



Spring 2026

PlumbHeat



Holyrood focus

Political parties share their promises ahead of the upcoming election



Set for success

How self-certification can give your business the competitive edge



Rights and wrongs

What you need to know about new changes to employment laws

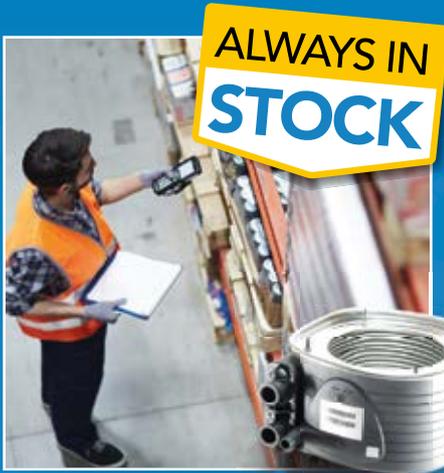
 2026 ELECTION SPECIAL

Securing the future

Minister for Higher and Further Education Ben Macpherson discusses the importance of apprenticeships and why employers are vital

FOR ALL YOUR PLUMBING & HEATING NEEDS

OPEN TO
TRADE &
RETAIL



1000s OF SPARES

We are committed to maintaining extensive stock local to the customer's needs enabling us to offer the UK's top brands ready for same-day delivery or collection. Our inventory also boasts a vast range of boiler spares, provided through our own central distribution, guaranteeing next-day availability for over 20,000 items.



BATHROOM SHOWROOMS

Our stylish and inspiring showroom displays are designed to make choosing your new bathroom easier for you. Browse the collections we have put together, showcasing the most up to date sanitaryware, showering enclosures and furniture from the leading manufacturers.



RENEWABLES

Our in-house Renewables Design Service is designed to assist our customers in selecting and specifying renewable systems tailored to your individual project needs by providing:

- System selection, design and pricing
- Full kit lists of manufacturers' products
- Professional Indemnity Insurance
- Detailed system designs

CALL OR VISIT US TODAY:

Glasgow 🏠
0141 352 7220

Bellshill 🏠
0169 874 4107

Edinburgh 🏠
0131 442 3478

Galashiels 🏠
0189 675 4521

Glasgow Rutherglen 🏠
0141 218 3750

Inverkeithing 🏠
0138 342 7470

Inverness 🏠
0146 324 8579

Kilmarnock 🏠
0156 357 8866



Scan the QR code
to download our

esteem
bathrooms
brochure today!



PLUMBING | HEATING | BATHROOMS | SPARES | RENEWABLES

plumbstore

OPENING TIMES

Monday - Friday 7:30am - 5:00pm

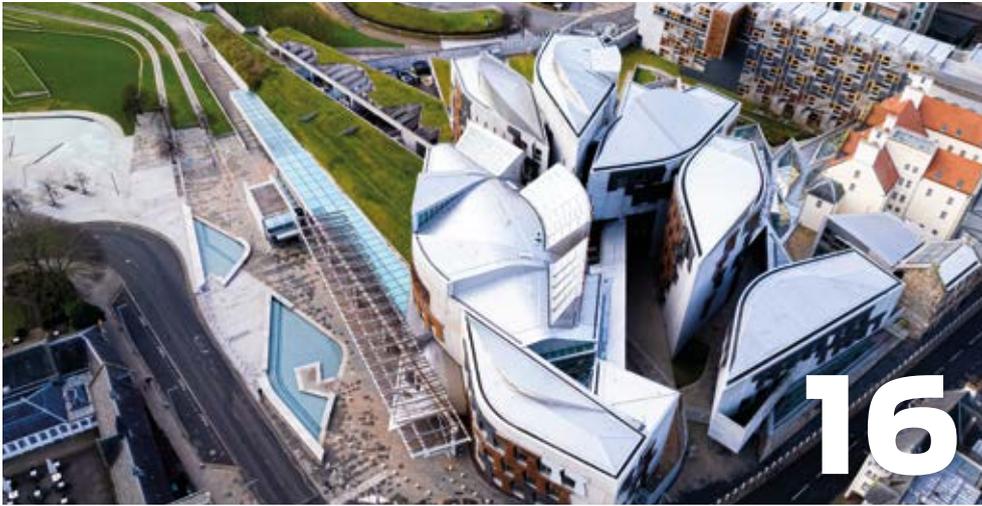
Saturday 8:00am - 12:00pm

www.plumbstores.co.uk

Spring 2026 Contents



IMAGE: Alexey Fedorenko / Shutterstock



» NEWS

- 06 News from SNIPEF and across the wider industry

» SNIPEF

- 13 *PlumbHeat's* Gregor Millar on making a difference

» MEMBERSHIP

- 14 Affiliate Lawton Tubes on supporting supply chains

» POLITICS SPECIAL

- 16 Political parties share how they'll help our members
- 19 SNIPEF publishes manifesto ahead of Holyrood election
- 20 Minister sets out plans for future of apprenticeships

» TECHNICAL

- 24 Protecting the public with the lead-free solder pledge
- 26 The business benefits of being an approved certifier

» TRAINING

- 29 Awards for apprentice pair's outstanding work
- 30 CABEC celebrates 25 years of inspiring youngsters

» ADVICE

- 32 Understanding upcoming changes to employment law

» PROZONE

- 35 Four pages of great ideas, innovation and insight

Editor Gregor Millar
gregor.millar@snipef.org

Editorial Offices

Bellevue House, 22 Hopetoun Street,
Edinburgh EH4 7GH

Tel 0131 556 0600 ■ Fax 0131 557 8409

■ Email contact@snipef.org

www.snipef.org

Follow us @SNIPEFnews

Published on behalf of SNIPEF by

Connect Publications

Studio 4015, Mile End

12 Seedhill Road, Paisley PA1 1JS

Advertising Sales David Hughes

davidh@connectcommunications.co.uk

Design & Production Ryan Swinney

ryan@connectcommunications.co.uk

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

Subscriptions Annual Subscription (4 issues) United Kingdom: £40

Overseas surface mail £30 Airmail (according to destination)

© 2026 Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation. All rights reserved.

Comment

FROM DUNCAN SHARP, SNIPEF PRESIDENT

The work has only just begun

Our members' voices are being heard in the places that matter but ahead of the Holyrood election in May, there's still more action needed to safeguard the future of the plumbing and heating profession

When I became President, I was clear that our profession must achieve meaningful growth, not only in membership and apprentice numbers but also in the strength and influence of its voice. Ensuring that members are heard clearly by decision-makers and that we shape lasting, positive change has been central to that aim.

We have made a strong start but there remains significant work ahead, including the opportunity presented by the upcoming Holyrood election in May. To ensure that our voice carries weight in that debate, it must be grounded in clear, member-led evidence and practical solutions.

That evidence is set out in our recent Employer Insights Research, which highlights the real challenges companies face in relation to apprenticeship training and demonstrates how rising costs and stagnant funding are constraining the skills pipeline.

This has informed SNIPEF's Scottish election manifesto and shaped a clear objective: to establish a fair and balanced apprenticeship funding model that reflects the true cost of training, shares responsibility

appropriately between government and employers and protects standards while improving completion rates.

Building on this platform, we have engaged directly with senior government officials and MSPs to press the case for reform. One such meeting I attended, alongside members and affiliates working within the renewables sector, was with Màiri McAllan MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Housing. We discussed constraints to market growth, delays in delivery through Home Energy Scotland, concerns regarding the quality of installation in new builds and workforce pressures, particularly in relation to training and apprenticeships.

The roundtable made clear that workforce capacity is

the principal constraint on sustainable scale. Employers emphasised that short conversion courses cannot replace structured, hands-on training and that Scotland's four-year apprenticeship model remains the foundation of a safety-critical profession.

However, the full cost of training, including supervision time, reduced productivity in early years and rising wage pressure is placing increasing strain on SMEs. There was broad agreement that funding models must better reflect the real economics of apprenticeship delivery if we are to build the skilled workforce that's required to meet future demand.

This engagement has also strengthened our public profile, securing significant media coverage and bringing some of the challenges facing our profession to national attention. This included a recent STV interview involving SNIPEF members John Crawford & Co (Mechanical) and Celsius Plumbing and Heating.

I would like to thank all members and affiliates who have supported this work. Your insight and practical

“ I am grateful for the support you have shown over the past year. It has made my presidency purposeful and memorable and I look forward to continuing our work together in the years ahead”



experience have been critical in ensuring our case is credible and grounded in reality. There is more to do in the months ahead and your continued involvement will remain essential.

Beyond our policy work, my time as President has reinforced the underlying resilience of our profession. SNIPEF's latest State of Trade report (**see page eight**) shows the profession on a stable footing, with workloads remaining steady even as margins tighten and profitability comes under pressure.

While financial challenges persist, the results reflect growing confidence and a positive direction of travel. That resilience will be vital as we seek to realise the opportunities ahead. We now look to government for a constructive response to our proposed apprenticeship

reforms. Should that be forthcoming, 2026 could prove to be a pivotal year in setting a stronger course for the future.

This will be my final column for *PlumbHeat* before my presidency concludes in June, and it has been an honour to represent SNIPEF and its members across Scotland and Northern Ireland. The year has brought many professional highlights, from leading the 50th Scottish Plumbing Apprentice of the Year competition to representing SNIPEF at events such as BESA's presidential lunch and InstallerSHOW. These occasions allowed us, and by extension our members, to share our views and build strong relationships across the sector and beyond.

On a personal level, travelling across the country and meeting SNIPEF members has been a rewarding experience. Hearing directly about the challenges

Duncan Sharp,
SNIPEF President

and opportunities facing your businesses and sharing a commitment to the profession has reinforced the strength of our collective purpose.

Our members define SNIPEF and the wider plumbing and heating profession and I am grateful for the support you have shown over the past year. It has made my presidency purposeful and memorable and I look forward to continuing our work together.

My final acknowledgment is to Steve Craig of the Dundee and District Association, who will become our 102nd President. I wish him every success in the role. Having worked with Steve for many years, I know he shares the same commitment to ensuring our profession continues to grow, strengthen and seize the opportunities ahead. ■

Duncan Sharp,
SNIPEF President

LATEST FROM AROUND THE FEDERATION

CLEAN TECH

Training can deliver the right results

Warm Homes Plan must prioritise skills to match government ambitions, warns SNIPEF

SNIPEF has welcomed the UK Government's announcement of the £15 billion Warm Homes Plan, aimed at upgrading millions of homes with energy efficiency and clean technology measures.

However, the plan must prioritise training and skills development to meet government ambitions and avoid repeating past failures.

The UK Government claim the scheme will bring lower energy bills to families across the country by making clean energy solutions, such as heat pumps and solar panels, more affordable for working people. But a skilled workforce to install these technologies is essential to ensure the plan can match these lofty ambitions.

Scott Sanford, Head of Technical Services and Certification at SNIPEF, said: "We welcome and



Scott Sanford, Head of Technical Services and Certification

support any initiative that helps families cut energy bills, reduce fuel poverty and accelerate the transition to a low-carbon future.

