



Winter 2021

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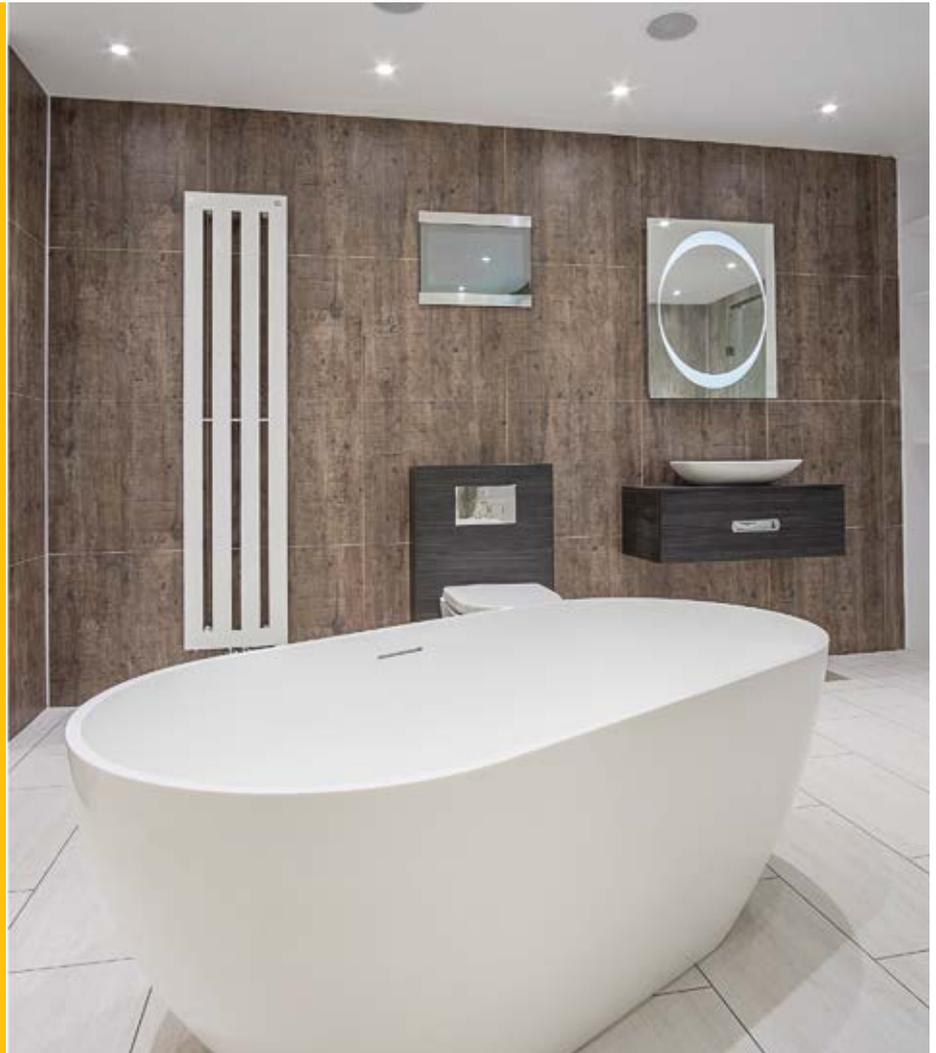
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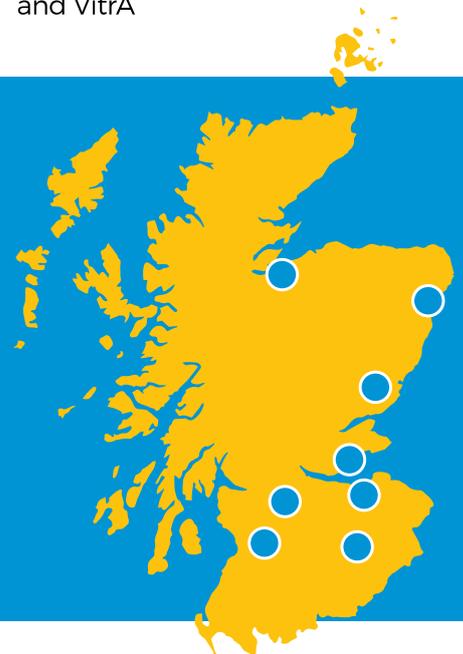
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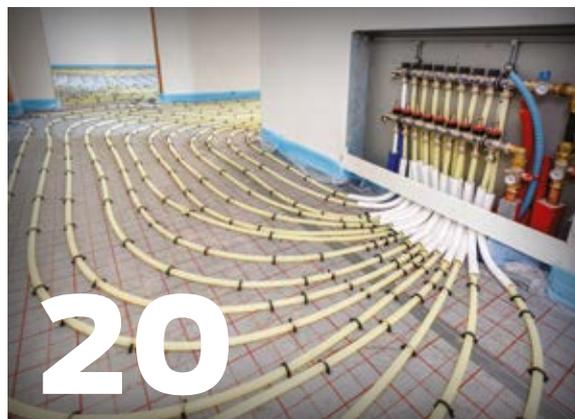


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Editor Cassandra Gowans
cassandra.gowans@snipef.org

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

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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

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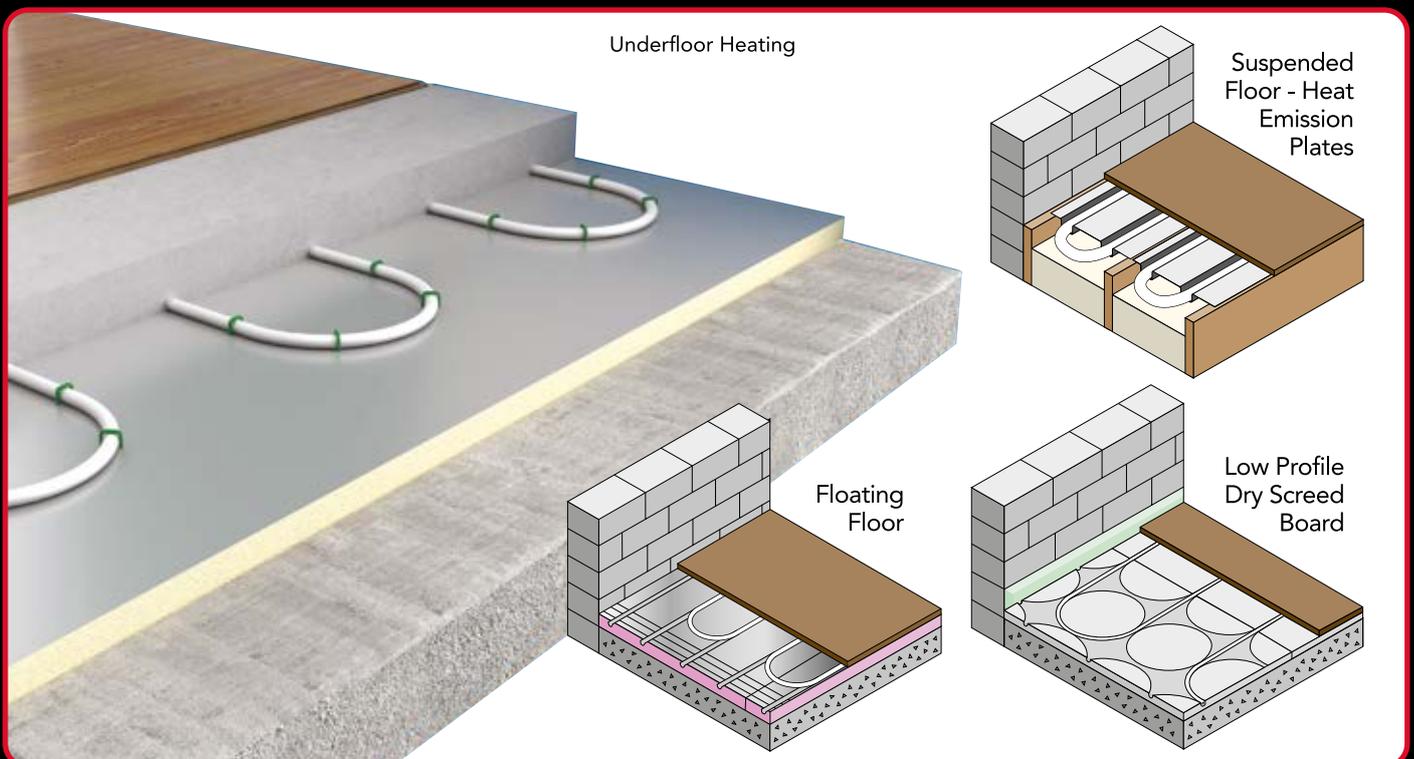
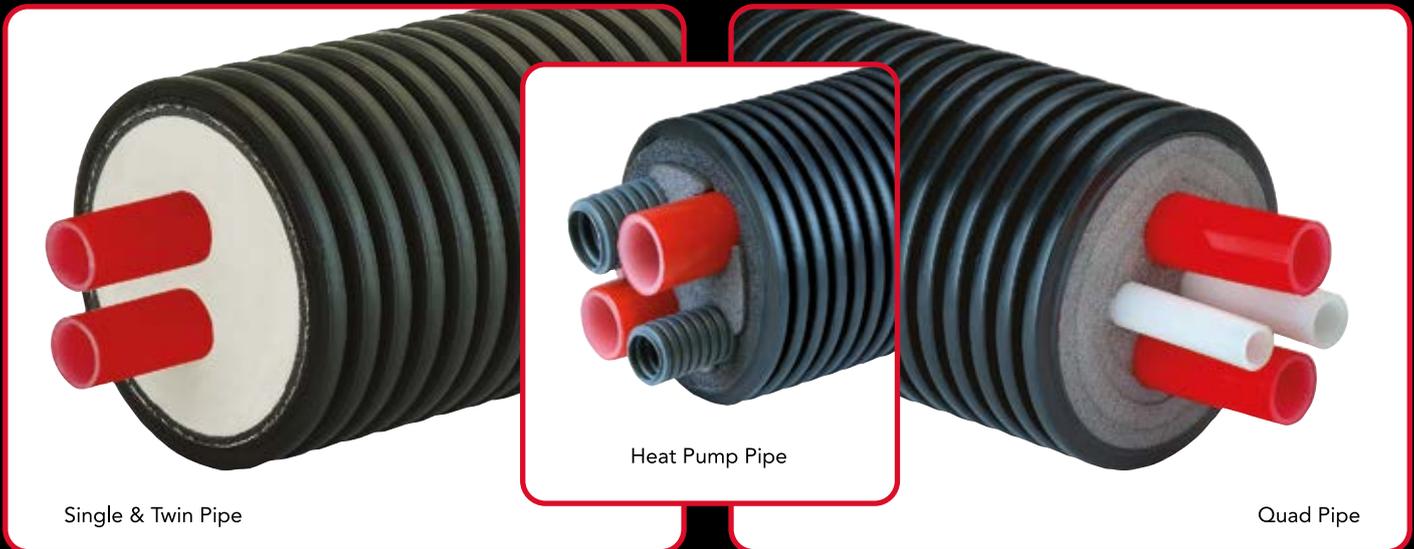
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Comment

FROM FIONA HODGSON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, SNIPEF

Overcoming the obstacles

During 2020 I found myself watching a lot of Netflix and came across *The Last Dance*, which charts the rise of the 1990s Chicago Bulls, led by Michael Jordan, one of the most notable dynasties in sports history. Jordan once said that “Obstacles don’t have to stop you. If you run into a wall, don’t turn around and give up. Figure out how to climb it, or work around it”.

We have all had to overcome obstacles as a result of the pandemic and where once we might have avoided them, playing it safe and sticking to what we know, we all had to move out of our comfort zone, think on our feet and adapt to change very quickly.

