

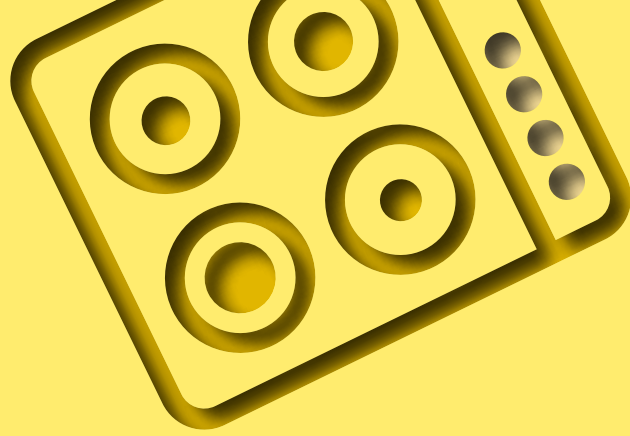


# Annual Report 2019-20

FIRST FOR ELECTRICAL SAFETY ADVICE

# About Us

Electrical Safety First is the UK charity dedicated to reducing deaths and injuries caused by electrical accidents. Our aim is to ensure everyone in the UK can use electricity safely. We campaign on behalf of consumers and electrical trade professionals to improve safety regulation and make sure that safety messages are appropriate, up to date and well communicated. We provide expert information and advice to help people protect themselves from faulty, damaged, sub-standard and poorly maintained electrical installations and appliances. We are recognised by government and industry as the leading campaigning charity and technical authority on electrical safety.



# Chair's Introduction



## **It has been a privilege to hold the role of Chair of Electrical Safety First for the last two years.**

In September we saw the retirement of Chief Executive, Phil Buckle. Phil led the Charity for ten years and was instrumental in extending the reach and success of our campaigning activities. I would like to thank him for his leadership over the last decade. I'd also like to thank our Senior Management Team for ensuring that business carried on as usual whilst waiting for the appointment of his successor. Their ability to steady the ship during the interim period, whilst achieving huge successes, is a true testament to their leadership ability.

In February we welcomed our new Chief Executive, Lesley Rudd. Her track record and commercial background, together with her experience of working with governments and regulators to shape energy policy, has given her a depth of understanding and focus on establishing practical policy solutions that will be a huge benefit to the Charity.

One of the biggest challenges faced by the Charity this year was the COVID-19 pandemic. The Electrical Safety First team has been working remotely since the middle of March and has admirably risen to the challenge of adapting to the "new normal" and continued to make progress against the Charity's goals, notably with the successful passing of the Consumer Scotland Bill in May. My thanks go to everyone for their flexibility and hard work, and particularly to Lesley who, faced with this unprecedented crisis just a month into the new role, has successfully led the team and built relationships with our key stakeholders despite these difficult circumstances.

During the year the Board has reviewed the Charity's activity against our strategy and the targets and priorities that have been set to help evaluate the impact of the work being carried out. We have seen considerable policy success during the year and our consumer campaigns have built on previous work around issues like product recalls and counterfeit electrical products, and also investigated new smart technology including the increase in popularity of electric vehicles.

The Charity's work continues to be underpinned by robust data. Analysis has given us greater insights than ever before into the awareness levels of particular demographic groups, helping us to better target our consumer-facing campaigns through our insights into attitudes and behaviour broken down by categories including location, gender, age, marital and working status.

The Charity's strong balance sheet has well placed it to continue its work throughout and beyond the current challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, but we will continue to be mindful of the need to make the best use of available funds to progress against the Charity's goals.

As I hand over to the Charity's new Chair, Andy Chaplin, I would like to thank my fellow Trustees, the two Chief Executives with whom I have worked, and the whole team at Electrical Safety First for their hard work and support, and wish the Charity continued success.

**Alison Parkes**  
Chair

# Chief Executive's Introduction

I am delighted to have been appointed Chief Executive of Electrical Safety First. I am passionate about safety and, as an advocate of collaboration, I welcome the opportunity my role provides to work with parliamentarians and a wide range of organisations to improve electrical safety.



When I joined in February this year my first priority was to get to know the Charity's staff and key stakeholders, building on the excellent foundations established by the team to ensure that we continue to be at the forefront of key debates around electrical safety issues. Just over a month into my new role, the country entered an unprecedented lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and while this has inevitably had an impact on the way we work, we have continued to engage with Government, industry and consumers and have shared important safety messages through traditional and social media to keep people safe during these difficult times.