"Improving insulation, expanding access to solar and heat pump technologies and targeted support for low-income households are all vital steps in delivering warmer homes, tackling long-term energy costs and contributing to net-zero objectives.

"However, the plan lacks explicit and substantial detail about investment in the training and skills development that's required to deliver quality home upgrades at scale. SNIPEF is clear that without a properly trained and competent workforce, large-scale retrofit and low-carbon heating deployment will falter.

"We have already seen the consequences of this approach. Previous government-supported insulation schemes allowed complex work to be carried out by inadequately trained and poorly supervised installers. In practice, this meant almost anyone could undertake publicly funded retrofit work, leading to serious failures, as seen in the recent spray foam insulation scandal that damaged homes, blighted homeowners and is now costing millions to resolve.

"If this programme is to succeed, investment in homes must go hand in hand with investment in people, skills and competence. Quality, safety and consumer confidence must be built in from the start, not dealt with after the damage is done."

Members can read more details about the Warm Homes plan at bit.ly/ph-homeupgrade

DONATION

New tools are a class act for students

For the third year running, Dundee District Master Plumbers' Association has presented first-year apprentices at Dundee and Angus College with tools. Local President Steve Craig and Vice President Ross Butter handed over the equipment to the students. Also in attendance were committee member Jim Butter and SNIPEF Regional Training Officer Vanessa Docherty. The Association thanks Worcester Bosch and Monument Tools for their continued support.





SUSTAINABILITY

Leading the net-zero conversation

SNIEF and Nesta welcomed Cabinet Secretary Màiri McAllan MSP and colleagues from across the profession to the Energy Training Academy in February to discuss the practical realities of Scotland's transition towards net-zero and low carbon alternatives.

The discussion focused on how market growth in the heat pump market had plateaued, with demand constrained by high up-front and running costs, inconsistent energy tariffs, policy uncertainty and challenges within the grant support system. Installers also

ABOVE:
Delegates at the Energy Training Academy in Dalkeith

face complex administration, delayed payments and regulatory pressures that limit SME participation and threaten long-term business sustainability.

Participants emphasised the need for long-term policy certainty, stronger quality assurance and increased investment in skills and apprenticeships to build workforce capacity and industry confidence. Concerns were also raised around fuel poverty, tenant education in social housing and barriers preventing smaller local businesses from accessing large-scale contracts.

The meeting was constructive with participants agreeing on many priorities. These included exploring hybrid subsidy and tariff models, expanding practical training and apprenticeship support, strengthening installation oversight and creating fairer access for SMEs to deliver high-quality local work.

SNIEF extends its thanks to members, affiliates and colleagues across the profession for coming together to outline positive next steps in Scotland's decarbonisation.

NEW MEMBERS

- Graham Oliver
Plumbing & Heating
- David Guidi Plumbing & Heating Limited
- Stanley Brash Construction Ltd
- CDM Plumbing Heating & Bathrooms Ltd
- Express Heating Co Ltd

NEW AFFILIATES

- Gledhill Building Products
- QURE Group
- Joule UK
- Purmo Group
- North East Scotland College
- Diversitech International



The students were delighted to receive the new equipment



RESULTS

Businesses are facing pressures and profit fears

SNIPEF's State of Trade report highlights a profession in a state of fragile stability

41%

of firms were busier than expected, up from 37% in Q3

36%

reported forward order books above expectations, up from 32% in Q3

47%

reported profit margins falling, up from 35% in Q3, including 14% falling significantly

93%

reported input price increases

67%

reported low availability of skilled professionals locally

64%

were very unlikely to recruit an apprentice in the next six months

45%

were confident or very confident in the profession, while only 9% were confident or very confident about the UK economy

Results from SNIPEF's latest State of Trade report show modest improvement in activity and confidence but profitability continues to deteriorate while pressures over costs and skills persist.

Improved workloads, busier order books and slightly better cashflow have supported activity, even as financial pressures continue to intensify. Businesses report being busier overall, with improving forward work pipelines and generally manageable payment conditions.

However, tighter margins have emerged as a growing concern, alongside persistent cost inflation and ongoing shortages of skilled operatives. This, combined with rising costs, is placing growing pressure on the financial resilience of plumbing and heating businesses in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

TRADING PERFORMANCE:

In the Q4 2025 State of Trade study, 41% of firms reported they were busier than expected, with 36% saying their workloads were above expectations. However, this improvement in activity has not translated into stronger financial performance, with nearly half of businesses (47%) reporting falling profit margins, up from 35% in Q3, including 14% experiencing a significant decline. Cost pressures also remain widespread, with 93% of firms reporting rising input prices.

CONFIDENCE

Confidence within the profession improved quarter on quarter, with 45% of firms feeling confident or very confident, up from 33% in Q3. In contrast, sentiment towards

the wider economy remains weak, with only 9% of respondents feeling confident or very confident about the UK economy, while 51% reported being pessimistic or very pessimistic.

WORKFORCE

The State of Trade report highlights a growing contradiction in the plumbing and heating labour market. Skills shortages remain widespread, with two thirds of businesses (67%) reporting low local availability of skilled professionals, yet appetite to recruit and train apprentices remains weak, with 64% very unlikely to recruit an apprentice in the next six months.

Fiona Hodgson, Chief Executive of SNIPEF, said: "Q4 shows that demand is holding up and firms are continuing to find ways to stay resilient. However, the defining feature of the quarter is the deterioration in profitability. Too many businesses are absorbing higher costs and ongoing supply chain pressures without being able to protect their margins."

She added: "Across 2025, the message from employers has been consistent. The profession is stable, but the conditions around it are not. Cost inflation has remained widespread, skills shortages continue to limit growth, and confidence in the wider economy is weak.

"Q4 is a clear warning that resilience is increasingly being sustained through margin compression."

You can view the full State of Trade Q4 findings by visiting www.snipef.org/publications



LEFT TO RIGHT: Group Chairman Brian Murphy, Divisional Finance Director Brian Tighe, Instantor Managing Director Neil Gaffney, Gorup Finance Director Shane O'Neill, Divisional Managing Director Alan Hogan and Group Managing Director Martin Murphy

ANNIVERSARY

Instantor turns 100

SNIEPEF affiliate Instantor celebrated its 100th anniversary on 4 February, marking a century of innovation that has left a lasting effect on the plumbing and heating profession.

Founded in 1926, Instantor began operations from a foundry at St James's Gate in Dublin, close to the iconic Guinness Brewery. That same

year, Instantor patented the original brass compression fitting, setting a new benchmark for reliability and ease of installation – a legacy that continues to influence the industry today.

Over the past 100 years, Instantor has supported the plumbing and heating sector through ongoing product development and

BELOW:
The firm has a proud history of innovation and excellence

manufacturing innovation. From its early role as a manufacturer to its current position as a supplier of press and compression fittings, the company has focused on improving installation efficiency, safety and reliability. This product development remains core to the company ethos, releasing six new product ranges in 2025 alone.

Alan Hogan, Managing Director – Plumbing, Heating and Kitchen Division at Instantor's parent company Sanbra Group, said: "Reaching our 100th year is a remarkable milestone but what truly defines our success is the impact we've made along the way. In recent years alone, the business has evolved at pace – entering new markets, delivering industry changing innovations and earning prestigious awards.

"This progress is driven by an exceptional team and, as we look ahead to the next century, our focus remains firmly on continuing to lead and transform the market."





on-site time. "We are incredibly excited to collaborate with Grundfos on this important initiative" said Ben Duckworth, CEO of Heat Engineer Software Limited. "Together, we're making it easier for German installers to deliver high-quality, energy-efficient heating systems while helping homeowners take advantage of valuable government incentives.

"This partnership represents a shared commitment to sustainability and smarter heating technology."

Ole Bech-Lisberg, Senior Business Development Manager at Grundfos, added: "Our goal is to empower installers with tools that save time and ensure system optimisation. Partnering with Heat Engineer Software allows us to combine best-in-class heat loss software with our intelligent balancing solutions. This supports both energy efficiency and comfort for homeowners while helping Germany achieve its ambitious carbon reduction targets."

This collaboration reflects both companies' long-term commitment to supporting the heating industry's transition toward cleaner, more efficient low-temperature heating systems. By combining expertise in software innovation and hydronic system optimisation, Heat Engineer and Grundfos are aiming to set a new standard for professional heating design and installation that prioritises efficiency, compliance and sustainability.

COLLABORATION

European project will deliver results

SNIEPF affiliates team up to simplify heating system upgrades in Germany

SNIEPF affiliates Heat Engineer Software and Grundfos have partnered to simplify and accelerate the process of hydronic balancing of heating systems across Germany.

This strategic collaboration is designed to help installers and homeowners access German government subsidies that are available for heating

ABOVE: Heat Engineer Software Founder and CTO Rich Cartwright (left) and CEO Ben Duckworth (right) with the Grundfos Go Balance Training apparatus

system improvements. One of the key component of these subsidies is a verified heat loss calculation – a service provided through the Heat Engineer Software platform.

By integrating this capability within the new Grundfos GO Balance mobile app, which enables accurate hydronic balancing of radiator systems, heating engineers will be able to deliver faster, more precise and fully compliant heating systems – reducing both administrative burden and

LEARNING

Gas training facility is full of positive energy

SNIEPF President Duncan Sharp and Chief Executive Fiona Hodgson visited Fife College's new gas training facility in Glenrothes in February. The facility has been built from scratch, with lecturers and students involved in its development, creating a high-quality learning environment that will benefit learners for many years to come. Discussions on the day also focused on shared opportunities to strengthen collaboration between colleges, SNIEPF and employers as the profession continues to evolve.



Fiona and Duncan enjoyed the visit to Fife College in Glenrothes



The STV crew heard about what is happening in the plumbing industry

INTERVIEWS

TV date helps put issues in the frame

SNIPEF welcomed STV to its Edinburgh office in February for interviews with Chief Executive Fiona Hodgson and Eva Wright, a first-year apprentice at SNIPEF member John Crawford and Co (Mechanical).

Their discussion focused on SNIPEF's Apprenticeship Campaign and recently published manifesto, which calls for a fair and balanced funding system that shares the real cost of training between government and employers while protecting standards and improving completion rates.

Eva told the TV crew about her experience as an apprentice and talked about why plumbing and heating remains a compelling opportunity for young people seeking a long and fulfilling career.

Fiona highlighted the challenges facing employers and the stark implications for the profession if current funding models remain unchanged.

Cameras also visited SNIPEF member Celsius Plumbing and Heating to hear directly how these issues have impacted business operations in recent years.



Number One for Air Source Heat Pumps in Scotland.

FREE Heating Design Service!

We are **MCS Certified** for design & supply of Air Source Heat Pump systems, and can also offer many other renewable heating solutions.



