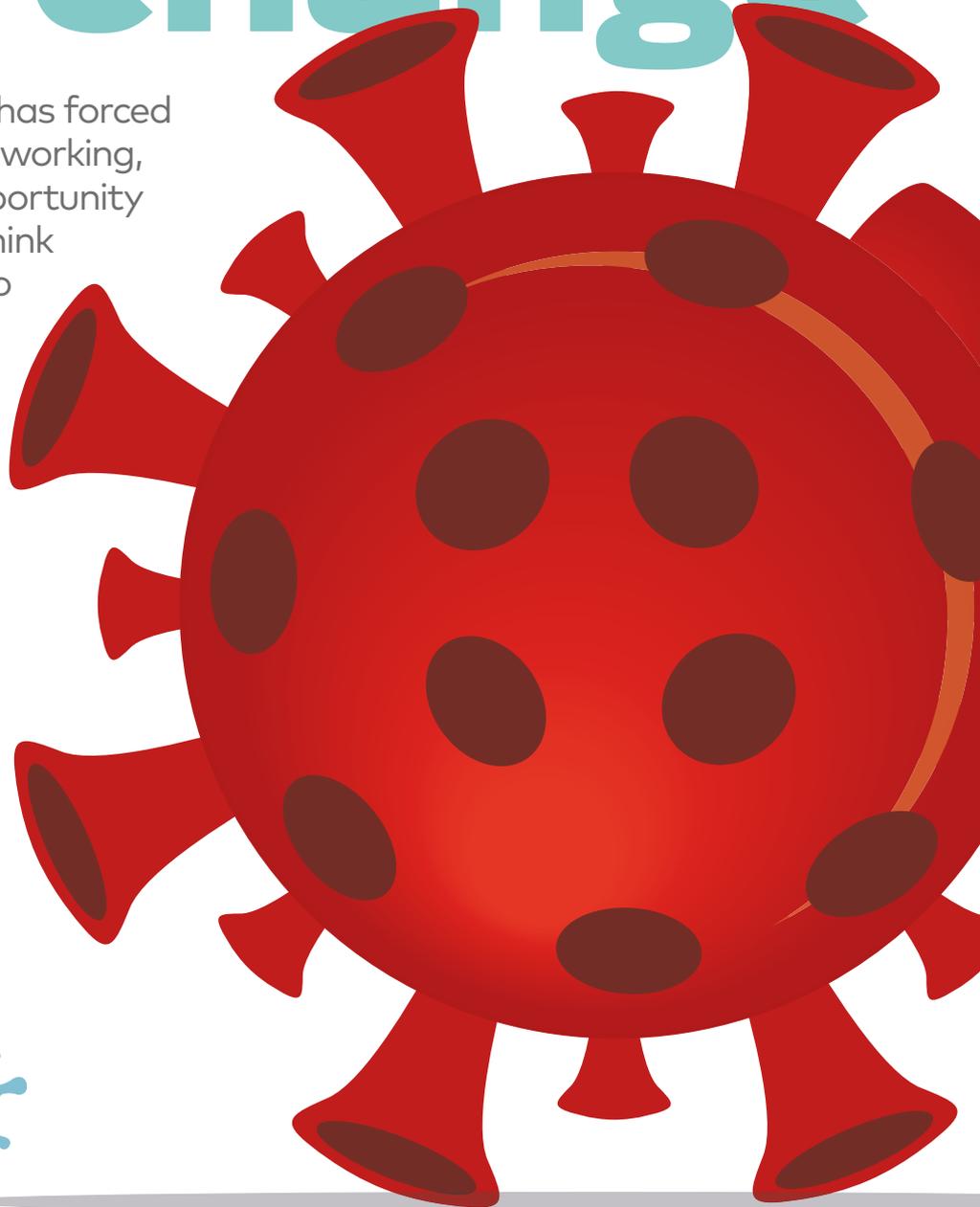
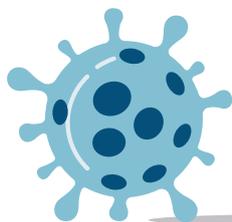
The Forum could have written a document TELLING industry what it would have to

do but instead we are asking industry what it wants. Quite simply, what are the issues that are causing the most problems and what can we do to deal with them? That's why we launched our *Blueprint for Change* document and I'm hoping that at the end of the consultation we'll have a very

powerful and rounded view on the future of the industry.