Despite the challenges presented by a General Election, Brexit and latterly the COVID-19 crisis, the year under review has been another successful one for the Charity, with significant achievements in line with our strategic goals.

Electrical Safety First has campaigned over a number of years for the introduction of regular safety checks on the electrical installations in privately rented homes in the UK. The confirmation that – as of June

2020 - these checks are a legal requirement in England is a welcome step towards improving the safety of tenants. This is a huge win for the Charity and, more importantly, will protect the tenants of 4.5 million properties in the Private Rented Sector (PRS) in England. Five yearly checks in privately rented homes were introduced in Scotland in 2015 and this year we were delighted that the same was achieved for the Scottish Social Rented Sector, another success for our ongoing 'Inequality Street' campaign which calls for equality in electrical safety standards, regardless of housing tenure.

We will continue to campaign for five yearly checks to be introduced in Wales and Northern Ireland and also for their introduction in the Social Housing Sector throughout the UK. Electrical safety in the home should not be a lottery based on tenure or location.

Despite the UK leaving the European Union on 31st January, there is still a lack of clarity around how the regulatory and enforcement landscape will look following the transition period. Electrical Safety First has urged the Government to maintain (as

a minimum) consumer safety standards and ensure that front-line product safety enforcement bodies are adequately resourced. This is something that we will continue to call for.

During the last year we consolidated our already strong relationship with the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS), notably working with them on an investigation into the sale of second-hand electrical goods which showed a clear need for better legislation and enforcement. As a result of the project, Electrical Safety First has co-developed a dedicated training programme on this issue for lead Trading Standards officers throughout the UK.

Strong partnerships like the one with the OPSS are vital to extending our reach and conveying our messages to a wider audience. Our relevance, objectivity, and knowledge enables us to work with a wide range of key stakeholders who are experts in their fields including manufacturers, retailers and policy developers.

A prime example of the Charity's influence amongst experts is the annual Product Safety Conference, which brings together leaders from across the industry to explore critical issues, solutions and insights into safer electrical products. I attended November's conference, which boasted an impressive line-up of speakers. Delegates were encouraged to "Think Like a Consumer", exploring what human behaviour can teach us about changing the way we integrate safety into the design, manufacture and sale of

AS WE REBUILD OUR ECONOMY AND STRIVE TO MEET THE UK'S GOAL OF NET ZERO EMISSIONS BY 2050, ELECTRICITY AND ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS CAN MAKE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTION.



## THE INTRODUCTION OF MANDATORY FIVE-YEARLY ELECTRICAL CHECKS IN PRIVATELY RENTED HOMES IN ENGLAND IS A MAJOR WIN FOR THE CHARITY.



electrical products, and look towards future innovations that will transform the way products are designed.

It is now over a decade since we established this event, during which time we have seen product safety embed itself in the political and news agenda. This year, we were pleased to see the Government issue a full recall for Whirlpool's faulty tumble dryers and to see Whirlpool take swift action themselves over December's recall of washing machines. We will continue to lobby for vital improvements to be made to the UK's product recall system. This includes calling for the creation of a centralised recall database and simplifying the product registration process; two steps that would better protect consumers

As a consumer-facing campaigning charity, Electrical Safety First has consistently punched above its weight, both in terms of its influence and its media profile. This year we have continued to call for better regulation of online marketplaces, vital in a post-Brexit Britain, through media campaigns supported by expert testing and guidance from our technical team. Our consumer campaigns have been short-listed for a number of prestigious awards. Our "Nan Knows Best" campaign to encourage product registration, produced in partnership with Beko, achieved a Highly Commended certificate for Best Consumer Campaign and Best Use of Video at the CorpComms Awards.

We have supported our media activity with the use of innovative digital technology, developing tools to tackle the risks associated with recalled and counterfeit electrical appliances, both major causes of electrical fires. Our Alexa Skills App makes it easy for people to find out if the electrical products in their home have been recalled. And the 'Check It Out' plug-in identifies third party sellers on eBay and Amazon.