If you require a renewable heating design contact us via the form at:

www.williamwilson.co.uk



William Wilson

PLUMBING • HEATING • BATHROOM • SUPPLIES

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ABERDEEN 01224 877522 | GLASGOW STH. ST. 0141 434 1520 |
| AYR 01292 286381 | INVERNESS 01463 237391 |
| AVIEMORE 01479 811567 | INVERURIE 01467 629853 |
| CUMBERNAULD 01236 868710 | KIRKCALDY 01592 653295 |
| CUPAR 01334 655700 | KIRKWALL 01856 871282 |
| DUNDEE 01382 880044 | PERTH 01738 638323 |
| EDINBURGH 0131 657 5151 | PORTREE 01478 612577 |
| ELGIN 01343 543181 | STORNOWAY 01851 704046 |
| FORT WILLIAM 01397 705375 | TAIN 01862 808040 |
| FRASERBURGH 01346 514474 | THURSO 01847 891685 |
| GLASGOW KINGST. 0141 418 2611 | |

www.williamwilson.co.uk



The widest boiler range in the UK

VITODENS



For **every** budget and **every** application, discover the **VITODENS** range today

- + Combi, storage combi, system and heat only models
- + Stainless steel heat exchanger
- + Up to 12 years boiler warranty as standard*
- + German engineered quality
- + Comprehensive pre-sales and post-sales support
- + VPlus loyalty programme rewards

*when registered via VPlus

FIND OUT MORE



BOOK TRAINING



Making a difference

PlumbHeat Editor Gregor Millar explores how member voices are driving change at a critical moment for the profession

Mirroring the views of our President, I closed last year's *PlumbHeat* by saying I wanted our members' voices to be at the heart of everything I do. As we head into an election year, this is more critical than ever and I'm glad to say you have already made a huge difference.

Throughout my articles over the past year, I wanted to highlight not only the great work our members do but also the challenges and opportunities facing our profession. The next step was always to bring these concerns to the attention of those who can deliver change. As you can imagine, this issue of *PlumbHeat* has a distinctly political theme, but I hope it helps to emphasise the power your voices have in making a difference.

For our main feature, I met Ben Macpherson MSP, Minister for Higher and Further Education. Our discussion centred on the upcoming legislation that aims to streamline Scotland's academic pathways, while reinforcing the importance of apprenticeships to the Scottish Government's long-term economic and infrastructure goals.

His ambition to achieve parity of esteem between apprenticeships and other academic routes was refreshing, while his desire to see employers involved in the continued development of apprenticeships in the years to come was also encouraging.

But, most importantly, having the chance to meet with senior government officials puts us

“Progress happens when your expertise and experience are brought into the conversation. You are shaping the future”

at the centre of the change – with your stories, views and engagement being the lynchpin that gives us a seat at the table.

In this issue, we also publish our manifesto calling for the creation of a fair, balanced funding system that shares the real cost of training between government and employers while protecting standards and improving completion rates. Your views are the backbone of this document and will continue to play a part as we strive to bring about a forward-thinking and future-proofed model.

I was also keen to hear from political parties across the spectrum – all of whom shared their thoughts on the challenges facing apprentice recruitment and training and how they would support you in the future should they be elected. Having such a cross-party understanding of the issues our profession wrestles with only highlights the enduring importance of our industry in the national consciousness, reinforcing that you are all being heard by the powers that be.

I hope this issue reinforces the true impact our members have in delivering long-lasting change.

As we look ahead, the message is clear: progress happens when your expertise and experience are brought into the conversation.

Whether you are training the next generation, investing in new technologies or simply delivering high-quality work every day, you are shaping the future of our profession. Thank you for continuing to share your insights and for the difference you make across Scotland and Northern Ireland. Together, we will keep championing skills, raising standards and ensuring our industry remains resilient, respected and ready for what comes next. ■



Securing the supply chain

New SNIPEF affiliate Lawton Tubes explains how it's helping to keep plumbing and heating businesses running smoothly

Lawton Tubes, one of the UK's leading copper tube manufacturers and suppliers, has joined SNIPEF as it strengthens its commitment to supporting plumbing and heating professionals across Scotland and Northern Ireland at a time when workforce pressures and supply chain certainty remain critical issues for the profession.

The move comes alongside significant investment across

BELOW: Robert Lawton, left, at the 'first dig' as construction of Lawton Tubes' new facility broke ground

By Gregor Millar,
PlumbHeat
Editor

the business, including the first dig at a new HQ and operational improvements designed to enhance production efficiency, logistics capability and long-term supply chain resilience – factors increasingly linked to the industry's ability to deliver housing, retrofit and low-carbon projects at pace.

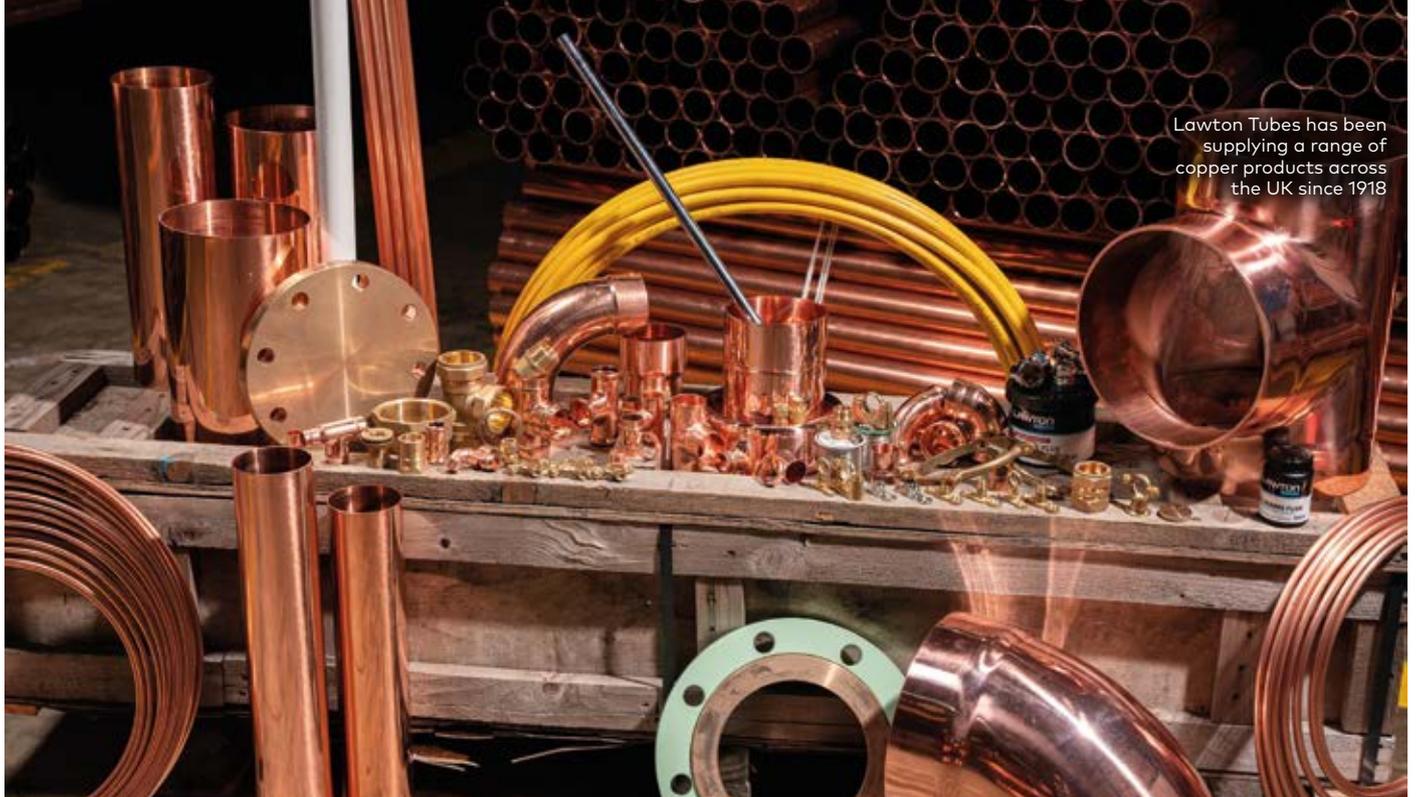
Headquartered in Coventry, Lawton Tubes supplies around 280,000 metres of copper tubing alongside hundreds of

thousands of copper soldering and press fittings to customers in Scotland and Northern Ireland every week. The company says its focus has been on maintaining dependable access to materials despite geographical distance and the additional regulatory requirements that have followed Brexit.

For customers in Scotland, deliveries arrive two to three times a week, in as little as 48 hours, using Lawton's own



Lawton Tubes has been supplying a range of copper products across the UK since 1918



dedicated drivers. For Northern Ireland, where post-Brexit trading arrangements have introduced added complexity, the company has established a streamlined process with logistics partner Steve Frowen Transport to maintain a lead time of five days.

That process has been developed to ensure copper moves across the Irish Sea with compliance checks and documentation managed in advance, allowing merchants and installers to receive products without disruption.

In Scotland, Lawton Tubes supports a broad range of plumbing and heating projects, from domestic installations to commercial developments. The business also counts a number of Scottish OEMs among its customers, including organisations operating in shipbuilding, wind energy and the whisky industry, supplying copper used in distillation and

“Joining SNIPEF feels like a natural step because we want to be more visible with the plumbing and heating trades in every part of the United Kingdom”

associated processes alongside its core work with the building services trade.

The company's decision to join SNIPEF reflects a wider strategic push to increase engagement with installers and contractors across both markets, while reinforcing confidence in material availability at a time when supply chain reliability and product quality remain key concerns for the profession.

Robert Lawton, a Director at Lawton Tubes, said the move reflects the company's respect for the professionalism and expertise of SNIPEF members.

“We have always seen Scotland and Northern Ireland as hugely important markets for us,” he said.

“Joining SNIPEF feels like a natural step because we want to be more visible with the plumbing and heating trades in every part of the UK.

“We have developed seamless operations to supply our

products to our customers, particularly in Northern Ireland. When the rules first changed there was initial disruption but we worked tirelessly with Steve Frowen Transport to build a process that works.

“When a merchant in Belfast or Ballymena places an order, they should have complete confidence that it will arrive on time. That peace of mind really matters.”

Lawton Tubes' membership of SNIPEF comes as the firm continues a £20 million programme of investment aimed at improving processes across the business and expanding operational capacity. The development of its new headquarters is expected to play a central role in modernising infrastructure, supporting workforce growth and strengthening long-term manufacturing capability in the UK.

For SNIPEF members, the message is straightforward: wherever you are based, Lawton Tubes is positioning itself to deliver copper supply backed not only by established logistics partnerships, but by continued investment in production, facilities and long-term service reliability. ■

BELOW: Lawton Tubes has its own dedicated drivers to ensure products reach their destinations quickly across Scotland and Northern Ireland



Holyrood 2026

The main parties standing for election in Scotland explain how they'll support apprentices and employers and why our members should give them their vote



Reform UK was contacted by SNIPEF but did not provide a comment by the time of publication.