At SNIPEF our goal is to support members to run successful plumbing and heating businesses in what has always been a competitive and changing market, but never more so than now. During 2020 we provided various resources to members to assist in these challenging times. Members were given free access to employment, contractual and technical advice and a new

website was launched which included a dedicated coronavirus area containing up to date guidance. Behind the scenes we worked with other like-minded professionals and trade bodies lobbying government to get construction back to work safely, interpreting government guidance and running webinars to raise awareness of key issues.

SNIPEF changed from having face to face meetings and training courses in our Edinburgh office to having more frequent virtual meetings and developing online training facilities. For many of our members and staff, Microsoft Teams has become the new way of communication and in so many ways has been a lifeline to so many businesses.

Similarly, SNIPEF worked with a selection of colleges to develop online training assessments for apprentices to enable them to complete assessments in their home or workplace and help reduce the time lost in college.

As an organisation, we were simply responding to issues as they arose to help meet the needs of our members and in many cases this meant we had to change the way we did things and think out of the box.



Fiona Hodgson,
Chief Executive,
SNIPEF

Some members faced and continue to face financial hardship as a result of the pandemic. As well as highlighting what financial assistance was available from government and challenging where we believed more support was required, we worked with members who were having difficulty paying their annual subscription and will continue to do so in 2021.

To further assist members dealing with the financial impact of the pandemic, SNIPEF has agreed not to raise its membership fees for 2021 and is looking to introduce a fee structure based on turnover in 2022 which should be a fairer charging system and provide more parity.

For any membership organisation, it is paramount that it understands the issues that are affecting its members and SNIPEF is no different.

With the Scottish elections in 2021 and Northern Ireland elections in 2022, we want to know what your key issues are so that we are best able to support and represent you.

For this reason, we issued a short ‘members only’ survey in December asking for your input on the issues which mattered to you. We will use this information not only to set out our manifesto to government but most importantly to tailor and improve our services to you, to reflect your evolving needs and the changing business landscape.

We will all face further obstacles during 2021 but having faced so many in 2020, we are now more adept to working around them and, as your trade association, be confident that SNIPEF will be here to advise and support you. ■

“At SNIPEF our goal is to support members to run successful plumbing and heating businesses in what has always been a competitive and changing market, but never more so than now”



💡 RENEWABLE ENERGY

SNIPEF creates bonds with Scottish Hydrogen and Fuel

SNIPEF and the Scottish Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Association (SHFCA) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to help both organisations deliver their aims efficiently for their members.

The move closely aligns the interests of the body which promotes and develops one of the most promising technologies of the green energy revolution with the association whose member firms are most likely to be called upon to implement it.

The new links will support the growth and beneficial impacts of both sectors in Scotland and Northern Ireland and will help develop and share best practice in the safe use and deployment of hydrogen technologies.

Fiona Hodgson, Chief Executive of SNIPEF, said: "SNIPEF has always been a progressive and forward-looking organisation which tries to foresee trends in the sector and there is no doubt that the direction of travel is towards a greener future.

"Our new association with one of the largest hydrogen and fuel cell membership organisations in the world will keep us abreast of the core technologies which are coming."

SHFCA Chief Executive Nigel Holmes added: "Our association now has more than 115 members focused on helping Scotland achieve a major hydrogen and fuel cell economy.

Hydrogen can be used for bulk energy storage

"SHFCA will work with SNIPEF to support all our members on the deployment of hydrogen for low carbon heat in industry and homes across Scotland.

"This will make a significant contribution towards delivering Scotland's ambition for net zero by 2045, together with the key milestone of 75%

“SNIPEF has always been a progressive and forward-looking organisation which tries to foresee trends in the sector and there is no doubt that the direction of travel is firmly towards a greener future”

Staying safe in lockdown

Once again, we have found ourselves in another lockdown. While the restrictions are affecting all our members, especially those who do most of their work in domestic settings, we understand that these restrictions are in place to help and protect us. The current vaccination process is making me hopeful for the future and I look forward to the day when businesses can work at their full capacity.

I am glad that a part of the construction sector can still work, but there must be a focus on health and safety. The CICV Forum, which SNIPEF is part of, has created many useful guidelines, infographics and videos to be shared among your staff. These include information on travelling to work safely, wearing masks, working from home, working in domestic settings, social distancing and much more. I highly recommend that you visit the CICV Forum website and its social media accounts to acquaint yourself with these documents.

Another challenge we are currently dealing with is Brexit. We have been contacted by a few members reporting issues with receiving goods. We hope this will be fixed, but members should try to prepare for this being a problem. Visit the Brexit Information section of our website for help and guidance.

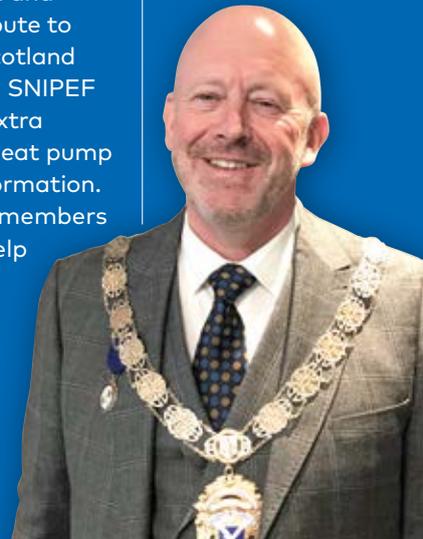
I am thrilled with The Low Carbon Heat Skills



Grant that has been announced. The funding is to help upskill plumbing apprentices and employees in the installation of ground and air source heat pumps. This will contribute to the green energy transformation as Scotland transitions to net zero carbon by 2045. SNIPEF is also offering its Scottish members extra funding on the air and ground source heat pump course. Please contact us for more information.

As always, I would like to thank our members for their support. SNIPEF is here to help you, so please contact us if you need advice or support. Take care.

Neil Hadden,
SNIPEF
President



“The Low Carbon Heat Skills Grant will contribute to the green energy transformation as Scotland transitions to net zero carbon by 2045.”

GHG reduction by 2030. We are delighted to be able to establish such a strong association with a body of professional firms which shares our values in terms of sustainable energy use and the promotion of Scotland's expertise on the national and international stage.”

According to Cleantechica, the world's leading source for cleantech analysis, Scotland has significant influence on the global wind energy industry



Fiona Hodgson,
Chief Executive
of SNIPEF

and its resources could be used to decarbonise heavy transport by using wind to produce green hydrogen for fuel cells.

Hydrogen, produced when water is 'split' by an electrical current, can be used for bulk, long-duration energy storage, creating the ability to store electricity at scale from wind farms. It also has applications in agriculture and food processing, refinery operations, metallurgy and scientific research.

STAFF

Meet our new arrival

Alison Hadley, Membership & Communications Administrator

Alison is from Edinburgh and has a Masters in Sociology (with Hons), which she completed in 2014. She has previously worked in reception and administration roles. Away from work, Alison enjoys reading and going for walks.



Looking ahead to the role of renewables

Back in November, SNIPEF's Technical and Skills Manager Martyn Raine took part in a webinar hosted by *Installer Magazine*.

The session focused on the future of heating in Scotland and looked at the current uptake of renewables in Scotland, where the opportunities lie for heating and plumbing tradespeople, and how to diversify your business.

Phil Hurley, Managing Director of NIBE and Vice Chairman of the Heat Pump Association, David Blevings from OFTEC and SNIPEF member Barry Sharp from Renewable Heat joined Martyn for the in-depth and informative discussion.

It was great to have a SNIPEF member there to give their views on renewables and share

the perspective of a business whose expertise is in the field of renewable heating systems.

Barry Sharp

INDUSTRY SURVEY

Fears over future change

The latest sector-wide survey reveals some good news for turnover but uncertainty remains

The latest quarterly sector-wide Building Engineering Business Survey shows that even though members reported a positive turnover in Q3, there is a worry that this will change in the following quarter.

The survey shows a shift towards recovery compared to Q2, when almost 60% of businesses reported a drop in turnover during the first half of the year: 64% of businesses reported the same or increased turnover in Q3, with only 35% reporting a decrease.

But more than two fifths of firms (43%) admitted they predict a fall in turnover by the end of 2020.

The survey revealed that approximately one in three businesses are unsure of how Brexit will impact them going forward. And with engineering services combatting the rising costs of materials, more than 51% reported a substantial increase between the second and third quarter of 2020.

Fiona Hodgson, Chief Executive of SNIPEF, said: "While the latest survey shows some positive news with

35%
of businesses
recorded a loss
in turnover

most members having a successful Q3 in terms of turnover, there is a concern that this might change in the upcoming months. Combined with rising costs and payment delays, this may prove to be a challenging time for members.

"As there is still confusion of how Brexit will affect businesses, we are urging members to be as prepared as they can be for any changes.

"We will continue to monitor

17%

of members reported an increase in employment of subcontractors and agency workers

41%

of direct contracts report that they were paid within 30-days

64%

of members reported an increase in Q3



30%

of businesses are unsure of how Brexit will impact their businesses going forward

43%

predicted a fall in turnover by the end of 2020

“The latest survey shows some positive news with most members having a successful Q3 in terms of turnover”

the position and keep our members updated.”

For the first time since 2019, 17% of those who replied to the survey reported an increase in

employment of subcontractors and agency workers, almost double the figure recorded from Q2.

However, regardless of public sector rules detailing payment within a 30-day period, many businesses revealed they still face a major challenge to get paid on time. Fewer than 41% of direct contracts and 27% of indirect contracts reported that they were paid within this time period.

27%

of indirect contracts report that they were paid within 30-days

51%

reported a substantial cost increase between the second and third quarter of 2020

PROMPT PAYMENT CODE

Breakthrough in battle over fair payment terms for businesses

We have welcomed a major milestone on the road to fairer payment terms for small businesses with sweeping reforms to the UK Government's Prompt Payment Code.

Under the new obligations, nearly 3,000 companies signed up to the code will have to pay 95% of small business suppliers within 30 days of invoicing, halving the current time limit.

The move should bring about an immediate and positive effect on cashflow. According to the Federation of Small Businesses, 50,000 firms close every year as a direct consequence of late payment.

SNIEF has been vocal in highlighting the issue of payment abuse. Fiona Hodgson, Chief Executive of SNIEF, said: "SNIEF has been voicing its concerns about this damaging issue for many years now and the reforms to the code will go a considerable way to easing some of the pressure on small business owners.

"It is particularly timely, since smaller companies need all the help they can get as the construction sector continues its uphill struggle to emerge from the grip of the pandemic and contribute fully again to the wider economy."

Ms Hodgson pointed out that over years of listening to SNIEF member companies and monitoring

Continued overleaf



Continued from page 9

their concerns, the problem of late payment has always been at the forefront of the issues that affect them.

She said: "Late payment causes real hardship and has a knock-on effect. It has hit hard over the last year, on top of the restrictions the sector has faced, and I believe the reforms will be welcomed by responsible businesses.

"It is heartening that all the years of lobbying by the construction industry have secured a tangible result and we will continue to fight for a fair and competitive business environment."

Gordon Matheson, SNIPEF Past President and former Chair of SEC Group (Scotland), said: "We can look forward to quicker payment for all small businesses.

"There has never been a more important time to speed up payment. Hopefully, the small business commissioner will use these powers to strike off persistent late payers who use the money as free finance for their own companies."

The requirement will become effective from 1 July this year. The existing target to pay 95% of larger businesses within 60 days will remain in place.

Changes which come into effect immediately include a requirement for the most senior person in a company to sign the code personally; acknowledgement that suppliers can charge interest on late invoices; and the enablement of code administrators to investigate breaches.