As we look forward to the next twelve months, we need to consider how to respond to previously recognised challenges such as climate change and also

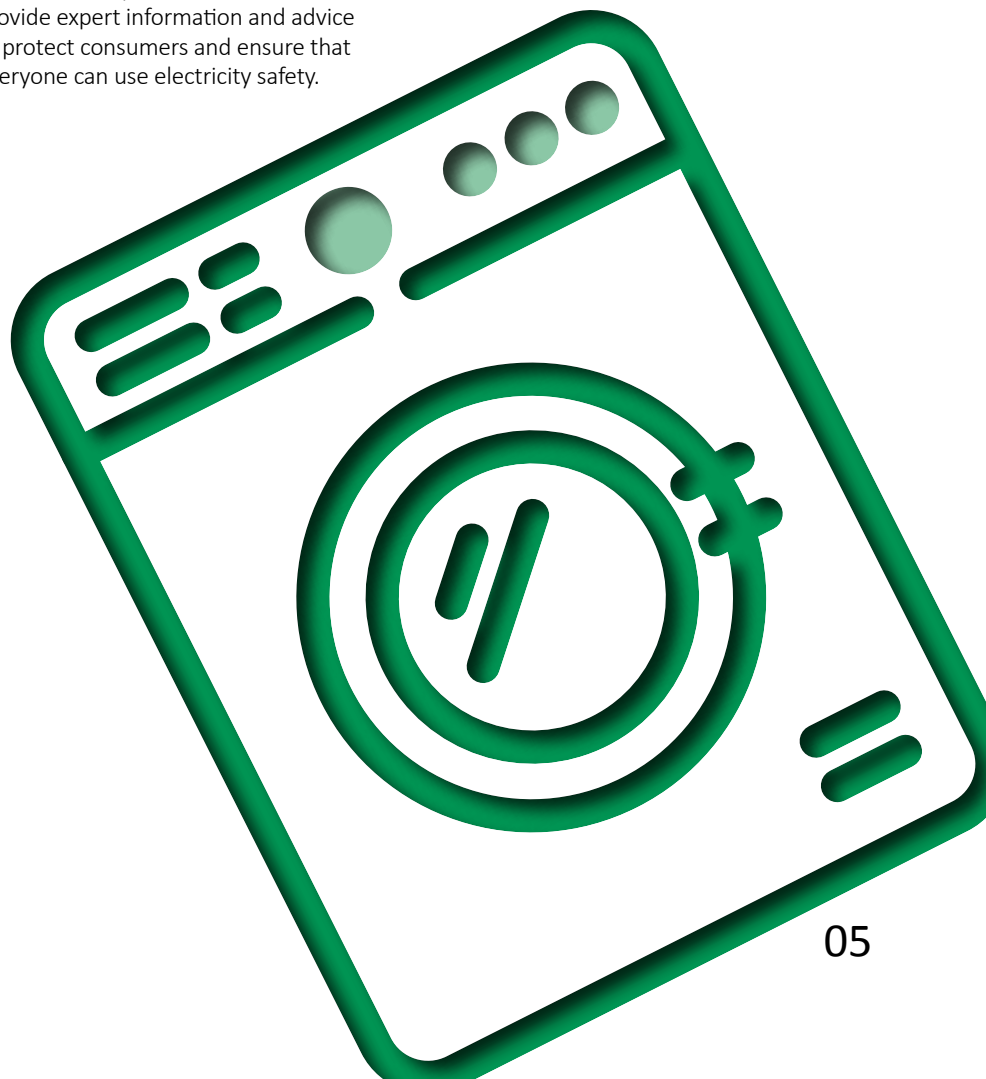
the unforeseen challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. As we rebuild our economy and strive to meet the UK's goal of net zero emissions by 2050, electricity and electrical products can make an important contribution. There is already growing interest in electric vehicles and smart products, and with fossil fuel heating systems not permitted in new homes from 2025 as part of the Government's Future Homes Standard, electricity looks set to play an increasingly important role in our lives.

The Charity has already entered this arena with its work around electric vehicles (EVs) and the smart home. The increased use of electricity together with UK consumers' unfamiliarity with technologies such as electrical vehicles and heat pumps means there will be an even greater need to keep our increasingly 'Electric World' safe. At Electrical Safety First we will continue to provide expert information and advice to protect consumers and ensure that everyone can use electricity safely.

I would like to thank everybody at Electrical Safety First for their hard work over the last year and particularly during the last few months when, although working remotely, it has been very much business as usual, which is a testament to the knowledge, experience and dedication of the team.