Scottish Liberal Democrats

Jamie Greene
MSP, Economy
Spokesperson

More than three-quarters of employers saying government is doing a poor job on apprenticeships should be a wake-up call. In the plumbing and heating sector, businesses want to train the next generation but they are being asked

to do this at a time when costs are rising fast across the board. The result is fewer apprentices, worsening skills shortages and growing risks to delivery on housing upgrades and decarbonising our heating systems.

Scottish Liberal Democrats believe apprenticeships must be treated as essential economic infrastructure, not an afterthought. That is especially true in the plumbing and heating trades, where improving Scotland's homes can cut bills, tackle ill health and bring down carbon emissions. Our recent budget

SNP

David Torrance MSP, former engineer

The SNP is focused on building a fair, prosperous and successful economy, which is supported by an education and skills system that is flexible and ready to meet the needs of people, communities and employers

Tackling the climate emergency is the great challenge of our times and one of the ways we can achieve our net zero target is by changing the way we heat our buildings. The plumbing and heating industry will play a critical role in this, and the SNP recognises the importance of having a skilled workforce to meet this challenge.

The SNP Government's Budget for 2026/27 provides funding to partners to enable the delivery of 25,000 Modern Apprenticeships, 5,000 Foundation Apprenticeships and at least 1,200 Graduate Apprenticeships in 2026/27. This latest funding commitment builds on the success we have had since the SNP came to power in 2007. Around 400,000 apprenticeship



opportunities have been provided to young people across the country since 2008, ensuring that Scotland has the skilled workforce required to meet the needs of an evolving skills landscape.

We are continuing to make progress, with the 2025 Heat in Buildings progress report showing that there has been an increase of more than 20% in the number of people in training on plumbing or heating Modern Apprenticeships since 2019.

We are, however, constrained by the fact that Westminster holds most of the key economic levers, as demonstrated by the UK Labour Government's disastrous decision to hike employer National Insurance contributions, which has hammered employers across all sectors, making it more expensive to recruit and train new employees.

Successive Westminster Governments treating Scotland as an afterthought with decisions such as this show exactly why Scotland needs a fresh start with independence to build a stronger, wealthier and fairer economy. It is only by voting for the SNP in May that this can be achieved.

deal showed the value that we place on skills. We have delivered new funded pathways into key sectors such as renewables and social care, and a major uplift to the budgets of Scotland's colleges.

Now we want to secure flexible lifelong learning routes so people can retrain into the trades at any stage and deliver stronger links between colleges and local businesses so training matches real workforce demand.

We also support measures to help firms take on apprentices and

upskill existing staff, especially in low-carbon heating and energy efficiency.

For trade employers, they want to know that they will be supported to deliver a high standard of training. One of the Scottish Government's consistent failures is in not working with industry bodies to design schemes that work in the real world. Scottish Liberal Democrats recognise that we need to support those who will be at the forefront of training the next generation.

Scottish Conservatives

Miles Briggs MSP, Education and Skills Spokesman

Like many other sectors, the plumbing and heating industry has suffered thanks to the SNP's chronic failure to invest in skills, training and colleges.

The staggering 20% cut in funding it has imposed over the past five years has led to job losses, a huge reduction in student numbers and a sharp decline in the number of young people qualifying for essential sectors, such as engineering, hospitality, manufacturing and skilled trades.

The number of apprenticeships has declined by as much as a third in the past decade while the SNP has dismally failed to maintain the investment in skills essential for economic growth. Employers have complained of a skills shortage and difficulty in recruiting staff. They have called for around 10,000 more apprenticeship places than are currently being filled.

Yet John Swinney's government failed to pass on £171 million from the Apprenticeship Levy, instead using it to plug holes in its own budget.

The Scottish Conservatives' plan is to deliver more apprenticeship places – in line with calls from employers – and, crucially, in those sectors where the skills shortage is most acute for businesses. We'll reverse the cuts to colleges and introduce measures to help local employers to shape training that matches their workforce needs.

The Scottish Conservatives are the only party with solid proposals for a demand-led approach that will provide young people and Scottish firms with the skills that are crucial in a host of sectors, including plumbing and heating, and reverse the damage done by years of SNP neglect.



Lorna Slater MSP, Economy Spokesperson

The Scottish Greens believe that investing in skills and apprenticeships in the plumbing and heating sector is essential if Scotland is to meet its climate targets while creating secure, well-paid jobs in communities across the country.

The transition to clean energy represents one of the biggest infrastructure challenges Scotland has faced in decades. Delivering it will require a new generation of skilled workers, alongside support for existing tradespeople to retrain and to upskill.

That is why we have been calling for a significant expansion of apprenticeships and training pathways focused on zero-emissions technologies.

We believe that support for small and medium-sized businesses to take on apprentices, as well as funded opportunities, is essential to ensure Scotland's just transition in the energy sector, which must work for workers as well as for the climate.

By investing in the workforce now, such as apprenticeships, geared towards a net-zero outcome, we can reduce energy bills, cut emissions and ensure that the economic benefits of Scotland's shift to clean heat are felt locally through high-quality jobs and long-term career opportunities in the trades.



Scottish Labour

Daniel Johnson MSP, Economy and Skills Spokesperson

An apprenticeship system that works will unlock opportunities for Scots and strengthen the Scottish economy as a whole.

As it stands, skills shortages are hindering many Scottish businesses, all while one in eight young people in Scotland are unemployed and people of all ages are looking to retrain or upskill.

Plumbing is a sector where we must get it right. We will always need these skills and there are huge opportunities with the roll-out of new heating technology.

Scottish Labour is committed to making Scotland's apprenticeship system work for people and for industry, and ending the SNP's brutal cuts to colleges.

Our apprenticeship guarantee means that any qualified apprenticeship candidate will be guaranteed a place in a sector where workers are needed.

We will introduce a university-style clearing system to match up applicants with opportunities and we will strengthen links between our education system and the world of work.

For too long, the SNP has raided funds raised by the Apprenticeship Levy in order to plug its own budget gaps, but we will put a stop to that.

Under a Scottish Labour government, money raised by the Apprenticeship Levy will be ringfenced for skills development.

Beyond apprenticeships, we are committed to upgrading homes and delivering the most ambitious housebuilding programme in the history of devolution – meaning more jobs in plumbing, heating and beyond.

Scottish Labour will fix the basics and deliver a better future for both workers and businesses – that is what is on the ballot in May.



IMAGE: Alexey Fedorenko / Shutterstock

Fairer funding, stronger skills

SNIEF launches manifesto setting out plans to protect the profession

SNIEF has launched its manifesto ahead of the Scottish election, urging government to share the cost burden of apprenticeships with employers through funding reform to safeguard the future of the profession.

Supporting Apprenticeships: Fixing Scotland's Skills Shortage sets out the urgent need to strengthen Scotland's plumbing and heating skills pipeline through fairer funding, improved completion and sustained employer support.

Evidence from employer research in late 2025 highlighted that recruitment intent is fragile, skills availability remains low and more than half of businesses are unlikely to take on an apprentice without additional support. At the same time, employers overwhelmingly back the four-year apprenticeship model as essential for maintaining safety, quality and professional standards across a safety-critical workforce.

The manifesto focuses on a single, outcome-driven objective: creating

a balanced funding system that shares the real costs of training between government and employers while protecting high standards and improving completion. This includes extending regional employer incentives across the full four-year programme, offsetting wage and supervision costs for micro and SME businesses, and rewarding completion, retention and flexible entry routes into the profession.

Taken together, these measures are designed to increase apprenticeship recruitment, strengthen workforce capacity and support modern low-carbon careers, delivering long-term benefits for businesses, communities and the wider Scottish economy.

Fiona Hodgson, Chief Executive of SNIEF, said: "Employers are not walking away from apprenticeships; they are being forced out by a system that no longer reflects the real cost of training in a safety-critical profession.

"For most plumbing and heating businesses, the cost of an apprentice is not recovered until the third year, meaning the first two years are a growing and unsustainable financial burden.

"Without reform, small firms will continue to be priced out of training, deepening the profession's ongoing skills shortage, ultimately impacting households, communities and the wider economy."

The manifesto calls on government and prospective parliamentary candidates to commit to reforming apprenticeship funding so that employers who want to train are supported, not penalised.

Fiona added: "Our proposals are not about lowering standards or shifting responsibility. They are about sharing costs fairly, rewarding completion and aligning public investment with long-term outcomes. If the Scottish Government wants more apprentices, safer homes and a skilled workforce that's fit

for the future, the system must work for the employers who deliver training on the ground." ■

You can read our manifesto by visiting www.snief.org/publications

The manifesto was published in February



Fiona Hodgson,
SNIEF Chief
Executive

Ben Macpherson says apprenticeships are a key facet of incoming education reforms



Committed to the future of plumbing

PlumbHeat met **Ben Macpherson**, Minister for Higher and Further Education, at the Scottish Parliament to discuss apprenticeships, employer pressures and the impact of education reforms on Scotland's future workforce

By Gregor Millar,
PlumbHeat editor

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE STRENGTHS AND PRESSURES WITHIN SCOTLAND'S HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION SYSTEM?

There are a lot of great things happening. We currently have around 25,000 modern apprenticeships being delivered in different ways and demand is growing, both from people who want to do them and the need for skilled people in the economy.

Apprenticeships provide strong opportunities to train in the workplace while also learning in a formal setting, leading to good careers and well-paid jobs. The challenge is ensuring the system continues to meet demand while supporting social change, so more people consider apprenticeships as a first-choice pathway.

APPRENTICESHIPS ARE OFTEN SEEN AS SECOND-BEST TO MORE TRADITIONAL ACADEMIC ROUTES. DO YOU RECOGNISE THAT PERCEPTION?

“ Apprenticeships are extremely important and, in my view, will become increasingly so in the years ahead ”

I am very passionate about ensuring genuine parity of esteem across different pathways, and I have sought to use that energy and determination to drive my work forward.

It's true that there has been a perception that some routes were preferable to others. However, I believe that perception is beginning to shift and I would like to see that momentum continue.

Apprenticeships are extremely important and, in my view, will become increasingly so in the years

ahead. The key, however, is to ensure diversity in the routes available, enabling people to choose a pathway that suits their way of learning and allows them to realise their potential to the greatest extent. I want all these pathways to be recognised as strong, credible choices that enable individuals to fulfil their potential and build a sustainable career.

HOW DO YOU SEE APPRENTICESHIPS CONTRIBUTING TO SOCIAL MOBILITY IN SCOTLAND?

Both equality of access and the ability to fulfil your potential, which is effectively what social mobility is about, are really important. I think it's about people having access to opportunities that they can realise. Apprenticeships provide that opportunity. They allow people to get straight into the practical and theoretical aspects of learning while earning, and that's an excellent way to develop skills and progress.

SNIPEF'S RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS CONCERN THAT THE COSTS OF HIRING APPRENTICES ARE BECOMING DISPROPORTIONATE. HOW ARE YOU RESPONDING TO THAT CHALLENGE?