The next step will be to work with government to get the changes implemented. There's absolutely no shortage of desire to change the way the Scottish construction industry operates. It's universal.

I'm hopeful that the industry



By Len Bunton
FRICS FCI Arb,
HON FRIAS
SEC Group
Scotland

“Despite these grumbles, one thing I have been encouraged by is the way industry has mobilised during the crisis”

which aims to use early intervention techniques to resolve issues before they escalate into full-blown disputes.

Most of all, I want to see a real 'culture change' within the sector, in particular the procurement process, with a greater emphasis on quality, experience and capability when tendering.

For too long, the industry has been driven by a race to the bottom of accepting the lowest price. That's got to stop. Architect fees have been annihilated over the years, so we need to get back to paying designers properly to design buildings.

I would like to see the reintroduction of a scale of fees in the public sector as most of the construction disputes I deal with go right back to a project not being designed properly from the outset.

Despite these grumbles, one thing I have been encouraged by is the way industry has mobilised during the crisis.

The CICV Forum has been incredible because it's the first time in 40 years we've had a collective group of people pointing in the same direction, all trying to improve the construction industry.

This Forum has demonstrated that everybody has a desire to achieve a better industry which will benefit all those involved. We've worked hard to solve problems and I have come across some of the

most incredibly talented people in the past 16 weeks that I'd never met before.

We recently had a discussion which involved four major contractors just sharing problems – that's fantastic and has never happened before.

Despite this optimism, let's be under no illusions that the challenges facing the industry during the recovery period will be enormous.

Contractors probably won't be able to generate any applications

for payment during restart, which creates an immediate cashflow problem. Then they'll go on to sites and not

be fully productive because of the distancing regulations.

Anecdotally, people are saying productivity might be down by 30-60%. Nobody knows for sure, but obviously that will have an impact on the value of applications that contractors are able to make every month.

Health and safety is also absolutely of paramount importance and observing these site operating procedures is going to be critical. The industry has responded well on that. The Forum has produced excellent guidelines on site operating procedures, which have been very helpful for people going back on site.

So progress HAS been made during lockdown – and I just hope we can continue to make progress and bring about real change that benefits us all. ■

This article first appeared in Project Scotland and has been reproduced with their permission.

will see widespread adoption of the Conflict Avoidance Pledge, a joint initiative from professional bodies including the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE),



Cover during Covid

Martin McGaffney from Marsh Commercial discusses the safety steps and insurance implications to consider when returning to work

Industries and businesses throughout the UK have been brought to a standstill due to the coronavirus outbreak after lockdown measures were introduced on 23 March. The Government is now allowing a range of professions to restart work as long as strict safety measures are in place.

Tradespeople – including plumbers – are returning to work amid relaxed rules. Workers hoping to return to projects in other people's homes and businesses will also be required to ensure they have no symptoms of the potentially deadly virus.

Measures must be taken to ensure that government instructions on social distancing are strictly adhered to and should be communicated to the workforce as frequently as is necessary, to ensure it is clearly understood and in order for employees to protect themselves, their colleagues, their families and prevent further spread of the virus.

We have communicated to our members in recent months the steps they need to take when working at third party premises. These include:

- All individuals, from directors and managers to employees, must take responsibility for helping to manage the spread of coronavirus.
- If you are a tradesperson carrying out essential repairs and maintenance in third party premises, you can continue to work providing that you are well and have no symptoms. You should notify all clients in advance of your arrival.
- On arrival at the premises, you should wash your hands using soap and water for 20 seconds. You should wash your hands regularly, particularly after blowing your nose, sneezing or coughing, and when leaving the

property. Where facilities to wash hands are not available, hand sanitiser should be used, and you should carry this with you at all times.

- You should maintain a safe distance (at least two metres) from any occupants at all times and ensure good ventilation in the area where you are working, including opening the window, where possible.
- No work should be carried out in any household that is self-isolating or where an individual is being shielded, unless your work is



Martin McGaffney
Account Executive,
Marsh Commercial

to remedy a direct risk to the safety of the household, such as emergency plumbing or repair.