Finally, I would like to thank the team at Certsure LLP, and the Charity's Chair and Board of Trustees for their support and guidance. I look forward to a long and happy working relationship.

**Lesley Rudd**  
Chief Executive



# Raising Consumer Awareness through the Media

Electrical Safety First works with the media to raise consumer awareness of electrical safety issues, with messaging that encourages positive behaviour change. Campaigning priorities are identified in the Charity's strategy and supported by robust consumer research and Government fire data. Our campaigns have achieved extensive broadcast, print and online coverage in both national and regional media.

**A key area of focus during the year was the worrying number of counterfeit, sub-standard and recalled electrical products available for sale via online marketplaces.**

There is a lack of awareness amongst consumers that when they buy from a marketplace, they are not necessarily buying directly from a manufacturer or trusted retailer. A lot of third-party retailers use online marketplaces to sell electrical products that are counterfeit or contain sub-standard parts.

In November, the Charity's technical team tested fifteen products purchased from Amazon Marketplace, eBay and Wish. These included hair straighteners, phone chargers, travel adaptors and laser hair removers. Fourteen of the products failed tests against the UK standard. Our media campaign was supported by consumer research, which found that:

- Almost one in three UK adults would be prepared to buy a fake or sub-standard electrical product online if it was on sale at a fraction of the usual price, with a third saying a discount of just 30% or less would be enough to make them purchase.
- Almost a quarter of people said that they had bought an electrical product from a marketplace, only to find that it was a fake.

We continued our investigation in January by looking into the number of recalled products available to buy on marketplaces. The Charity found that there are no mechanisms in place to stop people from listing appliances that have been subject to a recall notice for sale, with neither model nor serial number a mandatory field entry requirement at any stage in the process.

We offered advice to consumers about safe shopping online and called for better regulation of online marketplaces, to ensure that the products available for sale are safe and that proper processes are put in place to prevent the sale of recalled products.

**As more people switch to electric or hybrid vehicles in an effort to lower carbon emissions, we investigated the electrical safety implications.**

Analysis of figures from the Department of Transport showed that the growth in the number of electric vehicles in the UK has outpaced the corresponding figures for charging point locations by more than six times over the last five years.

The campaign informed owners of electric vehicles about best practice when it comes to charging and called on the government to make sure that the public charging infrastructure keeps pace with the growth in the uptake of plug-in vehicles, to ensure that people can charge their vehicles safely. Subsequently, Derek Thomas MP raised questions in Parliament around the availability of public charging points, with the Government response stressing their commitment to investing in charging infrastructure. The Charity also met with officials from the Department for Transport to discuss the matter further. In the coming year, more research will be carried out into charging capacity and practice.

# 38%

OF PEOPLE WHO ARE PLANNING TO PURCHASE SMART PRODUCTS WILL BUY THEM FROM AN ONLINE MARKETPLACE.



Alongside the media campaign we launched a Glovebox Guide which can be downloaded from our website. It provides tips and advice on using electric vehicles safely.

**During the year, we have also reacted to high profile news stories concerning electrical safety issues, as well as using seasonal hooks for key messages.**

When Whirlpool announced a recall of washing machines in December we provided comments for national broadcast and print media, as well as sharing information about how to register a machine for modification or replacement.

The Charity continued to offer comment on safety standards following the UK's exit from the European Union as well as urging the Government to provide a timetable for the introduction of five yearly electrical safety checks in the private rented sector, which was confirmed early in 2020.

**ALMOST ONE IN THREE UK ADULTS WOULD BE PREPARED TO BUY A FAKE OR SUB-STANDARD ELECTRICAL PRODUCT ONLINE IF IT WAS ON SALE AT A FRACTION OF THE USUAL PRICE, WITH A THIRD SAYING A DISCOUNT OF JUST 30% OR LESS WOULD BE ENOUGH TO MAKE THEM PURCHASE.**



As well as our usual Black Friday and Christmas tips, we also offered topical advice in response to widespread flooding in February and, in March, for workers and families isolated at home during the Coronavirus lockdown.

### **Supporting our Campaigns with Robust Research**

All of Electrical Safety First's campaigning activity is supported by Government data, commissioned research into specific issues, Freedom of Information requests, and consumer attitude research.