Gordon Matheson

INDUSTRY NEWS

End of an era as Specialist Engineering Contractors Group closes after 30 years



The Specialist Engineering Contractors (SEC) Group is coming to a close this year after almost 30 years. The organisation represents the largest sector (by value) in the UK construction industry and comprises SNIPEF, BCSA, BESA, ECA, SELECT, LEIA and the Scaffolding Association.

SNIPEF would like to pay tribute to all those involved in the group and in particular CEO Rudi Klein, Group Chair Trevor Hursthouse, Group Scotland Chair Gordon Matheson and the late Lord Martin O'Neill, the SEC Group President.

Throughout its history, SEC Group has been the only body exclusively representing the interests of specialist engineering contractors across the UK and has tirelessly campaigned to improve the construction industry supply chain trading environment, not least for SMEs. Key achievements include:

- playing a crucial role in achieving the 1996 Construction Act and subsequent updated

legislation to help eliminate industry bad practices and support the supply chain by improving payment security

- championing project bank accounts – now mandated for public contracts in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and established as the default option for all government procurement
- promoting new models of procurement that facilitate true collaboration through a focus on quality and value while minimising waste
- campaigning to end the outdated practice of retentions and protect payment to supply chains.

Following on from SEC Group, a new engineering services sector alliance called Actuate UK has launched. It is a collective of eight leading



“Actuate UK will give a welcome boost to our work in many areas and we look forward to working together closely”

💡 TAX CHANGE

trade, technology, research, and professional bodies that will deliver a single, consolidated voice for the sector.

As an agent for positive change, Actuate UK supports the delivery of a safer, more productive, and sustainable UK built environment and, together with others in the industry and government, will play a key role in essential national initiatives. These include the Construction Leadership Council's Recovery Roadmap, the Construction Playbook and strategic economic plans in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, building safety reform and the drive for zero net carbon.

Actuate UK will also lead the sector's response to the building safety agenda and post-Covid green recovery, providing direction and championing the industry culture changes needed for their successful delivery.

Fiona Hodgson, Chief Executive of SNIPEF, said: "SNIPEF campaigns on a wide variety of issues on behalf of member companies, with a focus on critical changes needed to create a resilient and sustainable construction sector.

"Actuate UK will give a welcome boost to our work in many areas and we look forward to working together, closely, and productively, in the future, not least in relation to the substantial amount of work undertaken by Scotland's Construction Industry Coronavirus (CICV) Forum throughout the pandemic."

Other bodies included are the Building Engineering and Services Association, the Building Services Research and Information Association, the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers, ECA – Electrical and Engineering Services, the Federation of Environmental Trade Associations, the Lift and Escalator Industry Association and SELECT – the Electrical Contractors' Association of Scotland.

SNIPEF calls to withdraw damaging reverse charge VAT legislation

SNIPEF has once again joined with more than 40 other trade associations in writing to the UK Government demanding the withdrawal of proposed reverse charge VAT legislation.

The influential trade bodies felt the need to press the case for a rethink with the Chancellor Rishi Sunak in the absence of a reply to a detailed argument they sent him in a letter dated 10 December last year.

The latest appeal reiterates the fact that reverse charge VAT will restrict cashflow in a vital and socially contributory industry, especially to the smallest firms, at just about the worst possible time.

The letter, led by the Federation of Master Builders, again emphasises that the policy – due to come into force on 1 March – risks reversing what modest recovery the industry has made from the pandemic and will limit the scope for protecting and creating jobs at a time when the country needs this most.

Fiona Hodgson, Chief Executive of SNIPEF, acknowledged an earlier delay in introducing the changes and also other UK Government aid to the sector, but said: "Introduction of reverse charge VAT now would be seriously detrimental to the economic recovery of the sector."

Reverse charge VAT will change how

cash flows through the supply chain as subcontractors will no longer charge VAT, which currently they can hold on to until it is time to pay it to HMRC. Instead, only the firm at the top of the supply chain will charge VAT to the end client, which will then be paid to HMRC.

The change is intended to clamp down on "missing-trader fraud", which HMRC estimates costs about £100 million per year in lost VAT. Such fraud involves a company collecting VAT from customers then disappearing without paying the sums collected on to the tax authorities.

Fiona said: "The changes will particularly impact SMEs that provide both services and materials. This is because they will have to pay VAT on the materials they purchase which can be costly, but will not be paid the VAT by their customers.

"Instead, they will need to wait until their next VAT return to recover the VAT which will detrimentally affect their cash flow and that for a significant number of companies will be unsustainable."

SNIPEF and the other trade bodies argue that their member companies are already subject to independent scrutiny which limits fraudulent behaviour and the introduction of reverse charge VAT unfairly penalises those that pay their VAT and comply with their obligations.

💡 HEAT CONSULTATION

Have your say

The Scottish Government has published their Heat in Buildings Strategy draft and are asking our members for feedback. The draft strategy outlines the steps required for transforming buildings

and the systems that supply their heat, ensuring Scotland transitions to zero emissions by 2045.

In line with Scotland's updated Climate Change Plan, it sets out the vision for more than a million homes

and an estimated 50,000 non-domestic buildings to be using low and zero emissions heating systems by 2030. The consultation closes on 30 April 2021, to view the draft and give feedback, visit bit.ly/sgdraft

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★ BREXIT BULLETIN

NORTHERN IRELAND PROTOCOL

The Northern Ireland Protocol came into effect on 1 January 2021 which means changes to the way goods move between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The Customs Declaration Service should now be used for declarations on the movements of goods to or from Northern Ireland, including goods from Great Britain to Northern Ireland. The CHIEF system can still be used under some circumstances. Some notable points are:

- Traders now need to adhere to new digital import declaration requirements, and digital safety and security information, for goods entering Northern Ireland from the rest of the UK
- Goods placed on the



NI market now require both the UKNI marking and CE Marking due to the new conformity assessment process being changed on 1 January 2021

- You need to make sure that your business has an EORI number starting with GB.

SUPPLY CHAIN INTERRUPTION

Unfortunately, a few members have reported issues with getting goods delivered. This has been on a small scale, but it is a problem we are aware of and encourage our

GRANTS

SNIEPF welcomes Low Carbon Heat Skills training funding

SNIEPF has warmly welcomed an announcement of funding to help upskill plumbing apprentices and employees in the installation of ground and air source heat pumps.

The new skills will be at the heart of the green energy transformation as Scotland transitions to net zero carbon by 2045, with the aim of approximately 126,000 buildings to be fitted with heat pumps by the end of 2025 and more than 50% of Scottish homes to be heated through renewable technology by 2030.

With the new Low Carbon Heat Skills Grant, the Scottish Government will be offering employers a grant covering up to 50% of the cost of necessary training courses for small to medium businesses.

SNIEPF is also offering its Scottish members funding of 200

Martyn Raine,
Technical and Skills
Manager, SNIEPF





members to prepare for these interruptions. Prepare for Brexit Scotland has identified two ways to help you get ready:

- Map your supply chain to assess risks and opportunities
- Supply chain mapping will help you identify the complexity of your supply chain and can be used as a

starting point for discussions with your teams, as well as with your suppliers. You might want to include supply chain managers, buyers, warehouse staff, technical staff and finance staff

- Find alternative suppliers with the help of the Research Service. You may need to find alternative suppliers to mitigate trade risks or to take advantage of new opportunities. Finding a new supplier can seem daunting, but the Research Service has collated a directory of suppliers by sector which can be accessed on the Scottish Enterprise website.

For more useful Brexit information and updates, please visit the Brexit Information section on the SNIPEF website. For our Scottish members please visit www.prepareforbrexit.scot for more updates, resources and events focused on Brexit. Our NI members can find information at bit.ly/3cXr93U. The UK Government has created a Brexit on-demand video service which focuses on priority topics for businesses. View them at bit.ly/2MNEQHT

Northern Ireland members meeting

In December last year, SNIPEF hosted a meeting with some of our members from Northern Ireland.

During the meeting we discussed the work SNIPEF has undertaken to help members during the pandemic. This included working with the SEC Group to feedback to Northern Ireland Construction Group and the NI Central Procurement Departments.

We talked about skills and apprenticeships, especially the NVQ Level 2 and Level 3 frameworks in plumbing. With a new Energy Strategy for NI being released later this year, challenges were identified for NI, including the need for upskilling, lack of operatives and a potential lack of marketplace demand.

The meeting was rewarding for both SNIPEF and SNIPEF members and we are thrilled to be hosting more meetings with our NI members throughout the year. It's important for us to get feedback from businesses and to make sure that we are representing the needs of our members.

places on the air and ground source heat pump course at £150 – which would mean, given the government funding of £300, the course would cost firms only £150.

“It is in everyone’s interests to act as soon as possible to reduce unnecessary emissions from heating our buildings”

The courses are designed to provide apprentices and employees with the skills they need to install low carbon heat technologies, especially air and ground source heat pumps, helping employers futureproof businesses. The Energy Saving Trust website has more information on eligibility.

Martyn Raine, technical and skills manager of SNIPEF, said: “This is very welcome assistance at a time when the direction of travel is so clearly towards low

carbon technologies and we are pleased to be able to put additional funding in place to encourage take-up.

“We would encourage all our member companies to take advantage of this scheme in order to enhance their workforce capability and play their part in creating a new environment of sustainable energy.”

The funding announcement coincides with a new scheme from the Scottish Government to help homeowners install renewable and energy efficiency measures. The £4.5 million cashback plan for domestic properties follows a similar incentive worth £4 million designed to encourage small-to-medium enterprises to install energy saving technologies.

Homeowners will be able to apply for 75% cashback up to the value of £7,500 towards the cost of a renewable heating system and a further 40% cashback up to £6,000 for energy efficiency measures. The offer is an

extension of the Home Energy Scotland loan scheme and will operate on a first-come, first-served basis until the end of the current financial year.

Fiona Hodgson, Chief Executive of SNIPEF, said: “It is in everyone’s interests to act as soon as possible to reduce unnecessary emissions from heating our buildings and there are wonderful new technologies available which will help us to make a real difference.”

While welcoming the initiatives, SNIPEF also stressed the importance of work being undertaken by trained, qualified and accredited plumbing and heating professionals.

SNIPEF has been at the forefront of innovation in training and skills to ensure a dynamic industry staffed by professionals versed in the complexity of the technologies which are underpinning renewables and meeting the demand for clean energy in an age of climate change.

Andy's update

By Andy Furnevel,
Membership Officer,
SNIPEF

We catch up with SNIPEF Membership Officer Andy Furnevel to find out what he's been up to lately

HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

In my previous update in the autumn issue of *PlumbHeat*, I was delighted to be writing about the lifting of Covid restrictions, but we now find ourselves back in lockdown once again.

I really do understand how difficult working through the pandemic is for our members as I speak with you on a daily basis. The latest lockdown has thrown up more questions than answers regarding what types of work can be carried out and what is deemed as essential or non-essential.

Being part of the CICV Forum enables SNIPEF and the other member organisations to have direct communication with the Scottish Government, allowing us to provide updates. You can find all the latest information on both the SNIPEF and CICV Forum websites.

WORKING FROM HOME

I'm now entering my eleventh month of working from home and a large part of that has consisted of being the main point of contact for incoming phone calls.

This is not my only role as I also handle the majority of membership enquiries and attend a wide range of meetings online via Microsoft Teams or Zoom.

The last couple of months have been particularly busy dealing with the membership annual

returns. I've also been learning more and more about the computer systems and should be awarded a medal as I can now process applications.

LIVING THROUGH LOCKDOWN

It was spring and summer when the last nationwide lockdown hit and the weather was obviously much better which allowed me to get into the garden at night and clean driveways, paint fences and plant trees, etc.

This lockdown is certainly different as there's currently two inches of snow on the ground and the temperature hasn't got above freezing for more than a week.