- No work should be carried out by a tradesperson who has coronavirus symptoms, however mild.
- Adhere to all hygiene protocols – clear management of infection risk and contamination, including thorough cleaning of tools, vehicles internally and externally, along with accessories such as keys, phones and other devices, before and after each use.
- Businesses should include coronavirus/ Covid-19 in their risk assessments. Depending on your working environment, you may need to consider providing additional PPE, including gloves, masks or anti-viral hand gel for employees. If you want employees to wear gloves or masks, then you will also need to think about providing guidance on their correct usage since both can be ineffective if used incorrectly.
- One of the requirements of SNIPEF membership is to have valid, in force, public liability insurance at a minimum limit of £2,000,000 and employers' liability insurance (if not a sole trader). As a result of the pandemic, there is a need for clarity around actions undertaken by our members and how this may affect their insurance cover.

DO I NEED TO INFORM MY INSURERS THAT I AM RETURNING TO WORK AT THIRD PARTY LOCATIONS?

Your insurance policy should note the locations you are covered to work at. This could be domestic premises only or it may include light commercial or heavier industrial locations. Many policies exclude cover for working at higher risk locations, such as airside or power stations.

As long as you are adhering to any location restrictions, there should be no need for you to notify your insurers.

CAN A CLIENT CLAIM AGAINST MY BUSINESS IF THEY CAN PROVE WE HAVE INTRODUCED CORONAVIRUS TO THEM?

If a client makes an allegation that you, or your employees, have introduced coronavirus to their premises, this would fall under public liability insurance. Public liability includes cover if your actions cause bodily injury or illness. The type of illness is not usually defined and could include coronavirus.

However, the burden of proof would need to be on the client that you, or your employees, had breached a duty of care.

This could include not taking adequate steps, as noted above, or allowing an employee to work, knowing they may have coronavirus. It is always worth keeping a note of the steps you have taken

“Public liability includes cover if your actions cause bodily injury or illness. The type of illness is not usually defined and could include coronavirus”

to follow government guidelines, including your risk assessments.

CAN EMPLOYEES CLAIM AGAINST THEIR EMPLOYER IF THEY HAVE CONTRACTED CORONAVIRUS DURING THEIR EMPLOYMENT?

Employers' liability is a compulsory insurance and typically has few or no exclusions. It is a similar situation if an employee alleges they contracted coronavirus whilst working for you. There would need to be proof this happened during their working hours with you. If this were the case, insurers would be obliged to consider a claim under employers' liability.

Insurers could seek recovery from the insured employer if they can show that reasonable steps were not taken to prevent injury or illness. This sort of recovery is unlikely to succeed unless they can prove the employer had acted recklessly.

REPORTING OF CLAIMS

All liability claims, whether for employers or public liability, should be notified to your insurance broker, if you have one, or your insurer, straight away.

Please do not try to address this directly with your client or employee. Inform them that you have notified your broker, or insurer, and leave it to them to communicate with the claimant.

CAN A CLIENT PASS ON LIABILITIES OF CURRENT AND FUTURE COVID-19 COSTS TO THEIR CONTRACTORS OR SUBCONTRACTORS?

A client passing on Covid-19 prevention costs, to you is a commercial matter. It will depend on whether they are contractually allowed to do this, if the work is ongoing. For future contracts, it is increasingly likely that Covid-19 prevention costs will be borne by contractors at all levels.