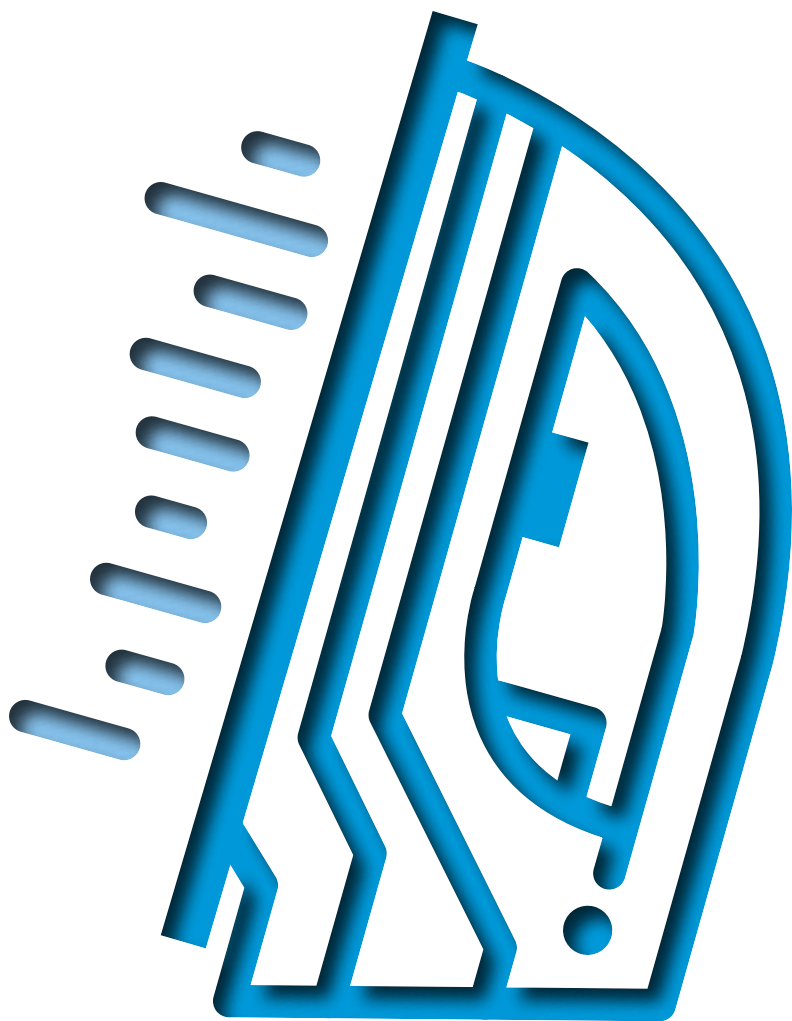
Our annual consumer survey gives insights into attitudes and awareness around the Charity's key campaigning issues, including product recalls and registration, counterfeit and sub-standard electrical products and the use of registered electricians.

The consumer survey results allow us to identify target audiences based on age, gender, geographical location, social grade, and working, employment and marital status. It also shows the respondents' social media preferences, helping us to select the right platforms through which to engage with them.

Understanding consumer attitudes towards **product recalls and registration** is a key priority for the Charity. Based on the 2020 consumer survey results, we learned that London, the North West, Scotland and Northern Ireland have a lower response rate to recall notices than the rest of the UK, and a lack of understanding around the need to register electrical products. To help us better target these regions in the next 12 months, we have commissioned some more detailed research that will give us a better picture of the groups that are most at risk.

We have also looked at smart technology, increasingly popular in modern homes, finding out where people are purchasing their products and how they are installing them. The results showed that 38% of people who are planning to purchase smart products will buy them from an online marketplace. Given that previous investigations into products sold via online marketplaces have identified a large number of counterfeit electrical products available for sale, we will be buying and testing smart products in 2020 to see if there are similar safety issues with this new technology.

(Research carried out by YouGov in January 2020, with a total sample size of 2102 adults. The survey was carried out online and figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults. 15% of respondents (321 people) said they intended to purchase smart products.)



# Raising Consumer Awareness through our Websites

The Electrical Safety First website continues to perform well. Following the previous year's development work to improve the user experience, we have seen visitors spending more time on the site with the number of pages visited by each user up by over 30% on last year.