We know your members are the heart of the construction sector, which is an area of growth in terms of economic development and skills demand. I also recognise the financial pressures of taking on an apprentice that employers face. We also know how much the UK Government's rise in National Insurance contributions, which is outside of our scope, has made it difficult for businesses in Scotland.

The Scottish Government is actively reviewing contribution rates and considering what additional support can be provided. We are thinking hard in government about how we support people going into apprenticeships.

EMPLOYER RESEARCH SHOWS STRONG CONSENSUS THAT THE FOUR-YEAR APPRENTICESHIP REMAINS THE GOLD STANDARD. HOW WILL YOU ENSURE THIS IS PROTECTED?

Part of that comes from working in partnership with organisations like SNIPEF, and we deeply value the dialogue SNIPEF has with the government, along with Skills Development Scotland and, in time, the Scottish Funding Council. This partnership approach will become even more significant.

We recognise that there are arrangements in place to ensure quality and we would seek to build on those. We know that if the quality of training and delivery is not there, it creates problems for everyone – for the individual, for industry and for wider society. We need to learn from



experience and make sure both quality and attention to detail are maintained and developed.

HOW DO YOU THINK EMPLOYERS CAN BE BETTER INVOLVED IN SHAPING APPRENTICESHIPS SO TRAINING REFLECTS REAL WORKPLACE NEEDS?

Employer input is crucial. Under the new arrangements, an apprenticeship committee within the Scottish Funding Council will include people with direct experience of delivering apprenticeships. This ensures that industry expertise helps shape standards, content and future demand planning.

We've been diligent and proactive through the legislative process and we will continue to be so in implementation, to ensure there is input from industry on what is required in terms of standards, the robustness of what is delivered and what is demanded within the economy – both now and in the future.

HOW IMPORTANT IS PARTNERSHIP WITH SECTOR-LED ORGANISATIONS SUCH AS SNIPEF IN SHAPING APPRENTICESHIP CONTENT AND STANDARDS?

The skills, training and delivery of people working on the ground – like SNIPEF members and their teams – are absolutely essential to achieving net zero and, importantly, the benefits that brings, such as warmer homes and better built environments.

That's a collective endeavour and training the workforce we need is something we must address now. It's not just about reducing emissions, but about tangible improvements in people's day-to-day lives.

Achieving that will depend on the skill and diligence of your members and their teams, so partnership with sector organisations is crucial.

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE VALUE OF EMPLOYER-LED MANAGING AGENTS SUCH

ABOVE: Ben Macpherson was full of praise for our members and the work they do

IMAGES: Mark Jackson Photography

AS SNIPEF WITHIN THE APPRENTICESHIP SPHERE?

We recognise the role of managing agents and that was part of the discussion during the legislation process. There are important considerations around costs but in terms of delivery on the ground, apprenticeships are incredibly valuable. Government, delivery bodies, managing agents, training providers, colleges and industry all have interconnected roles.

Everyone's input is crucial to making the most of opportunities for economic growth and preparing our environments and workforce for the net zero transition.

THE NEW TERTIARY EDUCATION BILL AIMS TO SIMPLIFY THE EDUCATION STRUCTURE AND FULLY INTEGRATE APPRENTICESHIPS. WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACHIEVE THROUGH THIS?

The achievement of a more cohesive, efficient and agile system is at the heart of what James Withers recommended and what we have now delivered legislatively and now we need to implement that practically.

What that will enable is greater collaboration, greater efficacy and responsiveness to not only the demands that are here now, but also to what is coming at us in terms of technological change and other challenges that will become even more apparent in the period ahead, so that we are ready to adjust to the future.

In a lot of other countries, apprenticeships and funding for universities and colleges are delivered through the same entity. We are making that happen now.

We value the role that Skills Development Scotland has played, and the staff there have made a very positive impact for employers and individuals undertaking apprenticeships. We deeply respect that, and that knowledge, passion and skill will transfer into the Scottish

Funding Council as part of implementation.

So, we are looking to retain all of that and build on it, but through one body rather than two. By putting everything into a single delivery entity.

WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE KEY BENEFITS OF THE BILL?

For prospective apprentices, this Bill helps build on the current success and gives government the ability in the future, through direction to the Scottish Funding Council, to determine if we want more apprenticeships and to respond to where demand exists.

It will make sure that input from employers and those with experience of apprenticeships, through the apprenticeship committee and more widely, helps shape what is delivered so that provision is responsive to the needs of industry.

Where there is demand, both from employers and from people who want to enter these professions, the Bill will help facilitate that for the next quarter of the 21st century and beyond, and it will do so in a way that connects apprenticeships more cohesively with higher and further education.

In terms of prospective employers, their input will continue to be very important, just as it has been in the current system. We want to build on that, enhance that involvement and make sure the system is agile and there for them. ■

Editor's PERSPECTIVE

In a period where apprenticeships are becoming prohibitively expensive, it is encouraging to hear they remain of core importance to the Scottish Government.

Our profession has long jostled with the perception that apprenticeships are a "second-class" option compared to other academic routes. But the minister's passion to ensure a parity of esteem aligns with SNIPEF's own core message, building confidence that the Scottish Government is equally determined to ensure the long-term viability of apprenticeships.

The Tertiary Education and Training Bill aims to simplify Scotland's post-school education system under the Scottish Funding Council, creating a more coordinated tertiary education and skills system.

SNIPEF hopes it will deliver a more agile and flexible system that can adapt to technological advances and shifting priorities to mould a future-ready workforce. Simplification was long overdue, however, centralisation raises questions about responsiveness to sector-specific needs, and we can't expect these changes to garner an immediate fix to ongoing skills shortages.

The minister's protestations for partnership are welcomed, and an opportunity for greater cooperation which has, in the past, been lacking. It's up to us to take advantage of this, utilise these new mechanisms to make sure our industry's voice is heard and respected, ensuring the next generation is given every opportunity to flourish.



A spirit of collaboration is a priority for the SNP Government, says Mr Macpherson

Round-up of latest WaterSafe activities and events

Take the safe and sound approach

Protect public health and your professional reputation with lead-free solder pledge

As regular readers will know, WaterSafe launched a major campaign in October 2024 to tackle the persistent and illegal use of lead-based solder on wholesome water systems. Since then, the initiative has gathered significant pace. We have now reached a major milestone, with more than 150 plumbers signing our Lead-Free Pledge – a public commitment to keep lead solder out of their toolbags.

Our campaign recently caught the attention of the national media, with *The Financial Times* shining a spotlight on the issue. And in a recent series of its Untold podcast, *Toxic Legacy*, it explored how lead is still finding its way into the UK's drinking water. The investigation warned that even a minor lapse in standards can cause toxic contamination, proving that carrying lead solder in your toolbag is a reputational and public health risk that no professional should be willing to take.

THE SCALE OF THE RISK

It has been more than 30 years since lead solder was banned for use on drinking water pipes (prohibited since 1989 and reinforced by the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999). Yet recent research from WaterSafe reveals a concerning

“Ensuring your work is lead-free is the best way to protect your customers, your business and the reputation of our industry”

reality: the 'old ways' of working are proving hard to shift.

Our survey of the UK plumbing industry found that a quarter of plumbers admitted to using lead solder on drinking water installations. When asked why, many cited its lower melting point and perceived ease of use. Even more startling is that two-thirds of plumbers still carry lead solder in their vans today.

While many contractors argue they use it legitimately for closed-circuit heating systems, having it on site creates a high risk of cross-contamination. Whether through a simple mistake in a dark cupboard or a lack of supervision for an apprentice, lead solder can easily end up on the wrong joint.

These aren't just theoretical risks; plumbing inspectors continue to find illegal joints in the field. One high-profile case involved a refurbished school kitchen where lead-soldered joints resulted in lead levels 18 times the legal limit, posing a direct and preventable threat to children's health.

WHY THE INDUSTRY IS UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

The Financial Times investigation serves as a stark reminder that lead exposure is not a problem of the past. The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and the World Health Organization (WHO) are clear: there is no safe level of lead exposure.

In children, lead is a neurotoxin that can lead to developmental delays and reduced IQ. In adults, long-term exposure contributes to kidney damage and high blood pressure. Because lead builds up in the body over time, every illegal joint contributes to a cumulative health crisis.



ABOVE: Lead solder is indistinguishable to the untrained eye

BELOW: It's important to take care and use lead-free solder © Water Regs UK



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



This is where the value of the WaterSafe register comes in. Our data shows that 98% of WaterSafe-approved plumbers are fully aware of the regulations regarding lead-free solder – a significantly higher awareness level than the wider industry.

For your business, this knowledge isn't just a compliance box-tick; it's a key differentiator. It shows you are a professional who prioritises the health of your community.

THE LEAD-FREE PLEDGE HITS A NEW MILESTONE

WaterSafe's Lead-Free Pledge encourages businesses to commit to a lead-free toolbag. By signing, you are telling your customers – and the water companies – that you have audited your kit and removed the risk of the accidental use of lead solder.

More than 150 plumbers have now made this commitment. By removing lead solder from your kit entirely – and using lead-free

alternatives for heating systems too – you eliminate the risk of a simple mistake turning into a major legal and health liability.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Clear out the van and toolbag:

The simplest way to comply with the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999 is to switch to lead-free solder for all applications. Modern lead-free solders are highly effective and remove the need to carry two types of wire.

Take the pledge: Join the growing group of professionals by signing the WaterSafe Lead-Free Pledge. It is a powerful way to demonstrate your integrity and can be a great talking point when quoting for new work.

Educate your customers: Use your WaterSafe registration to explain the importance of materials. Being able to show a customer your lead-free solder pool supports your competence and shows you are up to date with the regulations designed to keep their water safe.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The ban on lead solder isn't just "red tape" – it is a vital public health measure. As *The Financial Times* has shown, the public and the media are starting to ask tougher questions about water safety.

Ensuring your work is lead-free is the best way to protect your customers, your business and the reputation of our industry. Let's make the lead-free toolbag the industry standard. ■

To take the pledge visit: www.watersafe.org.uk/lead-free



Putting the health of your customers first is essential

OPT IN TO WATERSAFE

If you're a plumber in Northern Ireland or Scotland registered with SNIPEF, you are eligible to join WaterSafe at no extra cost. Eligible members must opt to sign up for WaterSafe – you will not automatically be registered. Contact us on 0131 357 2440 or email schemes@snipef.org for more information. For more information about WaterSafe and its benefits, visit watersafe.org.uk/howtojoin

From compliance to competitive advantage

Scott Sanford explores how ACCS can take your business to the next level

I've spoken to countless plumbing and heating firms who view building standards compliance with confusion or misunderstanding rather than seeing it as an opportunity.

The Approved Certifier of Construction Scheme (ACCS) is one of the few areas where regulation genuinely works in favour of the profession and, when used effectively, it can materially improve how a business operates. Put simply,

ACCS allows suitably qualified professionals to certify their own work associated with building warrant applications, confirming compliance with the Building (Scotland) Regulations 2004 without the need for repeated local authority inspections.