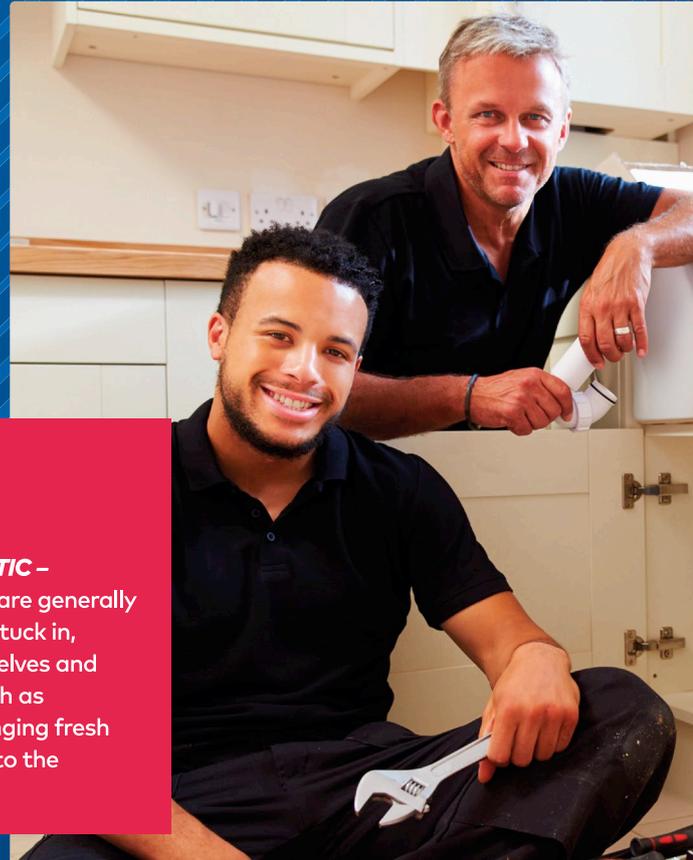
TALK TO YOUR BROKER

If you have any questions about your insurance cover, you should discuss the matter with your insurance broker. If you could benefit from a review of your insurance, please contact Martin McGaffney at Marsh Commercial by emailing martin.mcgaffney@marshcommercial.co.uk or calling 07711 484 946. ■

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@snipef.org alternatively you can visit our website



www.becomeaplumber.org

ProZone

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

ALUTEC
ALUMINIUM RAINWATER SYSTEMS



45

Water result

Discover the benefits of Marley Alutec's range of aluminium guttering systems

Making fuel fair

Why it's vital that the low carbon heating of the future is affordable and manageable

/ Page 40



Choose a Snug fit

PipeSnug makes boiler installation quicker and easier with the launch of the new FlueSnug

/ Page 41



Keep up the pressure

Your questions answered about the new range of AccuBoost accumulator tanks from Salamander

/ Page 43

Salamander Pumps 

Hot new offer

Get a free infrared thermometer when you buy a power flushing pump from Kamco

/ Page 44

Kamco

Cool comfort

Beat the heat and stay stylish on site in the latest summer workwear looks from Snickers

/ Page 44

Snickers
WORKWEAR

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

David Hughes
0131 561 0022
davidh@connectmedia.cc



Heat decarbonisation policy must be fair for all

Economic recovery from the Covid-19 crisis is undoubtedly dominating immediate government agendas, but the need for urgent, decisive action on climate change remains.

In Northern Ireland, 65% of households rely on oil heating, benefitting from low fuel costs and choice of supply. Many consumers in rural Scotland enjoy similar advantages but in line with the 2050 net zero ambition, the time has come for change.

Replacement low carbon heating solutions must be manageable and affordable, otherwise take up will falter and decarbonisation targets won't be met. Many older oil-heated homes in Northern Ireland and Scotland



Keep your oil boiler and switch to a renewable liquid fuel

- ✓ Easy and low cost
- ✓ Minimal disruption
- ✓ Competitive running costs

100% low carbon liquid fuel by 2035

Delivering the best carbon reduction solution for oil heated homes

are likely to have a low thermal efficiency. They are unsuitable for heat pumps – the technology favoured by governments for a high percentage of off-grid homes – without substantial, expensive energy efficiency improvement work. This is on top of the cost to install a heat pump which averages £10,000. Fortunately, there is a more cost-effective, less

By OFTEC CEO
Paul Rose



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

disruptive solution. Renewable liquid fuels could offer a drop-in replacement for heating oil, with a 100% fossil free alternative available by 2035 – or sooner with the right policy support.

As part of the local government heat working group in Northern Ireland and the Scottish Decarbonisation Advisory Group, OFTEC is pushing its proposal as the right one for off-grid consumers. OFTEC has also written to all Members of the Northern Ireland Legislative Assembly asking them to support a biofuel obligation as part of the Energy Strategy plan, and will continue to highlight the importance of a fair, affordable transition to low carbon heat. ■

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
- Free listing on OFTEC's popular online 'find a technician' search facility
- Free marketing material to help you win more customers
- Low cost business insurance, discounted website design and fuel card service
- Discounts on equipment and publications from our OFTEC Direct shop.