If it was summer, I would be playing golf, attending football, going for walks or meeting friends and family in the pub. None of this is really possible just now and if I head out for a walk, I'm likely to end up my backside and do myself an injury.

GET IN TOUCH

Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns you have on **07801 741 346** or email **andy.furnevel@snipef.org** Remember you can also follow me on Twitter **@SNIPEFandy**

Stay safe and see you soon. ■

NEW MEMBERS

- Peter Joyce & Son Ltd
- Quale Homes Ltd
- H B Heat Ltd
- Kaybee Builders (Edinburgh) Ltd
- G W Plumbing & Heating
- Norserv FM Ltd
- McEachern Bros Construction Ltd



Meet a member

In our latest profile, we get to know **Michael Stuart**, Managing Director of W&M Stuart Plumbing and Heating

HI MICHAEL, TELL US ABOUT YOUR COMPANY

W & M Stuart Plumbing and Heating was started up in 1984 by my father, William Stuart. We work across Aberdeenshire and carry out all aspects of plumbing and heating work. We offer many services, everything from a dripping tap to a complete bathroom design and installation. That includes work on new builds with complete heating systems, solar panel systems, and installation of gas and oil central heating. We also carry out annual boiler servicing and repairs for our customers all over the north east.

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE WITHIN THE COMPANY?

I am the Managing Director. I'm responsible for the organisation of jobs and

QUICK FACTS

NAME:
W & M Stuart
BASED: Alford
WEBSITE:
wmstuart.co.uk

Michael's quick-fire questions

COFFEE OR TEA?

Coffee

SWEET OR SAVOURY?

Sweet

FAVOURITE FILM? *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*

WHICH SUPERPOWER WOULD YOU CHOOSE TO HAVE? Flight

LAST THING YOU READ

Newspaper

MORNING PERSON OR NIGHT OWL? Morning

FAVOURITE HOLIDAY DESTINATION? Tenerife

DREAM CAR?

An all singing and dancing MKII Escort

ordering materials but I'm still very much hands on, and I go out and about on jobs.

HOW DID YOU BECOME INTERESTED IN THIS TYPE OF WORK AND HOW DID YOU GET STARTED?

It was inevitable that I would follow in my father's footsteps. Ever since I can remember, I would help out in the yard and store then, as I got older, I would help out at weekends and in the school holidays. I left school on a Friday and began working for the company on the following Monday.

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

Working on Balfour House in Aboyne has got to be the best project I have been involved with. It's an A-listed building from the 18th century building and it received a full heating and domestic overhaul. The client's attention to detail is 100 per cent and I have enjoyed working alongside them to keep the traditional aspects of the building alive.

WHAT IS YOUR FUNNIEST PLUMBING MOMENT?

An underground water tank was installed without us being there and filled, meaning the connections inside still had to be done! The client eagerly donned his wetsuit to assist in holding the connections inside the tank while we tightened.

WHAT ARE YOUR AMBITIONS FOR THE FUTURE?

We want to continue providing the best possible service to all our customers.

WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE ABOUT THE INDUSTRY?

The fact that Joe Bloggs can go on to the internet and buy items we use on a daily basis cheaper or at the same price.

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

You're kept up to date with the latest information on the industry and SNIPEF Training Services provide full funding for apprentices. You can get help with plumbing courses and technical information. ■





Current Software Not Cutting It?

Trade up, with simPRO

Service. Project. Maintenance.

Connect office operations to service in the field with our cloud-based software solution.

simprogroup.com/uk



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

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

TOP PRIORITIES FOR HOMEOWNERS IN SCOTLAND AND NORTHERN IRELAND

01. Remove all waste and belongings at the end of the job

63% **73%**

SCOTLAND

N. IRELAND

02. Maintain social distancing with their customers

59% **70%**

SCOTLAND

N. IRELAND

03. Wash hands

55% **63%**

SCOTLAND

N. IRELAND

04. Wear a mask/face covering

58% **68%**

SCOTLAND

N. IRELAND



Safe and sound

WaterSafe survey reveals what customers really want from their plumbers to feel reassured during Covid-19

WaterSafe's latest consumer survey asked 2,000 UK homeowners about their experiences of hiring a plumber since the beginning of Covid-19 pandemic, with results showing that one in five have used the services of a plumber during this time.

The most popular service in Scotland requiring a call-out since the beginning of the pandemic was new plumbing work, while in Northern Ireland it was fixing a leak and mending burst pipes.

To help plumbers reassure their customers, UK plumbing register WaterSafe is sharing the top priorities for homeowners in Scotland and Northern Ireland:

- Remove all waste and belongings at the end of the job (Scotland 63%, Northern

Ireland 73%)

- Maintain social distancing with their customers (Scotland 59%, Northern Ireland 70%)
- Wear a mask/face covering (Scotland 58%, Northern Ireland 68%)
- Wash hands (Scotland 55%, Northern Ireland 63%).

Other valued precautions for homeowners included using hand sanitiser, cleaning surfaces after working on them, wearing gloves, maintaining social distancing with colleagues and discussing safety precautions with them prior to the job.

The WaterSafe survey revealed that 46% of plumbers in Scotland and

Keeping to the Covid rules and cleaning surfaces helps customers to feel reassured

35% of plumbers in Northern Ireland made their customer's day by removing all waste and belongings at the end of the job.

But results also showed that only 27% of plumbers in Scotland and 40% in Northern Ireland maintained social distancing within their customers' homes.

Unsurprisingly, plumbers are also keen for customers to play their part as well.

A previous survey of plumbers revealed 10% of customers were not observing any government safety guidelines when they worked in homes.

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



Exploring the future of heat

In our new series looking at how we'll warm buildings in the decades to come, SNIPEF Technical and Skills Manager **Martyn Raine** examines the opportunities – and challenges – of the increase in heat pumps

Over recent years there has been considerable focus on net zero carbon emission and the plumbing industry has a part to play, predominantly through the heating of buildings.

The Scottish Government and the Northern Ireland Assembly have their strategies to meet the net zero targets, with Scotland setting a date of 2045 and Northern Ireland aiming for 2050. Scotland has also set some other milestones, with 2030 named as the goal for generating half of Scotland's energy consumption from renewable sources.

The green agenda has been identified as one of the 'economical escape routes' from Covid-19. This has brought real focus on heat generation in buildings and a large part of the plumbing sector who deliver heat services.

LOW CARBON HEAT GENERATION

There is a range of energy sources and techniques for generating heat in buildings. Some of these technologies are well established, such as heat pumps and solar, while others are still in development,

including hydrogen and biofuels. Heat pumps have been identified as the solution to the carbon conundrum by both the UK and Scottish Governments. Northern Ireland has remained technology-neutral at this time, but heat pumps will have a part to play here, too. So, what are the opportunities and challenges that could come with the mass deployment of heat pumps?

HEAT PUMPS

Heat pumps are a great technology utilising well-established refrigeration technology and harnessing energy held in natural resources such as air, ground and water. It's astonishing that we haven't embraced this technology on a larger scale sooner in the UK, especially since Lord Kelvin, who was born in Belfast and lectured mathematics in Glasgow, theorised thermodynamics back in the 1880s.

It is probably the case that heat pumps can provide heating for most, if not all, building types throughout Scotland and Northern Ireland.

As with any situation, there will be challenges that will need



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



to be addressed and we will probably need to take a 'fabric first' approach to buildings.

Our range of building stock will also create challenges through type and location. For example, a three-bed semi-detached house built in the last 30 years in suburbia probably suits the installation of external equipment, such as an air source heat pump, and it will be easier to upgrade the building fabrics, such as insulation. A solid stone walled block of flats in a city centre may prove more challenging. This will require good strategic planning that will bring together energy efficiency and heat generation measures to tackle carbon emissions.

THE AMBITION

The Scottish Government has identified heat pumps as an ideal solution to the net zero challenge ahead.



skilled. This skilled and qualified workforce will naturally bring quality and consumer confidence to the market, and that could boost demand. Industry recognised plumbers already hold the fundamental skillsets that are required in the heating industry. Many SNIPEF members already deliver heat services such as combustion appliance installation and maintenance and are perfectly placed to supply low carbon heat services. Simple upskilling of qualified plumbers can mobilise our workforce and allow a quick response to any marketplace demand either in the public or private sector.

The installation of heat pumps will no doubt be a dominant part of the heat sector, so our businesses need to start making the transition.

MARKETPLACE DEMAND

Marketplace demand will always be a question a business will need to be answered if it is to commit to investing in a transition of work types.

Naturally, over time, the new build sector will be required to install renewable energy systems as standard. The New Build Heat standard is expected to arrive in Scotland in 2024 and should set out strong standards. This should generate demand for both installation and maintenance operatives.

The requirement for retrofit systems plays a large part in decarbonisation. The public sector can drive demand through social housing and other public building stock. Private owner-occupiers of homes may be a more difficult part of our customer base to address and will require confidence from the buyers and financial support to stimulate and drive demand.

There is a range of loans and grants available through the Energy Saving Trust that can support this and we believe this type of financial support must remain and possibly increase to support mass deployment over the coming years. ■

The opportunity

If you work in the domestic market there is no doubt you will encounter a heat pump at some stage, whether that be installing one, repairing one or even just working on the heating circuit or water system connected to one. This technology will be a major player in the future and there

is a great opportunity to start making the transition to delivering low carbon heat services.

Funding is available for plumbing businesses to access 50% funding for renewable energy training in Scotland and SNIPEF also has a limited number of £150 grants available to members who

complete the renewable energy training.

For more information about grants and member support, contact us at info@snipef.org To find out more about upskilling grants from the Energy Saving Trust, visit energysavingtrust.org.uk/low-carbon-heat-skills-grant

It is currently estimated that we install approximately 2,000 heat pumps per year in Scotland, and to have any chance of meeting targets (for heat only) that will need to rise to 64,000 a year by the end of 2025. That means every year we will have to double the number

of heat pumps installed to a cumulative number of 126,000 installations.

SKILLS – THE RIGHT WORKFORCE

The workforce required to deliver services to the low carbon/renewable energy sector will need to be highly

Stored hot water is a common method used to satisfy the demand of hot water in a domestic property and there has been a transition from open vented/gravity feed systems to the more efficient unvented systems. The use of stored water vessels may increase over the coming years due to the increase in the use of heat pumps that will require hot water storage.

In this article, we want to address the pressure/thermal relief pipework from the unvented hot water cylinder and how to calculate the equivalent length to overcome the friction resistance of the pipework.

As with any pressurised or sealed system to be heated, we need to incorporate a means to release any excess pressure. When any pressure is released this will usually mean water will leave the stored vessel and terminate in a safe and conspicuous manner (so we know it is happening). The water leaving could be up to 95°C, which could create a major safety issue if it is not terminated correctly. We must design and install the pressure/thermal relief pipework correctly to ensure it does not pose a risk to anyone.

There are many situations when the pipework will need to be sited in a position under floors or behind a wall where once installed it is difficult to replace. This means it is essential to get the design right, so the installation is right the first time.

EQUIVALENT LENGTH AND FRICTIONAL RESISTANCE

As with any fluid/gas, the pipework the water passes through will create a frictional resistance. This resistance is from the wall of the pipework and changes in direction through fabricated bends and fittings. This resistance needs to be accounted for

Count on the right result

Find out how to make sure you're using the correct calculations when it comes to pressure/thermal relief pipework and overcoming friction resistance



by using an equivalent length calculation.

It is important to calculate this correctly as the section of pipework leaving the tundish operates through gravity, so if the equivalent length for the pipework has not been calculated correctly there is a risk of the system not being

able to disperse hot water correctly, which could create a dangerous situation. Typically, the pipework sizing is dictated by two factors – the pressure relief valve pipe diameter (referred to as D1) and the length of the pipe from the tundish to the termination point (referred to as D2).