This year we have improved the design of the site's homepage to better signpost our key campaigning areas and popular content. With product recalls and registration a major area of focus, we have enhanced this section of the site, adding categories for specific appliances and direct links to the registration pages on the websites of electrical product manufacturers. We have also updated the Find an Electrician page, making it easier for people throughout the UK to find a registered electrician in their area. This year 37,000 people have clicked through from our site to find a registered electrician, an increase of 11,000 compared to two years ago.

Traffic to our website driven by Search Engine Optimisation (SEO), which is organic and based on our Google rankings rather than paid advertising, increased by 30% year on year. We had an extra 650,000 visits to the website and visits to our product recall content increased by a massive 424%, an extra 417,000 visits compared to the previous year.

We receive a monthly Google Grant of \$40,000 per month to be used for Google adverts. This drove over 350,000 visits to the website, more than double the previous year's figures.



## BEST PERFORMING CONSUMER PAGES:

1. HOTPOINT AND INDESIT WASHING MACHINE RECALL  
**516,529**  
(8.19% of total site traffic)
2. WATTS TO AMPS CALCULATOR  
**289,983**  
(4.60%)
3. AMPS TO WATTS CALCULATOR  
**249,150**  
(3.95%)
4. WHIRLPOOL TUMBLE DRYER RECALL  
**200,705**  
(3.18%)
5. PRODUCT RECALL LANDING PAGE  
**123,588**  
(1.96%)

## TOTAL WEBSITE VISITS:

# 3,432,560

(+31.47% on previous year)

## SOCIAL MEDIA



# 20,700



# 22,236



# 1,404



## UNIQUE VISITORS AND INCREASE:

# 3,680,298

(+30.43%)



Our **sites for children and teenagers** offer support for both teachers and students with suggested lesson plans, worksheets, revision quizzes and games. We saw an increase in visitors to the sites at the end of March 2020, following school closures due to COVID-19.

### SWITCHED ON KIDS:

VISITORS: **106,728**

PAGE VIEWS: **784,986**

DOWNLOADS: **41,218**

### TWO THIRTY VOLTS:

VISITORS: **12,424**

PAGE VIEWS: **58,627**

DOWNLOADS: **3,475**



### MOST POPULAR DOWNLOADS:

1. LIST OF TUMBLE DRYERS AFFECTED BY WHIRLPOOL RECALL

**74,438**

2. BEST PRACTICE GUIDES (1-9)

**55,501**

3. LANDLORDS' GUIDE FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

**5,686**

4. GUIDANCE ON MINIMUM PROVISION OF SOCKETS

**3,319**

5. LANDLORDS' INTERIM CHECKLIST

**1,267**



### BEST PERFORMING PAGES FOR ELECTRICAL PROFESSIONALS:

1. BEST PRACTICE GUIDES

**73,541**

(37.7% of traffic to professional content)

2. WIRING REGULATIONS: NEW, REWIRED AND SIMILAR INSTALLATIONS

**26,224**

(13.44%)

3. WIRING REGULATIONS LANDING PAGE

**22,630**

(11.6%)

4. PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES LANDING PAGE

**16,752**

(8.59%)

5. WIRING REGULATIONS: INSPECTION, TESTING, CERTIFICATION AND REPORTING

**14,937**

(7.66%)

## PAGE VIEWS AND INCREASE:

# 6,309,718

(+35.75%)

# Working with Government

Electrical Safety First works closely with the UK and devolved governments to improve electrical safety standards in UK homes. In a year dominated by Brexit negotiations, a General Election and towards the end of the financial year the unprecedented disruption caused by COVID-19, we have still made significant progress towards improving electrical safety for UK consumers.

## Westminster

### Mandatory Electrical Safety Checks in the Private Rented Sector (PRS)

Following sustained lobbying by the Charity over a number of years, the UK Government brought these regulations into Parliament in March 2020. Mandatory five-yearly electrical safety checks in privately rented homes were introduced in June, with new tenancies needing to comply on or after 1 July 2020 and current tenancies by 1 April 2021.

### Whirlpool

Following the Government's announcement that it intended to serve a recall notice on Whirlpool after their initial safety notice issued against tumble dryers, Andy Slaughter MP secured an urgent question in the House of Commons which was repeated in the House of Lords. We sent briefing notes to supportive MPs and this resulted in five mentions for the Charity in these two Urgent Question debates. We maintained close contact with parliamentarians when Whirlpool announced a second recall of washing machines in December 2019.