The scheme has been in place since 2009 and operates under the oversight of the Scottish Government's Building Standards Division,



By Scott Sanford, Head of Technical Services and Certification

with administration and delivery through approved providers such as SNIPEF. From my perspective, this balance of professional autonomy and government oversight is what gives the scheme its credibility.

WHAT DOES THE SCHEME DO?

Under ACCS, Approved Certifiers of Construction are individuals who have satisfied rigorous qualification and competency criteria, allowing them to certify that certain building-regulated plumbing, heating and drainage work meets statutory standards. Companies that employ these certifiers are recognised as Approved Bodies and appear on the Scottish Government's Certification Register, which can be found at www.certificationregister.co.uk

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN IN PRACTICE FOR YOUR BUSINESS?

1. Operational efficiency and time savings

One of the most immediate advantages for businesses is the ability to self-certify work that would otherwise



ACCS membership allows professionals to self-certify, saving time and money on projects that require a building warrant

require a local authority building standards inspection. Accredited certifiers issue a certificate of construction on completion, which local authorities must accept. This eliminates delays associated with external inspections and streamlines project delivery.

Faster processing translates into more efficient workflows, fewer scheduling constraints on site and the ability to complete more jobs within the same timeframe, resulting in increased productivity.

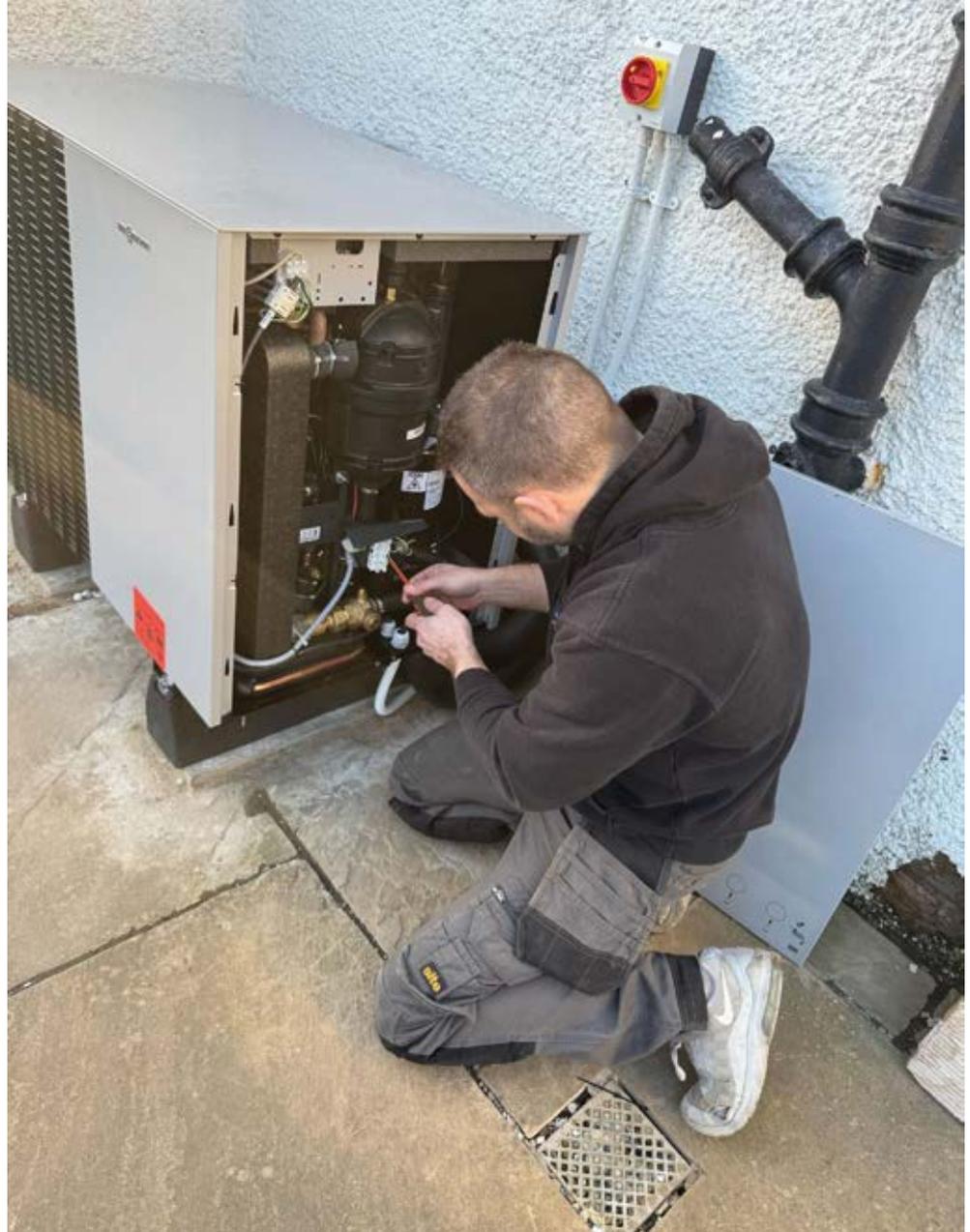
2. Cost reduction and financial incentives

Clients of Approved Certifiers qualify for reduced building warrant application fees, provided the local authority is notified in advance of the intention to use an Approved Certifier. This is something you can leverage when securing opportunities, giving you a tangible benefit you can offer to prospective clients.

Additionally, avoiding repeated inspections reduces indirect costs such as workforce downtime and travel expenses for inspectors – helping to protect your business's margins.

3. Competitive difference

Being an ACCS member highlights to your customers and partners that your business employs technically qualified individuals who adhere to a government-approved standard. This can make a real difference – reinforcing your business's dedication to quality and high standards when you are securing new work opportunities.



4. Building client confidence

Businesses benefit commercially when clients have confidence that the service will match expectations. Knowing that you are an Approved Certifier reassures customers that installations conform to the relevant standards and are overseen by professionals, reducing disputes and helping to foster long-term relationships.

5. Professional recognition

Being listed on the Scottish

ABOVE: Being in the scheme can give your firm a real advantage

Government's Certification Register as an Approved Body helps to elevate your business's standing. Accredited businesses have the opportunity to showcase their services in promotions, proposals and digital platforms. All of which reinforce your own professional reputation and help show that you are a trustworthy business.

WHY SHOULD INDIVIDUAL PLUMBING AND HEATING PROFESSIONALS GET INVOLVED?

1. Recognition of competence and career development

For individual plumbers and heating engineers, achieving ACCS accreditation is a real way to show your technical competence and regulatory understanding. The scheme

“ Under ACCS, Approved Certifiers of Construction are individuals who have satisfied rigorous qualification and competency criteria, allowing them to certify that certain building-regulated plumbing, heating and drainage work meets statutory standards”



requires demonstrable qualifications and relevant industry training, which supports ongoing professional development and skills validation.

2. Broader scope of work

Accredited professionals can certify their own work for compliance where building warrants are necessary, including above and below ground drainage, unvented systems and a range of heating installations. This expanded scope increases the range of projects you can confidently and autonomously support.

3. Reduced inspection worries

By certifying your own work, professionals can reduce dependency on external inspections. This improves control over project timelines, on-site productivity and decreases disruptions that can occur while waiting on inspector visits.

4. Trust and professional standing

Holding approved certifier status elevates an individual plumber's standing with clients, employers and within professional networks. It signals a deep understanding of the regulatory environment, ongoing compliance with industry standards and a commitment to quality workmanship.

5. Staying up to date with regulation

Scheme membership mandates ongoing engagement with updated building standards and refresher training, ensuring Accredited Certifiers remain informed on changing regulations and technologies, an essential asset in a climate of rapid regulatory change and evolving technology.

IN A NUTSHELL

In my view, the Approved Certifier of Construction

Scheme is one of the most practical tools available to plumbing and heating professionals in Scotland.

It speeds up the regulatory process and gives you the tools to deliver projects more efficiently while also providing a credible way to stand out in an increasingly competitive market. But it also gives you peace of mind and a respected badge of quality, something that has been the game-changer for many businesses within the profession.

For businesses considering joining the scheme, my advice is to view it not simply as a certification but as

“By certifying your own work, professionals can reduce dependency on external inspections”

an investment in how you operate, how you're perceived and how confidently you can deliver regulated work.

You can find all the information you need to get started by visiting www.snipef.org/contractors/certification-schemes/accs or by contacting us directly at schemes@snipef.org

The employer's view

Gavin Sinclair, a SNIPEF member for more than 20 years with HPG Solutions in Edinburgh, joined ACCS 16 years ago. He revealed the scheme had been vital for his business – opening the door to new opportunities and fostering positive relationships across the profession.

He said: "It's one of the most advantageous things that I've done as a plumbing business. In terms of being out there in world doing plumbing, heating and drainage, it's one of the best things my company has been involved in.

"Prior to joining ACCS, I had to phone building control, get an appointment and allow for potential time delays – I could lose up to seven days waiting. The convenience of being able to test it,

certify it and get the job moving made a huge difference.

"When you're pricing a job up for someone who knows you can certify, there's a better chance of getting the work, especially in a competitive tender. If you are a certifier and someone else is not, you are more likely to get the job as the main contractor is going to want you to do it. This helps you build strong relationships with contractors but on top of that, you can also promote cost savings for the client.

"If you want to stand out, I would encourage members to join ACCS. The benefits when you're tendering for work are an obvious plus point. It's a clear advantage that saves you time and allows you to generate more opportunities for work."



Rising talent recognised

By Gregor Millar,
PlumbHeat
editor

Plumbing and heating apprentices rewarded for their outstanding work with awards presented by two proud training providers

Two talented apprentices have been honoured with awards from their training providers for their excellent work as they prepare for a career in plumbing and heating.

At Tullos Training Ltd's annual prize-giving, 19-year-old Cameron Wright won the SNIPEF Rising Star – Outstanding Development award.

After picking up the honour, Cameron described how he'd be learning about different heating systems and the satisfaction he gets from seeing projects through to completion. He said: "One of the biggest learning curves has been working on boilers and gas – getting over how hard it looks to learning how easy it can be. It has also surprised me how technical certain parts of the job can be.

"We do a lot of work for insurance companies, working on homes that have flooded or caught fire, and we do all the pipe work in the house.

"It's a really good feeling when it's all finished and you get to see the final product – and to share that

with customers who are delighted to see their install."

Cameron also praised the support of his lecturers and employer, Drain Surgeon, and encouraged other young people to pursue a career in the profession. He added: "It's a great opportunity. Get as many CVs out to employers as possible and get your name out there. It's a great business to get into."

Jim Booth, Training Executive at Tullos, said Cameron had grown significantly during his apprenticeship, adding: "We are proud to be part of his journey."

Nathan Cadger, Operations Manager at Drain Surgeon, said: "We're absolutely delighted for Cameron – it's thoroughly deserved."