By Martyn Raine,
Technical and
Skills Manager,
SNIPEF

Example: Tundish to termination (D2)

For an installation that has a 1/2" thermal relief valve with 15mm outlet (D1), there will be a requirement for 5 x 90° bends for the installation from the tundish to the termination (D2). As the valve outlet is 15mm, the outlet of the tundish should be a minimum of one size larger – in this situation, a minimum of 22mm. The D2 section of pipework is 7 metres in length (not including bends/fittings).

From the table below:

- D2 maximum resistance allowed for a straight length of 22mm copper discharge pipe (D2) is 9m
- 1 x 22mm bend = 0.8m resistance, 5 x 22mm bends = 4m
- Subtract the 4m fitting/bend resistance from the 9m permissible length: 9m – 4m = 5m
- 5m is less than the actual length of 7m, therefore calculate

the next largest size

- Maximum resistance allowed for a straight length of 28mm pipe (D2) is 18m
- 1 x 28mm bend = 1m resistance. Five bends = 5m
- Subtract the 5m fitting/bend resistance from the 18m permissible length for 28mm: 18m – 5m = 13m
- 13m is more than 7m actual length so 28mm is a sufficient pipe diameter.

Valve outlet size	Minimum size of discharge pipe to tundish (D1)	Minimum size of discharge pipe from tundish (D2)	Maximum resistance allowed, expressed as a length of straight pipe i.e. no elbows or bends	Resistance created by the addition of each elbow or bend
G 1/2	15mm	22mm	Up to 9m	0.8m
		28mm	Up to 18m	1.0m
		35mm	Up to 27m	1.4m
G 3/4	22mm	28mm	Up to 9m	1.0m
		35mm	Up to 18m	1.4m
		42mm	Up to 27m	1.7m
G 1	28mm	35mm	Up to 9m	1.4m
		42mm	Up to 18m	1.7m
		54mm	Up to 27m	2.3m

TERMINATING TO THE INTERNAL DRAINAGE

Terminating to the internal drainage of a property is another option, but this is not as simple as it may seem, especially if you are installing an unvented system to an existing property. If it is decided that termination will be made to the internal drainage, then it will be required that any plastic pipework be approved to be used for high temperatures.

When using this method, a mechanical self-sealing trap will be needed that will stop any odours coming from the drainage. There are various options on the market that have been designed for this application.

The pipework leaving the self-sealing trap and connecting to the plastic drainage system should be of a type that can resist high temperatures. The British Plastics Federation

“As with any pressurised or sealed system to be heated, we need to incorporate a means to release any excess pressure”

recommends polypropylene complying to BS EN 1451-1:2000 which is supported/clipped at 300mm intervals. The BPF also recommends that plastic pipework complying to BS 7291 2006 should not be used. Polypropylene tends to be a 'push-fit' type system and if you are intending to use an ABS solvent weld system,

you should liaise with the manufacturer to ensure it is satisfactory for this type of application.

Before connecting to the soil and vent pipe (SVP) checks should be made to determine if the SVP can take high water temperatures. The BPF advises the use of either a U-PVC SVP that complies with BS EN 1329 or BS EN 1453 or polyethylene (PE) to BS EN 1519. The connection should also be made to the drainage system using either a manifold fitting or an appropriately sized boss connector. It is advisable to avoid the use of a strapped boss. ■

Further information

More guidance can be found in manufacturers' instructions or in the Building Regulation guides:

- Northern Ireland – Building Regulations - Technical Booklet P 2012 bit.ly/2NbZBNv

- Scotland – Building Standards – Technical handbook – Section 4: Safety bit.ly/3qmm5ty



Learning lessons

The CICV Forum recently hosted webinars covering everything from contracts and industry culture to conflict avoidance. **Len Bunton** looks at the main points from these valuable sessions – and what practical advice contractors can take forward in 2021

As someone who deals with payment issues every day, I think contractor problems can often be self-induced. It was therefore decided that the CICV Forum would host a series of free webinars to help improve the contractual and commercial management of building projects and try to ensure contractors are paid what they are due when they are due.

To do this, I was joined by a team of extremely experienced presenters including Professor Rudi Klein, CEO of the SEC

Group, Ian Honeyman, Commercial Director of the Scottish Building Federation, Angus Pearson, Contracts and Disputes Specialist with Fortis, and Deborah Harrison, Legal Counsel with the British Constructional Steelwork Association.

So what were the main points we wanted to get across? I decided the easiest way to sum things up was this bullet point guide:

- Read the sub-contracts you receive and look out for issues that might cause a problem and attract risk. If



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

the risk is too high, then be prepared to walk away.

- Make sure you understand what documentation constitutes the **contract documentation** and read through carefully to ensure that all documents are aligned and that there isn't conflict between or within documents.
- Watch out for amendments to the payment provisions.
- Be aware of clauses which extend your obligations and know how to deal with them, such as third-party agreements, collateral warranties, indemnity wording and cross-contract set-off.
- If you cannot negotiate any other amendment, at the very least seek to reasonably limit your liability – a 'cap'.
- Look at the contract duration stated in the tender documents and consider whether the time period is adequate for the scope of works to be undertaken.
- If the time period is not



sufficient, having given due consideration to all factors which could impact on programme, propose an alternative or qualify your tender.

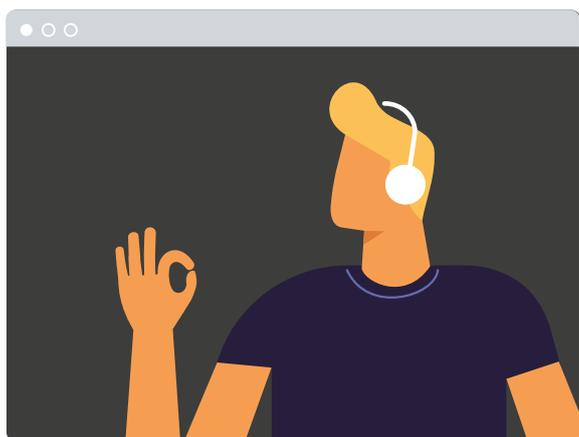
- Check that you have the right to claim for an extension to the date for completion. Understand the process which allows you to do so.
- Make sure your tender is qualified in respect of potential fluctuations in materials – remember Brexit – and put in something that means you do not take any risk in connection with sites closing and/or being disrupted by site closures.
- Use or adapt the payment schedule that is on the CICV Forum website and you will not run into any issues during the project on not meeting payment dates.
- Make sure you keep accurate records – email

communications, site diaries, resource schedules, videos and photographs. You never know when you might need these months down the line.

- Payment applications – provide as much detail as you can and don't give anyone any excuses to put a red pen through your applications. If you are asked for information, provide it.
- If you're not paid in full by the final date for payment then you have a statutory and contractual right under SBCC Conditions to suspend the performance of any or all of your obligations under the contract/sub-contract – a powerful remedy, so use it. You may be able to terminate your contract/sub-contract providing you follow the specific procedures.
- Make sure you follow the procedures in the contract/sub-contract for issuing notices. Send them to the correct person, at the correct address, within the specified time, in the manner described. Try to accommodate notice by email in your contract if you can.
- Get your final account in on time. Be sure it is clearly labelled as a final payment application in the terms of the contract. Chase up and collect your retentions. Keep a running ledger of when

retentions are due to be paid. Apply for retention if necessary.

- Have in mind the risk of insolvency of **any** party higher up the payment tree, not just the party employing you.
 - You have no need to be concerned about project bank accounts (PBAs), which ensure you get paid on time. You can find lots of information in the Useful Links section on www.cicvforum.co.uk
 - Conflict avoidance – inevitably you might need to take some action if you are not getting paid. Have a look at the CIC Low Value Adjudication Scheme and the Summary Procedure, which are low-cost adjudication schemes where the adjudicators' fees are fixed, making adjudication much more attractive to the construction supply chain. Consider writing these schemes into your contracts and sub-contracts. Again, information on these schemes can be found in the Useful Links section on www.cicvforum.co.uk
 - Conflict Avoidance Processes (CAP) – this is a game changer for the industry. It provides early intervention into any contentious issues on a construction project to resolve issues and stop them escalating further. The process helps to build relationships as well.
 - And finally.... collaborate. Negotiate. Talk. Find solutions. Do not let problems escalate.
- The six commercial webinars can be viewed on the CICV Forum website at cicvforum.co.uk/webinars along with other sessions on employment advice and health and safety matters. If you would like to see any other topics covered in 2021, email info@cicvforum.co.uk ■



Safety first

Make sure you're always up to date with the very latest Covid-19 health and safety advice with the CICV Forum's range of easy-to-use resources

As the pandemic continues, it's vital that we all play our part by following the health and safety rules and keeping up to date with the latest advice.

SNIEF has a key role in the Construction Industry Coronavirus (CICV) Forum to help our members navigate the Covid-19 crisis.

The dedicated collective brings together trade and professional bodies to share advice and speak directly to government on the issues that matter, giving the construction industry a stronger voice in pushing for positive change.

WORKING TOGETHER

The Forum also provides easy to follow advice and guidance to make people aware of the changing situation and what it could mean for their business.

Cassandra Gowans, SNIEF's Membership and Communications Manager, said: "The CICV Forum has played a vital part in helping our members in Scotland cope during the coronavirus pandemic. Working together with others in the industry has provided a wealth of expertise utilised to assist and reconstruct the industry.

"SNIEF members must follow the guidelines and stick

to the health and safety rules so that our industry can continue to work during this trying time. We urge you to make sure that you are doing all you can to keep yourself, employees and customers safe.

"We encourage our members to regularly check the Coronavirus Guidance section on our website as well as our social media channels for updated guidance. Infographics, videos and guidebooks are also available on the CICV Forum website."

KNOW THE RULES

Following the move back into lockdown, the Forum published a new version of its



downloadable infographic about domestic construction work, available for free on its website.

It gives an at-a-glance overview of what work is permitted during the latest lockdown and the health and safety measures that must be taken on all projects.

The engaging design delivers clear and concise advice about what you need to be aware of when working in someone's home, and a reminder of the rules to keep everyone safe.

PROPER PROTECTION

The infographic is part of a library of essential resources on the Forum's website, including a new campaign about using the correct PPE at work.

Mask for Task: Cover for Covid explains when to wear a mask or respirator on site and how to make sure your face covering is used correctly. There's also advice on taking care of your mask to ensure it gives you the best possible protection.

The animation explains how to use the right PPE

“In everything we do, we will continue to remind everyone in the industry that they have an important part to play in Scotland's recovery”

“Working together with others in the industry has provided a wealth of expertise utilised to assist and reconstruct the industry”



To help reinforce the message that it's vitally important to keep everyone safe, there's a colourful animation to remind workers about using the right PPE in the right way. And there's also a downloadable infographic poster giving specific instructions about using face coverings.

For more in-depth advice on health and safety, an updated

version of the Forum's SOG underpinning guidance was also published online in January.

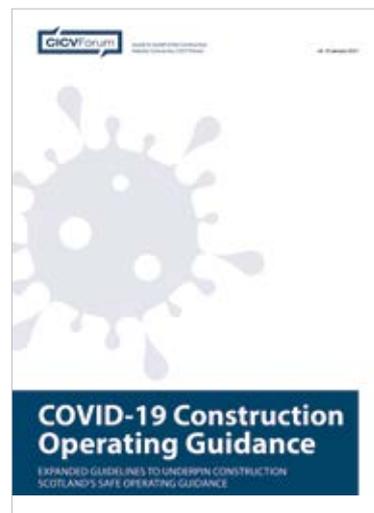
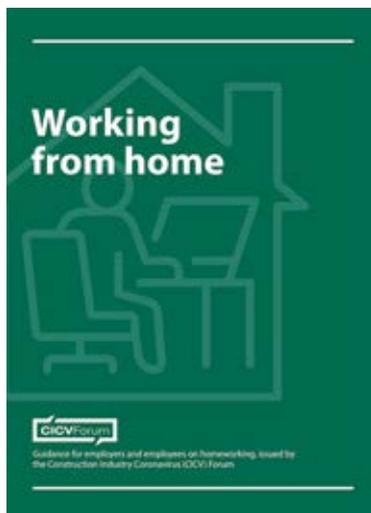
The detailed document is designed to support the safe operating guidance released by the Scottish Government and Construction Scotland.