### APPG Online and Home Electrical Safety

The APPG, for which the Charity provides the secretariat, changed its name from 'Home Electrical Safety' to include 'Online' in its title. This is due to an increased focus on online marketplaces and so that the Group can act as a coalition to lobby for better regulation of the sale of electrical goods online. The APPG was re-established in February 2020 and its work this year has included raising parliamentary awareness of the issues relating to the Whirlpool recalls, holding meetings with the former Minister, Kelly Tolhurst MP, and also with Whirlpool executives on two separate occasions. In 2020, the focus of the APPG will be the Government's expected 'Online Harms Bill'.

### Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) Select Committee

Given that Electrical Safety First is a major stakeholder in the recall of electrical goods policy area, we were asked to give oral evidence to the BEIS Select Committee on the Whirlpool recall. Whirlpool was also called to give evidence and made a public apology to consumers at the hearing.

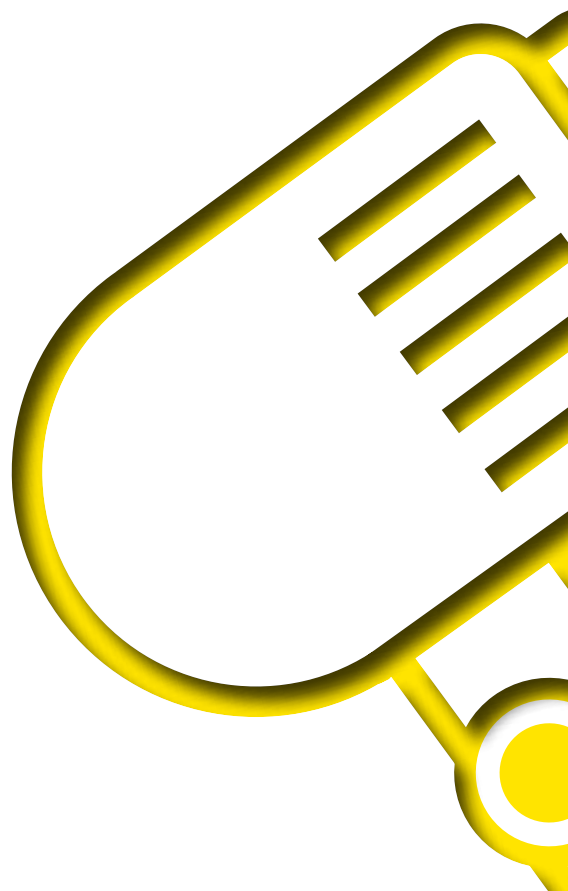
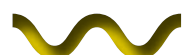
## Wales

### Report on Electrical Fires

We published our response to the Welsh Government's review of electrical safety and fires in Wales. It raised policy matters that we believe need to be worked through by the Welsh Government, particularly around how Home Safety Visits work in practice when it comes to electrical safety checks and the referral of any problems that are identified.

As part of this lobbying of Welsh politicians on the report, we attended a meeting with Hannah Blythyn, Deputy Minister in the

WHIRLPOOL ANNOUNCED TWO RECALLS IN 2019, AND WE SUPPORTED PARLIAMENTARIANS IN HOLDING THE GOVERNMENT TO ACCOUNT ON THE ANNOUNCEMENT.



Welsh Government. The Minister expressed her support for a Welsh Electrical Safety Week and also her interest in the contents of the report and promised to undertake a review of how Home Safety Visits function. The Minister has not yet commenced the review and we are continuing to lobby the Welsh Government to ensure that Home Safety Visits are fit for purpose, to protect Welsh people from electrical fires and ensure their safety.

# 27,000

HOMES IN WALES ARE  
ELECTRICALLY UNSAFE



## Welsh Electrical Safety Week

We established Welsh Electrical Safety Week with the support of Fire and Rescue Services in Wales. During the week we hosted an event in The Senedd, the National Assembly for Wales, at which we raised awareness of the fact that 27,000 homes in Wales are electrically unsafe. 28 Members attended, which is one third of the Assembly and an extremely high number of politicians to attend an Assembly event.

## Scotland

### Social Rented Sector

We achieved five yearly electrical safety checks in the Social Rented Sector in Scotland, which covers the installation and any appliances provided as part of a tenancy. The associated guidance also includes our best practice advice to encourage social landlords to act on issues such as white goods safety and product registration. Our ongoing 'Inequality Street' campaign has also achieved the introduction of mandatory installation of RCDs in the Scottish Private Rented Sector from 2024. This will provide private tenants in Scotland with the highest protection for electrical safety across the UK, with five yearly electrical safety checks in place in the PRS since 2015.