Meanwhile Shaun Wilcox, 29, was named Best Overall Plumbing Apprentice at UHI Moray's Construction Awards.

He joined the profession later than many apprentices, having worked in

a shortbread factory since leaving school, but always knew he wanted to learn a trade.

Shaun, who also won the copper category at the 2024 Scottish Plumbing Apprentice of the Year (SPAY) contest, said: "It's always good to get recognised when you've put in the work. It feels good to be acknowledged for that.

"I think the older you get, especially if you've been in a job for a while, it's hard to leave and find something else. When you go into an apprenticeship, you're maybe not paid as much at the beginning but you've got something at the end of it. That makes it worth it."

Shaun highlighted the support of both his employer and college in his development, saying they have been vital to his progression while also giving him opportunities to flourish through projects and competitions.

Mike Rollo, Service Manager for Building Services at Moray Council, said: "Shaun has deservedly received many accolades both locally and nationally throughout his apprenticeship with Moray Council. Shaun's success is another example of the talent and dedication coming through our programmes."

Jim Mackinnon, Deputy Head of Curriculum – Construction, at UHI Moray, added: "Shaun is a most able student. At an early stage in first year, he demonstrated very good ability with all practical and theoretical tasks and this continued. We wish Shaun all the best for the future." ■



Cameron Wright, won the award at Tullos Training Ltd annual awards



Shaun Wilcox, pictured at SPAY 2024, was honoured at UHI Moray's annual awards

The plumbing and heating stars of tomorrow came together at the Edinburgh Corn Exchange to take part in this year's Construction and Built Environment Challenge (CABEC).

The event marked 25 years of bringing together pupils, educators and industry partners for a high-energy final designed to showcase the breadth of careers available in construction, engineering and building services across Scotland.

The CABEC final concluded with awards recognising outstanding teamwork, problem-solving and practical skills across a variety of disciplines.

Firrhill High School took the top prize, with Boroughmuir High School being named runner-up and Holyrood RC High School taking third place.

The event, held in February and run by the Scottish Electrical Charitable Training Trust (SECTT), featured 10 interactive challenge stations, which were created and delivered by a collective of schools, colleges, universities and training providers.

Pupils took part in practical, theoretical and team-based activities



years of inspiration

CABEC competition celebrates milestone as industry's stars of the future show off their skills

that reflected real-world scenarios and the STEM skills used daily across the built environment.

SNIEPF operated the heat pump challenge, designed and developed by President Duncan Sharp. The task saw pupils entrusted with connecting copper piping to a heat pump system under a strict timeframe. Once successfully completed, the station would trigger a series of LED lights to let participants know that the system was fully operational.

The challenge helped to reinforce the crucial role that renewable technology is playing in plumbing and heating as part of the drive towards net-zero. But it also highlighted the diverse nature of the profession, showcasing the variety of opportunities available to youngsters eyeing up their future career path.

The event was opened by Fiona Harper, Chief Executive of SECTT, which supports the training of around 3,000 electrical installation apprentices

and adult trainees across Scotland.

She said: "CABEC has been running for an incredible 25 years. We've had thousands of students try their hand at different trades and many have gone on to have jobs and careers in our industry – and that's something we are all very proud of.

"The brilliant thing about the skills students are learning about today is that they're portable. Whether you end up in electrical, plumbing, engineering, design, surveying or project management, these are the kinds of skills that take you anywhere in the world.

Competing schools:

- Bathgate Academy
- Boroughmuir High School
- Erskine Stewart Melville
- Firrhill High School
- George Heriot's School
- Holyrood RC High School
- Linlithgow Academy
- Penicuik High School
- Ross High School
- St Kentigern's Academy

“The competition has long been a stepping stone for youngsters to learn more about our profession and the wider construction sector, showcasing the wide array of career opportunities available to them”



Firrhill High School were crowned winners at the 2026 CABEC Final



The SNIEPF Training Services team were on hand to educate pupils about the diverse career options in plumbing and heating



Pupils learned more about heat pump technology at the SNIEPF challenge station



Boroughmuir High School was named runner-up



Holyrood RC High School finished third

Challenge providers:

- Edinburgh Napier University
- Heriot-Watt University
- SRUC (Scotland's Rural College)
- West Lothian College
- SNIEPF Training Services Ltd
- SECTT
- Edinburgh College

"As the world changes and technology develops, there are many areas of work that are changing, including ours, but one thing is clear; we will always need tradespeople to build things and make them safe.

"I want to say a huge thanks to our providers, sponsors schools and pupils. Together they made the competition a huge success. Congratulations also to our winners and runners up, you've all done yourself so proud."

Dale Thomson, Apprentice Training Manager at SNIEPF Training Services, added: "Everyone at SNIEPF is proud to continue our support for CABEC as it reaches this historic milestone.

"The competition has long been a stepping stone for youngsters to learn more about our profession and the wider construction sector, showcasing the wide array of career opportunities available to them.

"We were once again delighted to have pupils take part in our heat pump challenge, highlighting the importance of renewable technology as our profession continues to evolve.

"We hope that pupils gained valuable insight into the varied skills that encapsulate the modern plumber and that they feel inspired by the future careers plumbing and heating has to offer." ■

Don't go wrong on new rights



By Linda Ferguson,
Industrial Relations
Manager

The Employment Rights Act became law on 18 December, bringing changes that will affect your business. Linda Ferguson, SNIPEF's Industrial Relations Manager, outlines what you need to know about the new legislation

18 February 2026

Reform of trade union laws – Phase one

- Simplifying the information of ballot papers and the notice of industrial action.
- Notice to employers reduced from 14 days to 10 days and removal of the obligations relating to the supervision of picketing.
- The mandate for industrial action has been increased from six to 12 months.
- Removal of conditions that were introduced in May 2024 to the check-off process in the public sector.
- Extended protection against dismissal for taking industrial action to the length of the strike, which is currently 12 weeks.
- The removal of the 40% support threshold for industrial action.

1 April 2026

National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage rates increased

- The National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage will increase. The new rates apply to everyone, including apprentices, and are different based on the employee's age.

5 April 2026

Statutory maternity, paternity and sick rates

- Maternity, paternity, adoption, shared parental, neonatal care and paternity bereavement pay rises from £187.18 to £194.32 per week.
- The three-day waiting period and the lower earnings limit for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) will be removed. SSP will be payable from the first day of a period of sickness. There is a requirement for employees to earn at least the lower earnings limit. SSP will increase from £118.75 to £123.25 per week.

Reform of trade union laws – Phase two

- Reduce the requirement of 10% membership at the application stage to a level not lower than 2%.
- Strengthened protections against unfair practices during the statutory recognised process.

STATUTORY PATERNITY AND ORDINARY PARENTAL LEAVE TO BECOME DAY-ONE EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

- From 6 April 2026, the qualifying periods for paternity leave (currently 26 weeks) and ordinary parental leave (currently one year) will be removed, making them both day-one rights. It will also remove the restriction on employees taking paternity leave and pay after they have taken shared parental leave and pay.
- Employees who are newly eligible for day-one paternity and parental leave can give notice from 18 February 2026.

EXTENDED ELIGIBILITY FOR STATUTORY SICK PAY (SSP)

From 6 April 2026, statutory sick pay (SSP) will be extended so that it is payable from the first day of



absence, removing the current three-day waiting period. The requirement for employees to earn at least the lower earnings limit will also be removed. Employees will be entitled to the standard SSP rate or 80% of their average weekly earnings, whichever is lower.

COLLECTIVE REDUNDANCY – INCREASED PROTECTIVE AWARD

The maximum protective award for non-compliance with collective redundancy obligations will increase from 90 days' pay to 180 days' pay per affected employee. This applies where an employer fails to properly consult appropriate employee

representatives when proposing 20 or more redundancies at one establishment within a 90-day period. This change will apply to dismissals which happen on or after 6 April 2026.

FAIR WORK AGENCY TO BE ESTABLISHED

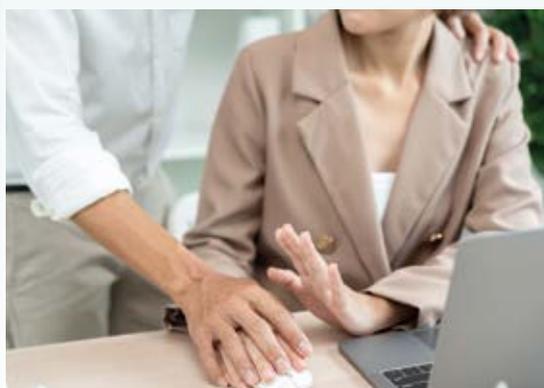
- A single, consolidated body to monitor and enforce core employment rights will be established: the Fair Work Agency (FWA). The FWA will incorporate certain existing agencies and will be responsible for enforcing rights including the national minimum wage, statutory sick pay and holiday pay.
- The agency will have powers to investigate breaches, issue civil penalties and take action against labour exploitation.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT ADDED TO WHISTLEBLOWING LEGISLATION

The whistleblowing provisions will be amended so that complaints of sexual harassment will be treated as protected disclosures.

Introduction of electronic and workplace balloting in connection with industrial action

- Reform of trade union legislation. The government has indicated that it plans to introduce electronic and workplace balloting in connection with industrial action in August 2026.
- It is also expected that the removal of the 50% turnout threshold for an industrial action ballot to be valid will be implemented at the same time as electronic balloting.





October 2026

Reform of trade union laws – Phase three

- Introduction a right of union access to the workplace (both physical and virtual) to meet, support, represent, recruit or organise workers and to facilitate collective bargaining.
- Requirement for employers to provide workers with a written statement that they have the right to join a trade union.
- Requirement for employers to provide trade union representatives with reasonable accommodation and facilities.
- Introduction of a right to time off for trade union equality representatives.
- Strengthen protection from dismissal and detriment for union members and their representatives taking protected industrial action.

EXTENSION TO EMPLOYMENT TRIBUNAL TIME LIMITS

- The time limit to make a claim at an employment tribunal will increase from three to six months.

PROTECTION FOR WORKERS ENGAGED ON OUTSOURCED PUBLIC SECTOR CONTRACTS



- The Act enables regulations to be published that would seek to prevent a two-tier workforce between employees engaged on the same outsourced public sector service contract. These are expected to outline specific terms that must be included in outsourcing agreement to ensure private sector employees engaged on such contracts are treated no less favourably than those who transferred from the public sector under previous arrangements.
- The Act also provides for the publication of a code of practice containing guidance on outsourcing agreements.

October 2026

Stronger harassment law

- An employer will be obligated to take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of their workers.
- The Act also introduces employer liability for third-party harassment. This liability is not limited to sexual harassment but extends to harassment on the grounds of age, disability, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.



January 2027

Unfair dismissal qualification period

- The qualification period for protection from unfair dismissal will reduce from two years to six months. This will come into effect from 1 January 2027 (meaning that employees hired from 1 July 2026 will gain protection from unfair dismissal after six months).