Visit www.joinoftec.com or contact our registration team today:

T: 01473 626 298

E: registration@oftec.org

W: joinoftec.com

Installing boiler flues just got easier: The PipeSnug team launches FlueSnug

The team behind PipeSnug, the innovative product that gives a quicker, smarter finish around pipework, has launched a larger 'FlueSnug' version designed to fit all 100mm boiler flues.

Removing any need for pointing, FlueSnug can be installed in less than five seconds and snugly fits the 152mm core-drilled hole in the wall through which the boiler pipe and flue exits.

FlueSnug can be used both inside and outside the property for the best finish and prevents heat escaping as well as acting as a barrier to drafts, damp, insects and pests.

FlueSnug also allows installers to quickly access the flue for any service or maintenance requirements, without

the need to remove existing brickwork, mortar or sealant. The FlueSnug can then simply be reinstalled once complete so no need to make good again afterwards, saving even more time and cost for installers and their customers.

Approved by major boiler makers, FlueSnug looks set to be the quickest, and most cost-effective way to comply with forthcoming changes to Part L of the Building Regulations, which mandates the need for pipe collars or grommets onto a pipe where it enters or exits a home, helping to maintain the energy efficiency of the building.

"FlueSnug is already getting fantastic feedback from the trade and is suitable for any building where a boiler flue has to be installed, from new builds to local

authority properties to commercial buildings," explained Director Alex Lever. "We know from the feedback we have had that heating engineers clearly see the time and cost saving benefits of the product – as well as the benefits of compliance with the proposed changes to Part L of the Building Regulations."

With the Covid-19 pandemic and the disruption it has caused, PipeSnug is asking installers to go directly to its website for product information and further details on how to order and will be available in merchants in the coming weeks. ■

For more details on FlueSnug, visit www.pipesnug.co.uk

**PIPE
SNUG**
No point pointing 

FlueSnug means there's no need for pointing and can be installed in less than five seconds





BES
We've got it!

Plumbing, heating and gas supplies... FAST!

NEW CATALOGUE OUT NOW!

100s of PRICE REDUCTIONS

- Over 15,000 products
- FREE next day delivery*
- Quality products
- LOW prices

Order online bes.co.uk
or call free **0800 80 10 90**



The new normal?

That's just the Maincor normal!

As we start to come out of lockdown, many businesses are having to change the way they operate to meet the new safety guidelines.

At Maincor, our commitment to service and support means it's business as usual. We've always believed in delivering our systems in the safest and most convenient way possible.

- ✓ Online quotation and design service, with no hard copies to worry about
- ✓ Pipe is boxed hot under controlled conditions for extra hygiene
- ✓ The installer is the first person to handle the pipe after leaving the factory
- ✓ Direct to site delivery, eliminating double handling
- ✓ Online training & site assistance via video conferencing
- ✓ Site visits, strictly risk assessed

So there's no real change for us. We'll continue to build on the past to deliver the future.

For more information on our pipe systems, email enquiries@maincor.co.uk or call us on **01455 555930**

MAINCOR



Underfloor Heating



Radiator Heating



Plumbing



Pre-Insulated Pipe

www.maincor.co.uk

Tanks a million!

Ken Vance, Training Manager at Salamander Pumps, explains why the AccuBoost range is the simple solution to boosting mains water pressure

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF ACCUMULATOR TANKS AVAILABLE?

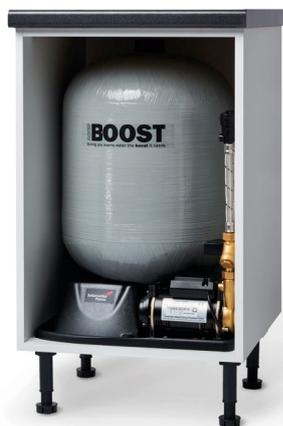
The AccuBoost range consists of nine different accumulator tanks available in a number of sizes and pumped and unpumped models, offering a solution for combination boilers and unvented cylinder systems.