SPREADING THE MESSAGE

The Forum has also reinforced its reminders to workers about how to travel safely to and from sites, as well as the importance of remaining Covid aware when you're not at work.

And its latest guidance documents provide advice for businesses where some employees are working from home. There's a digital leaflet with information on the issues that need to be considered when homeworking, as well as an interactive checklist to ensure staff are as safe as possible while working remotely.

Iain Mason, Chair of the Forum's Communications sub-group and Director of Membership and Communications at SELECT, said: "Since the CIV Forum was established, our animations and infographics have proved



New advice includes homeworking info and updated construction operating guidance



The new version of the domestic work guidance

effective tools and helped us deliver essential messaging to an extremely wide audience.

"We will continue our focus on co-operation and collaboration to help get us through the coming weeks and months. In everything we do, we will continue to remind everyone in the industry that they have an important part to play in Scotland's recovery."

The CIV Forum resources can be found online at www.civforum.co.uk and you can also follow the Forum on social media. ■

Downloads and media

- 'MASK FOR TASK' VIDEO / Watch at bit.ly/civ_maskfortask
- 'MASK FOR TASK' INFOGRAPHIC / Download at civforum.co.uk/downloads
- DOMESTIC GUIDANCE VIDEO / Watch at bit.ly/civ_domestic
- DOMESTIC GUIDANCE INFOGRAPHIC / Download at civforum.co.uk/downloads
- HOMEWORKING ADVICE BOOKLET AND CHECKLIST / Download at civforum.co.uk/downloads
- CONSTRUCTION OPERATING GUIDANCE / Download at bit.ly/SOP-new

Apprenticeship

SCOTLAND

Government support has been stepped up in response to the challenges young people are facing because of the coronavirus pandemic. Here, we explain what extra help is available for employers who are taking on an apprentice in Scotland or Northern Ireland.

APPRENTICESHIP EMPLOYER GRANT

The new Apprenticeship Employer Grant is part of the Scottish Government's Young Person's Guarantee. The grant aims to encourage more employers to take on an apprentice or upskill an existing staff member through an apprenticeship and is in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

The funding includes:

- £5,000 for employers taking on or upskilling a 16 to 24-year-old through an apprenticeship, and for those aged up to 29 who have a disability, are care experienced or are from a black, Asian or minority ethnic background
- £3,500 for employers taking on or upskilling an individual aged 25 and over through an apprenticeship.



Funding will be available for eligible employers where the apprenticeship start date was on or after 1 December 2020. Funding will be available for starts until 25 March 2021 or until funding levels are exceeded, whichever comes first. SNIPEF has asked for these dates to be extended.

Read more at www.apprenticeships.scot

ADOPT AN APPRENTICE

The Adopt an Apprentice grant is available to a replacement employer to allow them to support a redundant apprentice with their apprenticeship and work towards their qualification.

The amount available to the replacement

employers is either £2,000 or £5,000 dependent on the eligibility of the apprentice and the rules set out by Skills Development Scotland. Applications close on 25 March 2021.

Read more at www.ourskillsforce.co.uk

Since the pandemic began, SNIPEF has been made aware of 32 redundant apprentices and has been able to assist with the re-employment of 25 of them by actively using its member network to help find them new employers.

Dale Thomson, Training Manager for SNIPEF, said: "This has been a very difficult year for everyone in the construction sector.

"Many firms have been badly hit and people have lost their jobs.

"The funding will aid the recovery and encourage employers to maintain and enhance their workforces.

"It will give hope to individuals who have been made redundant over the pandemic." ■

Scottish Apprenticeship Week 2021

Apprentices have faced a difficult past year with their studies being disrupted and the challenges that Covid-19 has brought them. That's why this year we encourage you to support and uplift your apprentices by celebrating Scottish Apprenticeship Week, running from 1 to 5 March. This year's theme

“The funding will aid the recovery and encourage employers to maintain and enhance their workforces. It will give hope to individuals who have been made redundant over the pandemic”

funding for ■■■

NORTHERN IRELAND



NORTHERN IRELAND APPRENTICESHIP RECOVERY PACKAGE SCHEMES

The NI Department for the Economy (DfE) launched an Apprenticeship Recovery Package for Northern Ireland last year, intending to provide financial support to local businesses to help

the apprenticeship system respond to the impact of the Covid-19 crisis.

Applications for one project, the Apprenticeship Challenge Fund, closed last year but there are two other schemes still available.

RECRUITMENT OF NEW APPRENTICESHIPS

This incentive is available to all employers to support the recruitment of new apprentices. Employers will be eligible for up to £3,000 for each new apprenticeship opportunity created from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021. This bonus will apply to all new apprenticeship opportunities and includes apprentices who have been made redundant:

- **Payment 1** – £2,000

after 90 days' retention following start of new apprenticeship

- **Payment 2** – £1,000 after 200 days' retention following start of a new paid apprenticeship.

APPRENTICESHIP RETURN, RETAIN AND RESULT SCHEME

To help return apprentices from furlough and retain them until 31 March 2021 and on to successful completion of their apprenticeship, DfE will provide incentive payments to employers to support the return, retention and result for apprentices. The total amount payable under the scheme will be a maximum

of £3,700 per apprentice, distribution as follows:

- **Return** – £500 per returned furloughed apprentice payable for the first full month of paid apprenticeship from 1 November 2020
- **Retain** – maximum of £2,000 available: £500 per month for up to four months of paid apprenticeship between 1 December 2020 and 31 March 2021
- **Result** – £1,200 for successful full framework achievement of a returned furloughed apprentice

Visit www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk for further information. ■

is Business Backing Talent, to showcase the great things that happen when employers back talent through apprenticeships.

Along with stories about apprenticeships, Skills Development

Scotland will be providing information on the range of support available for employers to back talent through apprenticeships.

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Expert Rudi Klein examines how Covid-related risks are being shunted down the supply chain and discusses what contract clauses linked to the pandemic could mean for your business

Passing on the pain

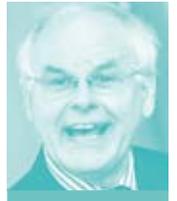
The resurgence of Covid-19 and the ever-growing number of areas subject to lockdowns have, again, raised the spectre of disruption to construction works. Such disruption may take many varied forms. Sites may be wholly or partially closed because of workers testing positive, government-ordered lockdowns which include construction, or interruption to deliveries to sites (meaning that progress to certain of the works has been/will be interrupted).

It may come as no surprise to many in the industry that Covid-related risks are being shunted along the supply chain. This is despite exhortations from the UK Government and all the devolved governments that we should all be working together and sharing risk



Example 1

".....the Sub-Contractor shall have no right or remedy pursuant to any provision of this Sub-Contract, whether by adjustment to the Sub-Contract Sum or by adjustment to the Completion Date(s) or otherwise or in damages at common law or in tort [delict in Scotland] or pursuant to any other theory of law to the extent that any matter listed in Schedule 1 (Notifiable Diseases) and/or Schedule 2 (Causative Agents) of the Health Protection (Notification) Regulations 2010 has any effect, whether direct or indirect, on the Works or on the progress of the Works".



By Rudi Klein,
Barrister and
SEC Group CEO



The costs over an eight-week period of lockdown could be phenomenal – cancelled deliveries, storage costs, salaries and overheads, etc"



in these unprecedented times. Clearly, this message hasn't got through to some clients and contractors.

ANALYSING EXAMPLE ONE

What is the clause in this example actually saying?

- In general, you are to assume all the Covid-related risks impacting upon your sub-contract works (even though you are unlikely to be in a position to avoid/manage them or insure against them).
- This is irrespective of whether the impact on the main contract works is **"direct or indirect"** ("indirect" could, for example, refer to the precautionary shutting down of a site because workers have been taken ill with Covid-19 on another – unrelated – site some five miles down the road).
- Through no fault of your own, you could be liable to pick up some or all of the main contractor's liquidated damages if it has not been given an extension of time by the client (or if it has not been given the extension applied for).

ANALYSING EXAMPLE TWO

Your price is expected to include **"the risk of Covid"**. The immediate question is: what does this mean? Since it is so open-ended, pricing

Example 2

You are informed at bid stage that if you are unwilling to take on "the risk of Covid" – whatever this may involve – your tender/offer will not be considered. Your sub-contract then tells you that:

"For the full period of the subcontract works – subcontractor takes on the risk of maintaining productivity assuming 2m social distancing in place."

This clause continues:

"In relation to pandemics (current and future) in the event of any

future lockdowns, implemented by Government instruction, which lead to the site shutting down,

- *Week 1 to 8 sub-contractor is responsible for all costs but an extension of time will be granted for each day the site is closed;*
- *Week 9+ reasonable costs are recoverable under the Sub-Contract where the sub-contractor has used best endeavours to mitigate delays and an extension of time will be granted for each day the site is closed".*

for Covid risk would require the services of a clairvoyant. You then take on the risk of maintaining productivity even though social distancing is in force. So, without fault on your part, you can't social distance (and have to cease work until you can) you will be in breach of contract when your productivity suffers.

For such a clause to work, there would have to be some benchmark to measure the requisite productivity.

From week nine onwards, reasonable costs can be recovered provided you have used **"best endeavours"** to reduce delays. This requires you to do everything you reasonably can which could include, ironically, incurring extra costs in order to reduce delays – plenty of scope for argument here. It would have been better if the clause had specified the steps required to be taken.

ADVICE FOR SNIPEF MEMBER FIRMS

Apart from the myriad disputes these clauses are likely to engender, they import risks which, for the most part, you will not be able to manage. For the sake of efficiency and fairness, risks should always be allocated to those best able to manage them.

Therefore, seek to either negotiate them out of your contract or, at least, seek to define with more precision the risks you are being asked to take on. If you are likely to be saddled with ongoing costs in the event of disruption to your works, make sure that you have a right of termination in these circumstances. Perhaps you could make clear at the outset that your price does not take into consideration Covid-related risks. ■

“It may come as no surprise to many in the industry that Covid-related risks are being shunted along the supply chain”

The costs over an eight-week period of lockdown could be phenomenal – cancelled deliveries, storage costs, salaries and overheads, etc.

In this context, you would want the right to terminate your contract.



Facing

Chiene + Tait explain what you need to know about the latest VAT rules

the tax

Changes to the VAT treatment of construction services were due to be introduced in October 2019, however, due to pressure from the industry and the Covid pandemic, they were postponed until March. They will have a major impact on our members who act as contractors and sub-contractors.

From 1 March 2021, the domestic VAT reverse charge must be used for most supplies of building and construction services. The charge applies to standard and reduced-rate VAT services:

- for individuals or businesses who are registered for VAT in the UK
- reported within the Construction Industry Scheme (CIS)

Therefore, any plumbing business which is registered for VAT and CIS and supplies its services to larger contractors will be affected by the change, designed to combat fraud.

It means that starting from 1 March 2021, affected businesses will no longer charge contractors VAT on qualifying services. Instead, the VAT will be accounted for by the contractor who is receiving the service, using the 'reverse charge' process.

WHAT IS A REVERSE CHARGE?