- The compensation cap for unfair dismissal will be removed.

LIMITS ON USE OF FIRE AND REHIRE

- It will automatically be unfair to dismiss an employee for refusing a "restricted variation"

to their contract, which includes changes relating to pay, hours of work, holiday entitlement, pensions, clauses permitting unilateral changes and other terms that will be set out in regulations.

- It will automatically be unfair to an employee if the principal reason for the dismissal is to employ another person to do the same work as the dismissed employee or rehire the dismissed employer to carry.



More information

Members can view the act in full by visiting www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2025/36, or if you need more detailed guidance, please contact Linda at linda.ferguson@snipef.org

ProZone

Don't get in a spin over laundry issue

Drainage system challenge in a domestic property is no problem for Sanvite+

Sanvite+ has helped solve a common but problematic challenge at a domestic property – a laundry room with no direct access to the drainage system.

The home sits in an elevated position, with the laundry room located in a compact stone garage beneath the level of the house.

Waste water needed to be pumped upwards to the existing soil stack at the property in Staffordshire. After a flood caused by an incorrectly specified macerator pump, homeowner Ed Shenton sought a purpose-built solution and turned to Saniflo's Sanvite+ – a pump designed specifically to handle hot, soapy grey water from domestic appliances.

"The previous unit simply wasn't designed for washing machine discharge," said Ed. "The Sanvite+ has been completely reliable since installation. It runs quietly and efficiently and can be fitted with minimal changes to the existing pipework."

Unlike standard macerator pumps designed for toilet waste, the Sanvite+ is engineered to handle the unique demands of grey water from washing machines, dishwashers and sinks. The unit automatically detects incoming water and discharges it efficiently and quietly.

"This is exactly the type of situation the Sanvite+ was designed for," said Amanda Mills, Marketing Manager at SFA Saniflo UK. "Many homeowners

BELOW: The issue in the laundry room has been fixed

4 pages of the latest innovations and products from the UK's premier plumbing and heating professionals

and installers don't realise that using the wrong pump can lead to failures and flooding. The Sanvite+ is purpose-built for grey water applications, which is why it delivers reliable, long-term performance where other solutions fall short."

With multiple inlets and the ability to pump up to 5m vertically or 50m horizontally – enough to reach drainage points in most domestic settings – the Sanvite+ also offers flexibility for future additions such as a utility sink or additional appliances.

Manufactured in France, the Sanvite+ is widely specified in utility rooms, kitchens and garages where gravity drainage is not possible, making it ideal for conversions, extensions and below-ground installations. ■

Find out more at www.sfaniflo.co.uk



Prominent.
Professional.
Proactive.
Be ProZone.

The ProZone section in SNIPEF's *PlumbHeat* magazine is read by thousands of plumbing and heating professionals across Scotland and Northern Ireland. It's the ideal opportunity to promote your business and share your

know-how and knowledge with the people who matter most.

✓ Contact David Hughes

07767 407 402
davidh@connectmedia.cc



Heating solutions at hand

Supplies4Heat has released its 29th edition brochure to showcase an extensive collection of designs that combine performance, style and innovation, making finding the ideal heating solution as easy as possible.

Crucially, the brochure also highlights a new, free next-day delivery option for all products in stocked finishes, when ordered before 11am. For painted and non-stocked finishes, these will now be delivered in just five working days.

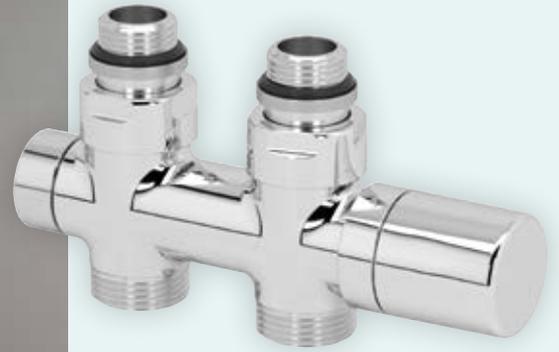
The brochure also features the new element design of the Cornel electric radiator, which blends a timeless finish with cutting-edge technology to offer an elegant and efficient solution. Available in a choice of two or three columns, two height options and a



The Cornel electric radiator is both modern and stylish

range of colour variants, including the new bare metal lacquer finish, the Cornel electric radiator offers real design flexibility. Controllable with an intuitive IR remote, it can easily be set to the required temperature by users at any time.

Another new addition is the cost-effective Bayford ladder rail, offering a simple, classic aesthetic, providing efficient heat output in hydronic and electric (the latter of which features



The new 50mm valves deliver better and more consistent heat output

an optional remote control), and both are available in white and chrome finishes.

Also highlighted in the brochure are the company's new 50mm valves, helping to deliver consistent performance and improved heat output, while also creating a clean, symmetrical look by centralising pipe connections and concealing pipework. These valves are suitable for all side-loading towel rails including the Tallis side rail, Chaucer side rail, Hawkhurst, Dale and Holt. ■

The new brochure is available for free delivery or download a copy at www.supplies4heat.co.uk

Explore our solutions
heating.danfoss.com



More than just a TRV: Your Heating Hero

Over 80 years ago, Danfoss invented the Thermostatic Radiator Valve (TRV), sparking a legacy of innovation, quality, and reliability in heating solutions.

Today, we offer a comprehensive range of products for both residential and commercial applications, that includes self-balancing valves, liquid filled sensors, fast acting gas sensors as well as remote sensors, all tailored for a range of diverse applications.

Enhance comfort and efficiency with Danfoss — your partner in energy efficiency.



Scan the QR code to learn more or visit heating.danfoss.com



Thousands back a cleaner future

When policymakers published their Alternative Clean Heating consultation shortly before Christmas, they probably didn't expect the scale of response we've seen at OFTEC.

While the consultation was launched by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) in Westminster, it was shared with the devolved government in Northern Ireland to incorporate the views of all households in the UK.

A few months later, and around 16,000 oil heated homes, technicians and fuel distributors made a submission to call on the government to back renewable liquid fuels. Responses came from all corners of the UK, including in Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland policymakers are already exploring biofuels and are monitoring if the UK

goes ahead with a Renewable Liquid Heating Fuel Obligation to subsidise these fuels to make them more affordable. Northern Ireland would likely then adopt a similar approach.

The consultation stated that the cost of switching an oil heated home to a heat pump would be £17,000. For harder to treat homes, which require additional energy efficiency upgrades, the cost could be even higher. Herein lies the problem.

There are more than 500,000 oil heated homes in Northern Ireland who therefore have a unique stake in this debate. In the consultation responses, they called on the government to support renewable liquid fuels such as hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO). ■

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



David Blevings, Ireland Manager at OFTEC
IMAGE: Gordon McAvoey Photography

Grow your business with OFTEC

OFTEC is widely recognised for its commitment to liquid fuel heating, training and registration. But we also support today's wider heating industry, with registration options designed to help your business grow.

- Liquid fuel (Including unvented)
- Heat pumps
- Biomass
- Electrical (Part P)
- Solar thermal
- Solid fuel

Why register with OFTEC?

- ✓ Listed on "Find a Technician" – helping customers discover you.
- ✓ MCS, Trustmark and PAS2030 registration also available.
- ✓ Expert technical support when you need it.
- ✓ Industry updates to keep you ahead of the curve.
- ✓ Exclusive discounts from carefully selected partners.

Scan the QR to find out more.



www.oftec.org



BES
We've got it!

CELEBRATING
50 YEARS
1975-2025

**Plumbing,
heating and
gas supplies...
FAST!**

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

Get your FREE CATALOGUE NOW!

Order Mon-Fri 'til 9pm for
FREE NEXT DAY DELIVERY*
Sat/Sun 'til 3pm for Monday delivery

Call free **0800 80 10 90** | Order online **bes.co.uk**



200+
PRODUCTS

Free battery offer with Makita XGT

Makita has introduced a new redemption offer on XGT® machines, batteries, chargers, torches and power source kits. Between 1 March and 30 September 2026, customers can claim a free BL4040F battery for every £390 (excluding VAT) spent on qualifying XGT® products.

Makita's XGT® range of cordless products are designed to deliver high-performance power, durability and reliability for trade professionals.

The 40VMax battery can be used for heavy duty tasks or combined with another 40VMax battery to deliver an impressive 80VMax power output on select machines. This enables many of the XGT® tools to rival corded or petrol-equivalent performance and given the XGT® range covers such a wide array of products including drills, impact drivers, saws and other outdoor equipment, it makes the range a go-to option no matter what the trade or task.

The BL4040F battery included in the redemption offer is designed to produce a 35% increase in power in comparison to the standard BL4040 4.0Ah battery.

With tabless cell technology, the battery has an enhanced cooling system, meaning the battery continues to run cooler to maintain performance under heavy load. The battery also features a power level indicator to give users a warning when to recharge at a glance and has an average charging time of only 45 minutes. Kevin Brannigan, Marketing Manager at Makita UK said: "The new XGT® redemption promotion allows customers to claim a new battery when purchasing selected XGT® tools, helping them to get even more value from every purchase."

For more information and to see the full terms and conditions for the promotion, please visit www.makita.com/redemptions

eurofins

Accredited Water Hygiene Testing

Protect. Maintain compliance. Reduce risk.

Eurofins Water Hygiene Testing UK Ltd. provides UKAS-accredited testing to support Legionella control, broader microbiological, BSRIA and chemistry water analysis. Plus nationwide coverage with >60 sample drop-off locations.

Register for exclusive promo code to receive 10% discount off testing with Eurofins Water Hygiene Testing UK*

Register now to claim your promo code

*subject to terms and conditions

eurofins.co.uk/water
watersales@ftuki.eurofins.com
+44 (0) 845 604 6740

UKAS-accredited water hygiene testing services

The original and still the best



Reliability built in as standard

Our macerators are the quietest on the market – but we're here to shout about it! With over 60 years of innovation behind us, we're proud to deliver the best in performance, reliability, and peace of mind. Experience the quietest and most advanced pumping technology available today.

Inventing the macerator was just the start. Perfecting it has been our mission.



Easy installation & maintenance



Reliable



Quiet technology



5 year warranty



Technical support

Saniflo  SFA GROUP



[sfasaniflo.co.uk](https://www.sfaniflo.co.uk)



From a quick fix to a full-scale refit, **City Plumbing** and **The Bathroom Showroom** are built to keep you on-site and earning. We don't just provide the products; we provide the quote-winning backup.



**3D DESIGN
& PLANNING
SERVICE**



**SHOWROOMS &
EXPERT ADVICE
NATIONWIDE**



**QUALITY BRANDS
IN STOCK**



**EXPERT SPARES
SUPPORT**



**HOMEOWNER
FINANCE OPTIONS**



Scan to find your
nearest branch

**VISIT YOUR LOCAL BRANCH
OR SHOWROOM FOR YOUR
NEXT PROJECT.**

 **THE
BATHROOM
SHOWROOM**