The nine different models range from 60 litres to 450 litres, with all models except the 60-litre tank available in both pumped and unpumped versions. Depending on the size of the tank, AccuBoost can provide up to 36l/min per tank. However, multiple tanks can also be linked together to provide even higher flow rates, should this be required.

WHAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BEFORE INSTALLATION?

With nine different models available, it goes without saying that it's important to specify the right tank for the job. To do this, there are four main factors that should be taken into consideration.

- **Pumped or unpumped?** As a quick rule of thumb, you should install a pumped tank if the home's water pressure is less than 2.0 bar, the water flow is less than 12l/min, or the highest outlet is on the second floor or above. However, this does not apply if the home has a lead or restrictive mains.



Salamander Pumps 



- **Does the home have a combi or unvented system?** All tanks in the AccuBoost range are suitable for combi boiler systems, however, a home with an unvented system would require a minimum of 300 or 450 litres capacity and in some cases even more. For a capacity greater than 450 litres, you will need to link multiple tanks together.
- **What size of tank is required?** When specifying the size of the tank needed, you should calculate the flow rate per minute of all the outlets across the home that will be required to run simultaneously. Once this is determined, you can then identify which size tank will provide this flow rate for a minimum of nine minutes – the average length of a shower.
- **How much space is available?** If space is limited, a smaller model may be required which would mean running fewer outlets at one time. However, one way around this would be to link multiple, smaller tanks together to provide the necessary flow rate. And remember, tanks do not have to be situated in the kitchen, and can be installed in any location where it can be connected to the mains water supply, such as a garage. ■

The AccuBoost tanks are available in a range of sizes

For more information, visit salamanderpumps.co.uk



Free infrared thermometer with every power flushing pump

As well as the full hose and adapter set supplied with every Kamco Clearflow power flushing pump, a promotional offer sees an infrared thermometer worth £40 added to the kit.

Experienced heating engineers will switch on the boiler and carefully check the condition of a heating system before recommending a power flush. Checking that all radiators are equally and evenly hot is part of the assessment. An infrared thermometer with laser dot guidance is an easy way to check how even a radiator's temperature is across the surface, and is the engineer's eye into what is happening inside the system.

Cold areas in a radiator indicate that a build-up of sludge and corrosion debris is preventing hot water from reaching the area – and the answer is invariably 'power flush the heating system'.

Summer is a great time for engineers to promote a power flush of older systems, to restore efficiency at a time when heating is not so

critical, and the thermometer is a handy tool to demonstrate where a heating system is lacking. It is accurate to within a tenth of a degree and gives a professional image to a heating engineer.

Clearflow pumps generate a high velocity flow of water that dislodges sludge and corrosion deposits. Heating the system to 50°C once the flushing chemical has been added improves the speed and efficiency of a flush. The cleaning process is improved by rapidly reversing the flow of water to create turbulence in radiators. Fresh water is then driven through the system to purge the debris.

During the power flush engineers should continually check radiator temperatures, and, once they are consistent all over and the system water is clear, then the power flush has been successful.

The promotional offer of a free infrared thermometer runs for three months while stocks last. ■

Kamco

Keep your cool on site in Snickers' range of stylish Work Shorts

Snickers' Work Shorts are designed to deliver superior comfort and freedom of movement.

Fabric, functionality and fit are hallmarks of Snickers Workwear, and it's the innovation and fabric technology in the Stretch Shorts that really set them apart.

The AllroundWork and FlexiWork shorts



are great for working in the warmer months. Delivering superior flexibility and comfort, these lightweight work shorts come in a body-mapping design and a range of new colours.

Made from a self-ventilating stretch fabric with Cordura reinforcements for all-round mobility and durability, they're packed with comfort and functionality and designed for the fast-paced professional who's always on the go and delivering top class work on site. ■

For more information, call the helpline on 01484 854788, visit the website at www.snickersworkwear.co.uk or email sales@hultaforsgroup.co.uk

Snickers' new 4-Way Stretch Trousers are made for moving

Snickers' new slim-fit stretch trousers deliver extreme working comfort all day, every day.

Hi-tech fabrics and body-mapping designs in the new multi-purpose AllroundWork 4-Way Stretch Trousers ensure maximum mobility wherever you are on site.