The reverse charge is a way of accounting for VAT which puts the responsibility on to the customer rather than the supplier. It is therefore the customer who accounts for the VAT on the supply being made on its VAT return. This means there is less chance that a supplier can receive VAT from a customer and then not pay the tax on to HMRC, with the payment effectively 'going

missing'. The diagram below outlines how this process works and what has changed.

WHAT ARE THE PRACTICAL EFFECTS OF THE CHANGES?

If you're a plumbing contractor and are providing a qualifying service to another contractor or construction company, you'll now be required to raise your invoices without VAT. Invoices should include all the normal required features of a tax invoice but should also include a narrative such as "Reverse Charge: Customer to pay the VAT to HMRC" or "Reverse Charge s.55A VATA 1994 applies".

This won't affect your own VAT recovery position – you'll still be required to be registered for VAT if your turnover is more than £85,000 and you'll still be able to recover VAT on business expenditure. The value of the supply will still be recorded in

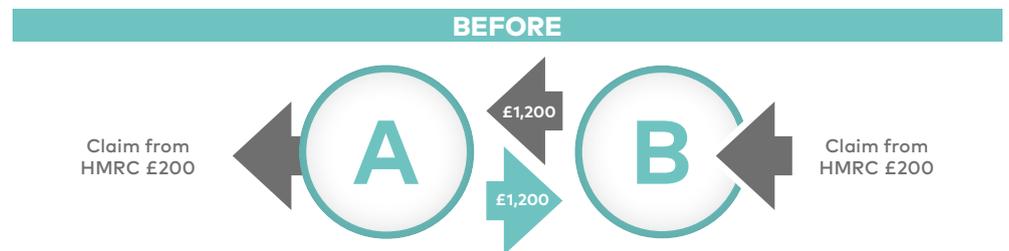
Sub-contractor supplies plumbing contractor

Example 1

Most services other than those for new residential developments will fall within the reverse charge.

- Plumbing contractor should confirm their status
- Sub contractor issues invoices with no VAT to plumbing contractor
- Plumbing contractor accounts for VAT on the supply in its monthly or quarterly VAT return; e.g. invoice is for £1,000, plumbing contractor accounts for £200 in Box 1 and recovers £200 in Box 4.

Box 6 (Total Sales) of the VAT return. Assuming the invoice was for £1,000, the purchaser will account for £200 VAT in Box 1 of their VAT return and then recover the same amount in Box 4. The result will be the



Plumbing contractor A invoices plumbing contractor B £1,000, plus VAT of £200, for work undertaken. Plumbing contractor B pays plumbing contractor A £1,200. Plumbing contractor B receives the VAT back (£200) from HMRC. Plumbing contractor A pays HMRC £200 for the VAT on the invoice.

Before: Plumbing Company Example VAT return					
	A	B		A	B
Box 1	200	NIL	Box 6	1,000	NIL
Box 2	NIL	NIL	Box 7	NIL	1,000
Box 3	200	NIL	Box 8	NIL	NIL
Box 4	NIL	(200)	Box 9	NIL	—
Box 5	200	NIL			

same as before, however, as the purchaser is not paying over VAT there is less risk that a fraudulent supplier could disappear with it before paying it on to HMRC.

WHAT SERVICES ARE INCLUDED?

The majority of construction services are covered, which in the plumbing industry means repairs, heating installation, drainage installation and most other services provided by plumbers. The reverse charge will only apply to construction services that are normally subject to the standard rate and reduced rate of VAT. So if you're providing plumbing services to contractors who are working on new residential properties, your services remain zero-rated. It will also apply to building materials supplied with these construction services.

The measure will only apply to firms that are supplying their construction services to another business that will sell on these construction services. It does not apply where the construction services are provided to a consumer or connected businesses where the normal VAT rules will apply.

In addition, it won't apply to services provided to an 'end-user'. These are defined as being those who receive building and construction services but do not supply those services

Sub-contractor supplies construction company



VAT treatment will depend on the status of the construction company.

- If the construction company is making an onward supply, the sub-contractors services will be subject to reverse charge
- If the construction company is constructing on its own site,

they are regarded as an 'end-user' so the sub-contractor will charge VAT as normal

- The construction company should provide all contractors with written 'end-user' confirmation if applicable.

along with other building and construction services.

The following supplies of services will therefore be excluded from the domestic reverse charge where the customer has notified the supplier that the exemption applies:

- supplies of construction services made to end users (consumers, final customers and businesses that are VAT and CIS registered but do not make onward supplies of the building and construction services supplied to them)
- supplies of construction services to intermediary suppliers (businesses that are VAT and CIS registered that are connected or linked to end users).

End users and intermediary suppliers must notify their supplier or building contractor in writing that they are end users/intermediary suppliers. Notification of end user or intermediary status can be

Chiene+Tait
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

If your business might be affected by this change and you would like to discuss things further please contact VAT Director Iain Masterton at vat@chiene.co.uk or call 0131 558 5800.

made on paper and sent by post, electronically in an email or in a contract.

The notification should be kept as part of normal business records and show clearly what supplies are covered.

WHAT CAN CONTRACTORS DO TO PREPARE?

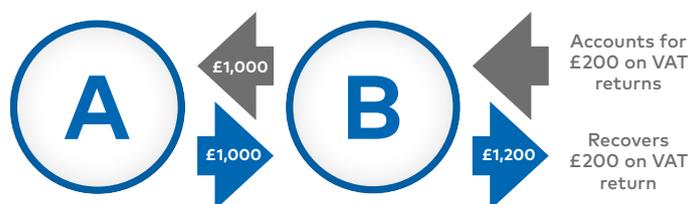
The new law will be introduced from 1 March 2021. We understand there will be a 'light touch' from HMRC during the first six months which will allow for genuine mistakes.

All plumbing businesses need to consider if they will be impacted by this change and identify which services to other contractors will be covered and what services they receive from other sub-contractors that might be affected.

Changes will also need to be made to accountancy packages to enable these transactions to be treated correctly from a sales and purchasing perspective. Customers will need to be clear in their communications with suppliers during the contracting stage to ensure the VAT status of the works is correct. This will include confirming whether they have 'end-user' or 'intermediary' status or not.

One commercial impact from these changes is cash flow. Many contractors will raise invoices early in their VAT period, collect the tax and then use this to fund the business until the money needs to be paid to HMRC one month and seven days after the end of the VAT period. This will no longer be possible – so businesses should consider the impact. ■

AFTER



Plumbing contractor A invoices plumbing contractor B £1,000 for work undertaken. Plumbing contractor B pays plumbing contractor A £1,000. Plumbing contractor B accounts for VAT on the work undertaken on its VAT return and recovers same amount as input VAT.

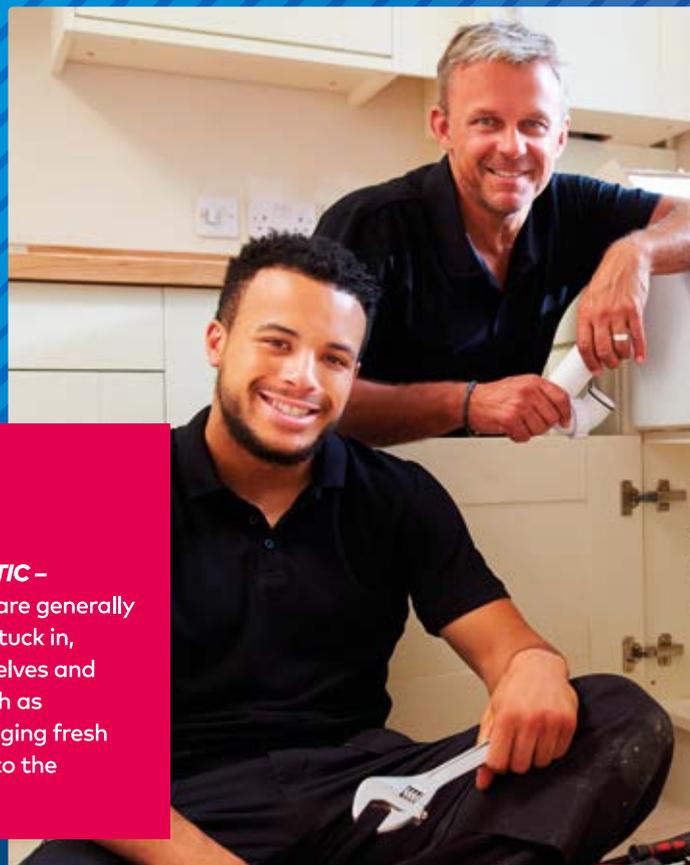
After: Plumbing Company Example VAT return

	A	B		A	B
Box 1	NIL	200	Box 6	1,000	NIL
Box 2	NIL	-	Box 7	NIL	1,000
Box 3	NIL	200	Box 8	NIL	NIL
Box 4	NIL	(200)	Box 9	NIL	NIL
Box 5	NIL	NIL			

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



SNIPEF 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

SNIPEF 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



36

Making the cut
Knipex's new TubiX® Pipe Cutter slices through copper, brass and stainless steel with ease

Show and sell

Take a virtual trip to City Plumbing's new bathroom showroom, now open in Kirkcaldy
[/ Page 34](#)

Heating the future

Exploring the potential of using renewable liquid fuels to provide heat for off-grid rural homes
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Bright ideas

Snickers' neon workwear will get you noticed while merino wool layers deliver maximum comfort
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Top marks

What you need to know about the recent change from CE marking to the new UKCA scheme
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Read all about it

Grant UK's latest brochure gives you an essential introduction to air source heat pumps
[/ Page 38](#)

Smart savings

Maincor's range of pre-insulated pipes delivers efficient and cost-effective solutions
[/ Page 39](#)

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City Plumbing launches new bathroom showroom

Specialist team ready to help with virtual visits as site opens in Kirkcaldy

City Plumbing opened its new bathroom showroom on 5 February on the Hayfield Industrial Estate, Kirkcaldy. The showroom is located within the existing City Plumbing branch and is staffed by a specialist Sales Manager and team, who can produce free CAD drawings and estimates for trade customers.

As the showroom is located within the City Plumbing branch, local plumbers can get all their plumbing, heating, spares and electrical products in one visit.

IT'S ALL ABOUT THE TEAM WORK

Scott Findlay, Branch Manager, said: "I'm super proud of the whole team. We've all worked together brilliantly to get the showroom in

Kirkcaldy up and running. It hasn't always been easy, we had to work around Covid restrictions and social distancing, but we've done it and I'm so happy.

"We have a fully stocked trade counter next door and will open for face to face sales when the restrictions end. We're ready and I can't wait to welcome our customers into The Bathroom Showroom and show the local plumbers we are best in town!"

IN-HOUSE DESIGN EXPERTS

The Bathroom Showroom offers a bespoke free 3D-design service, so customers can view their perfect bathroom before it's fitted. The team in Kirkcaldy is open for virtual appointments, so can still support you and your customers. As part of our design and sales



You can find The Bathroom Showroom within the City Plumbing branch at Unit 6, Frederick Wilson Park, Hayfield Industrial Estate, Kirkcaldy KY2 5DR

The Bathroom Showroom is now open for virtual appointments. To book an appointment with one of their designers, please call the team on 01592 649930 or book online at bathrooms.com

services, our team in Kirkcaldy can recommend suites from the UK's best known bathroom brands, recommend finishes, tiles and accessories – for any budget.

A COMPANY THAT IS GOING PLACES

Kevin Dermidy, Regional Director for Scotland said: "It's great to work for a company that is looking further ahead than just through the pandemic. This is our 25th bathroom showroom in Scotland and 253rd showroom in the UK. We are continuing to invest in our infrastructure right across the country ensuring that our customers have the best access to the finest products, designs and customer service." ■

Renewable liquid fuels must be included in future heat strategy

In 2021, decisions will be made on future energy strategy in Northern Ireland and Scotland.

OFTEC has a seat on the Northern Ireland Heat Strategy Group and the Scottish Heat Advisory Group where discussions continue over the inclusion of a renewable liquid fuel, namely hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO), in forthcoming off-grid heat policy.

Trials of the fossil-free fuel produced from waste sources are underway in NI and Scotland. The NI Housing Executive has also agreed local trials of HVO in four homes from January 2021. To gain their endorsement would be highly positive.

Early indications show HVO can provide a simple replacement for heating oil at a fraction of the cost

to install a heat pump or biomass boiler – governments' preferred solutions for rural homes.

Heat pumps can provide a good low carbon heating solution in some settings but due to the low thermal efficiency of many rural properties, cannot be considered the panacea to the off-grid decarbonisation challenge.

Around 70% of bungalows, 44% of terrace homes and 53% of detached houses in NI Ireland fall into SAP Bands D-F, while in Scotland, some 67% of EPC Band G homes and 57% of Band F properties are in rural areas.

The majority of these homes are not suitable for heat pumps without first installing costly and disruptive insulation improvements. If governments are



Renewable liquid fuels can help solve the off-grid decarbonisation dilemma

serious about making rapid – and socially fair – progress on carbon reduction, they must provide households with access to cheaper, more practical to install solutions.

Now is the time to set aside any preconceived ideas around the 'best' solutions for off-grid households, listen to all the options and trust industry to deliver. ■

By OFTEC CEO
Paul Rose



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

A complete registration service for heating technicians



OFTEC competent person registration provides a range of benefits:

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- Free marketing material to help you win more customers
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- Discounts on equipment and publications from our OFTEC Direct shop.



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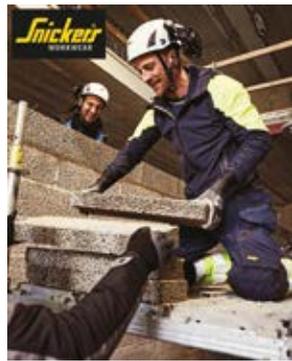
W: joinoftec.com

Be stylish and seen in Snickers

While fabric, functionality and fit are hallmarks of Snickers Workwear, it's the innovation and technology in the new FlexiWork neon fleece hoodie, jacket and gilet that really set these garments apart.

Delivering superior flexibility and comfort, these lightweight four-way stretch garments come in a body-mapping design and are made from an elastane/polyester fabric with a water and wind repellent finish to provide comfort and durability.

As well as being



street-smart and visibly striking with neon panels and reflective details for enhanced visibility they're designed for the fast-paced professional delivering top class work.

For professionals who rely on their gear in demanding environments, they're a must for those who want to be visibly ahead of the rest on site this winter. ■

Cool, cosy and comfortable

Stay warm or cool in Snickers' 100 per cent all-natural Merino wool mid and base-layer clothes that deliver optimal comfort when the weather gets chilly.

There are short and long sleeve T-shirts as well as leggings and topwear that combine superior wool warmth with body-mapping designs for the ultimate protection in cold conditions.

Designed by nature for excellent ventilation and insulation, Merino wool is extremely soft, and naturally odour-preventive for an all-day fresh feel. It's also temperature-regulating, repels water, dirt particles. It's anti-static and Snickers Workwear ensures that the wool it uses



is produced in kind-to-animals, 'mulesing-free' environments.

Snickers Workwear clothing gives you the kind of warm, dry and fresh working comfort you wouldn't have thought possible. That's why it's the brand of choice for working outside in cold weather. ■

For more information, call the Hultafors Group UK Helpline on 01484 854788 or download a digital catalogue at www.snickersworkwear.co.uk



Knipex goes into the workshop with the TubiX® Pipe Cutter

Leading pliers specialists Knipex has released a useful video guide for heating and plumbing installers featuring its innovative TubiX® Pipe Cutter.

The informative video, filmed at the company's workshops in Wuppertal, and available to view via the company's YouTube channel, shows how the 180 mm long Knipex TubiX® Pipe Cutter makes work much easier due to guide rollers and 10 quality needle bearings, which are integrated in the cutting wheel.

It cuts copper, brass and stainless steel pipes with a wall thickness of up to 2 mm and diameters from 6 to 35 mm (1/4"-1 3/8").

All functions of the Knipex TubiX® can be easily carried out with just one hand, thanks to the QuickLock single-handed quick adjustment which guides and locks the tool onto the pipe, then accurately positions the cutting wheel for different pipe diameters. After the pipe is cut, an integrated, retractable deburring tool can be used to smooth out the cut surface. The cutting wheel is made of quality ball-bearing steel and can be exchanged quickly. ■

For more details visit www.knipex.com To watch the video head over to YouTube: <https://youtu.be/i3ae5gPyLhQ>





Hitting the mark

David Osborne, CEO of Roman, explains what you need to know about the switch to UKCA marking

A very important change in mandatory product marking came into force on 1 January this year. The UKCA (UK Conformity Assessed) mark is being phased in to replace the CE mark in the UK and is a critical change in legislation for trades to be aware of.

A one-year transition period will ease the changeover and mean all products placed on the market in Great Britain with the CE mark will remain valid until 1 January 2022. The UKCA marking does not apply to existing stock, i.e. products manufactured and ready to place on the market before 1 January 2021. This means that the CE marking on products manufactured and ready to place on the market before 1 January 2021 will still be valid.

New products launched in England, Wales and Scotland from January 2021 must feature the UKCA mark. The EU market still requires the CE marking for products manufactured in Britain and the same applies for the

Northern Ireland market which still require the CE marking or UK (NI) marking. All products placed in Great Britain can have both the CE and UKCA marking affiliated to them, providing they fulfil the associated requirements. The actual testing for conformity remains unchanged at this time across the marks. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of manufacturers to ensure their showering products conform to the standard, but the final reseller of the products, such as plumbers, also have a legal responsibility to ensure the products they stock, or are specifying, also conform to the standard.

There were 2014 updates for CE marking itself for manufacturers, suppliers and glass contractors, which includes production audits in addition to CE testing to prove ongoing compliance and individual product traceability over 10 years. At Roman, every product is digitally photographed before final packaging and carries an individual product code for

Roman's shower products have an individual code to provide total traceability

complete traceability. Checking the legitimacy of a CE/UKCA mark on a product is relatively straightforward as manufacturers or suppliers must make the declaration of performance available to their customers, therefore making it available for everyone to see. Best practice conformity is to show CE/UKCA marking details within their literature and on their website. In line with the standard, they should also display their CE/UKCA documents for each product on their website.

It must be stressed that the CE/UKCA marking is a mandatory legal requirement with enforcement. Two of the common misconceptions are that it is something that the manufacturers would resolve if there was a problem; and secondly saying that you conform is one thing, but proving you conform is actually what CE/UKCA marking is all about. There are still many non-compliant products out there and there are huge consequences for the seller of the non-compliant product. It is strongly urged that plumbers ask the right questions around CE/UKCA marking of all their suppliers. ■

ROMAN[®]
REFINED SHOWERING

Going greener with Grant UK

New air source heat pump brochure is launched

A new consumer-focused brochure for Grant air source heat pumps is now available. The contents provide homeowners with an insight into this renewable technology, answering their questions and supplying them with the information they need before taking their first steps towards a greener home heating system.

The new Grant Aeronas³ Air Source Heat Pump range brochure is designed to provide homeowners with an in-depth introduction to this type of renewable heating. With interest

“Interest and demand for air source heat pumps is rising each day as homeowners are keen to make their mark in reducing the carbon levels within the environment”

in sustainability growing, more and more consumers are evaluating the measures they can take to reduce their impact on the environment. Many homeowners are assessing their home heating and looking for alternative

The brochure explains all you need to know about air source heat pumps

systems, such as heat pumps, that will fulfil their heating requirements while also lowering their carbon footprint. To aid this research, Grant's latest heat pump brochure strives to equip homeowners with the knowledge they need to make informed decisions about the right heating solutions for their property.

The new brochure is eye-catching in design with detailed content. A breadth of topics are covered inside, including an introduction to how heat pumps work, an overview of the Aeronas³ R32 range, explanations about SCOPs, noise levels and siting heating pumps, as well as a handy section all about the dos and don'ts of heat pump installations. The brochure also includes a case study featuring a whole house heating system upgrade which showcases a number of renewable technologies available from Grant.

In line with the green credentials of its products, this latest brochure from Grant is also sustainably printed. Printed on 100% recycled paper which is uncoated and using a plant-based ink, this brochure is recyclable, making both the print and its contents environmentally friendly.

“Our new Grant Aeronas³ Air Source Heat Pump range brochure should be an invaluable resource to help our installers share key product information with their customers,” said Kevin Ellis, Grant UK's Renewables Manager. “Interest and demand for air source heat pumps is rising each day as homeowners are keen to make their mark in reducing the carbon levels within the environment. We hope this brochure will not only answer any unanswered questions consumers may have about heat pumps but it should also serve to highlight the role than a Grant air source heat pump could play in their home.” ■

To download a copy, please visit www.grantuk.com/support/manuals-brochures



As energy prices rise and the government's sustainable agenda presses on, there is more and more call for renewable heat sources. The cost of installing and maintaining such systems can be off-putting, but it is important to weigh this up against the potential long-term savings.

The savings and the eco benefits of biomass and other renewable heat sources are undeniable. But what happens when the heat source is in an outbuilding or communal plant room? How can installers be sure heat is delivered in an energy efficient way, with minimal loss along the way?

One solution is to specify pre-insulated pipework, which will reduce the amount of heat lost quite significantly. Constructed with an insulating layer and an outer casing, pre-insulated pipe systems provide high-quality insulation to maintain the temperature of the water. Available typically in lengths ranging from 1 metre to 100 metres, the pipework is laid underground and has an average working life of around 30 years.

Austroflex pipe, from Maincor, minimises heat loss in point to point heating applications. Available in lengths up to 340 metres, the flexibility of the pipe makes for easy installation and minimises the need for joints. The pipe can typically be installed in one uninterrupted length from the heat source to the building – thus minimising installation and system costs. This type of system is also suitable for use in larger scale installations, which will



Pre-insulated pipes can minimise heat loss, making systems more efficient

Summing up renewable heating costs

The long-term benefits of renewable heating and hot water systems are undeniable, but how can installers ensure they are fitted in the most efficient of ways?

John Gittens, Business Development Director of Maincor, takes a look...

typically have a central heat source supplying multiple buildings.

Pre-insulated pipework is commonly used in the commercial heating sector. With the rise in homeowners choosing renewables, it is increasingly seen in domestic situations too.

Products such as those from Maincor, with an average lambda value of around 0.0219 W/mK (the lambda value is used to identify a material's ability to limit energy loss), will improve energy efficiency and system

performance. A protective aluminium barrier in the outer casing also ensures the insulation properties remain constant over the entire lifetime of the pipe.

Specify a pre-insulated piping system with a very low heat loss and the savings soon add up. Piping that can be installed in one uninterrupted length from the heat source to the building, such as that from Maincor, will minimise installation, maintenance and system costs, which is good news for you and your customers. ■

MAINCOR

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A perfect partnership

Maincor has partnered with Austrian manufacturer AUSTROFLEX, to supply the AustroPUR range of pre-insulated pipes in the UK. Suitable for a wide range of building types, the corrugated



outer case allows for a tight bending radius for fast installation.

AustroPUR pipe is ideal for minimising heat loss in point to point heating

applications, such as connecting a property to an external renewable heat source located in an outhouse.

The insulation used in Maincor's AustroPUR pipe systems is high quality polyurethane foam, making it one of the most cost-effective solutions available.

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