With great fit and superb value for money, they have a slimmer fit for better looks and protection against snagging. There's reinforced Cordura in the KneeGuard System for greater comfort and durability and they're designed to take the D30 ERGO Craftsman Kneepad. Check out all the Stretch Garments from Snickers Workwear



– the optimal choice for craftsmen and women who need to get every job done comfortably and efficiently. ■

For more information, call the helpline on 01484 854788, visit www.snickersworkwear.co.uk or email sales@hultaforsgroup.co.uk

Snickers

WORKWEAR

Choose aluminium, choose quality

Drummond McKenzie, Area Sales Manager (Scotland) at Marley Alutec, explains the practical advantages of installing an aluminium rainwater and guttering system as opposed to those manufactured from PVC or cast iron.

For the second year in a row, we have renewed our SNIPEF membership and in truth, it was an easy decision to make as it provides us with countless benefits, including introducing us to many plumbing contractors who work with rainwater and guttering systems. However, there are still those in the trade who don't fully understand the benefits of an aluminium rainwater and guttering system, and this means many are missing out on the most suitable solution for modern rainwater needs.

While traditionally, rainwater systems have been manufactured from PVC or cast iron, both materials have their limitations. This is why an increasing number of suppliers, like us, manufacture their systems from aluminium which has a number of comparative advantages and is ideal for use across a wide range of properties.

JOINT DURABILITY

Durability is often the most important consideration when choosing a rainwater system. In recent years, many installers have shifted away from cast iron systems to PVC on the grounds of their additional durability without maintenance. On average, PVC systems have around a 20-year life expectancy, but products manufactured from highly corrosion resistant aluminium have a functional life expectancy of 50+ years with minimal maintenance. In addition, aluminium naturally generates a protective oxide coating if its surface should be damaged, further helping to ensure the product's extended lifecycle.

INSTALLATION BENEFITS

As most rainwater system installations happen at height, it is important to look for a lightweight solution that is easy to fit to reduce the risk to the installer during fitting. Despite this, heavy cast iron rainwater systems remain popular. In fact, most systems manufactured from this material require multiple tradespeople to manoeuvre and install. Instead, plumbers should consider aluminium systems, which are approximately 65% lighter than cast iron



equivalents meaning installation is much easier with the need for excessive heavy lifting reduced.

Similarly, there are now a number of aluminium systems that are as easy to install as PVC. For example, Marley Alutec's Evolve guttering range simply snaps into the fascia brackets with similar snap-on union clips for the gutter joints. Marley Alutec also offers fascia and soffit systems with H-section joints that perfectly mimic PVC alternatives, making them just as easy to install. Akin to PVC alternatives, both ranges can be fitted without the need for any specialist skills or tools but with vastly superior quality and durability.

AESTHETIC BENEFITS

Aluminium systems also offer an array of design and colour choices that can be used to create any aesthetic goal. The material is an ideal substrate for polyester powder coating and can also be used as a direct replacement for bolted cast iron in a textured polyester coated finish. This means that designers can replace cast iron products with enhanced, significantly lighter systems that are visually identical.

There is a lot to consider when specifying a rainwater system. However, those in the trade should know that their options aren't restricted to cast iron versus PVC. Instead, plumbers should familiarise themselves with modern aluminium rainwater systems which offer the best of both worlds as lightweight, easy to install, extremely durable solutions available in a range of colours and styles. ■

Aluminium can provide a range of benefits for rainwater and gutter systems

ALUTEC
ALUMINIUM RAINWATER SYSTEMS

For more information about Marley Alutec, please visit www.marleyalutec.co.uk

For fast fixing of pipes in floor joists or stud walls

NEW
10-16" RSWB
now available!

Request a free sample now at
walraven.com/en/rswb

Britclips® RSWB

Why mess around with wooden noggins when you can keep a box of RSWB's on your van? With two sizes available they will fit any joist divide between 25 and 60cm. Perfect for all your first fix needs from mounting pipework in floor joists or stud walls to bathroom set ups. With pre-drilled holes you can simply screw in your pipe clips and get perfect alignment!

Installer Craig Reading told us: "These brackets have changed the way we work. The time-saving benefit is key for us, they are so simple and effective we can get our jobs done quicker and they look great too!"