### Consumer Scotland Bill

We lobbied for an amendment to the Consumer Scotland Bill in the Scottish Parliament. The Bill aimed to establish a new body, Consumer Scotland, which would have responsibility for co-ordinating advice and undertaking advocacy work on consumer issues in Scotland. Our proposals required the body to establish a central database of major product recalls in Scotland and provide advice to consumers adversely affected by them. We gained both government and cross-party political support for our proposals, and the Bill which included our amendments became **The Consumer (Scotland) Act 2020** when it received Royal Assent on 9 June 2020.

### Mixed-Tenure Housing

We secured funding from the Scottish Government for new research into electrical safety in mixed-tenure apartment blocks in Scotland. With recent high-profile fires and electrical product recalls, there has been growing concern regarding the electrical safety of those living in mixed tenure blocks. Electricity is the primary cause of accidental fires in Scottish homes with tenements, or 'blocks' of flats, at particular risk according to official fire data.

Having already achieved our electrical safety asks in both the private and social rented sectors in Scotland, this research project will help us to gain further insight into this pressing issue and support new policy development, particularly for the owner-occupied sector. This sector has minimal electrical safety requirements but makes up the biggest proportion of Scotland's housing mix and is home to the largest number of older and vulnerable people.

### Events and Partnerships

Our product safety event in the Scottish Parliament was attended by 20 MSPs, including two government Ministers. It allowed us to raise our issues directly with politicians and showcase our strong partnership working with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) and the Society of Chief Officers of Trading Standards in Scotland (SCOTSS) who supported the event. We also attended the SNP, Scottish Labour and Scottish Conservative conferences and were able to raise our policy issues with 49 of their elected representatives.

Our relationship with the SFRS continues to grow, cementing the Charity's recognition as electrical safety experts in Scotland. We were invited to join their Electrical Safety Working Group which works with a range of partners to reduce the risks from domestic electrical fires.

## Northern Ireland

Our work in Northern Ireland was affected by the collapse of the Northern Ireland Assembly for the majority of 2019-20. Despite the Assembly only reforming in January 2020, we were still able to meet with several politicians at their party conferences, including the DUP and Alliance Party events. We also completed our first piece of housing research in Northern Ireland which we aim to publish in 2020. The report investigates the level of electrical risk in Northern Ireland's homes, with a focus on the impact on older and disabled people.



Throughout 2019, and despite a General Election, Electrical Safety First achieved a record 97 mentions across the UK Parliaments and Assemblies. Politicians raise the name of the Charity and its concerns through debates, questions and Parliamentary reports.

# Thought Leadership in an Uncertain World

At the time of writing the UK has been in lockdown for two months, with no idea of what the “new normal” may be. But key to the sustainability of any organisation are two primary elements – its relevance and its expertise.

Our Thought Leadership strategy is built on this foundation. It encompasses an ability to identify not just current issues but also those on the horizon. As a recognised expert in our field, we work with key stakeholder organisations across the supply chain and with related trade bodies, government departments, consumer and non-profit organisations.

We produce in-depth features, comment and opinion pieces, where the rationale for our policy positions and consumer campaigns is detailed and where our expertise can flag forthcoming trends, opportunities and challenges in the consumer or legislative landscape. In this way, we help ensure all key stakeholders are informed of potential implications, for both business and consumer protection.

These articles appear in a wide range of media channels and sectors, from political outlets such as *Adjacent Government* and *First* (the magazine of the Local Government Association), to international brand protection magazines, such as *Pointer*. They also include health and safety media (such as the Scottish Government’s harm and injury hub and community safety network), and those aimed at older people and the legal profession. It has also been essential to maintain a significant presence in key industry publications, both print and online, to ensure a regular dialogue with manufacturers, retailers and installers, as

well as those serving emerging areas such as electric vehicles and smart homes.

This year we have commented on topics as diverse as the ‘Right to Repair’ Bill and the circular economy, the dangers of the online sale of counterfeit and second-hand goods, and the need for regular electrical checks across all housing tenures. We have also highlighted the innovative, tailored tools that we have developed to help keep consumers safe.

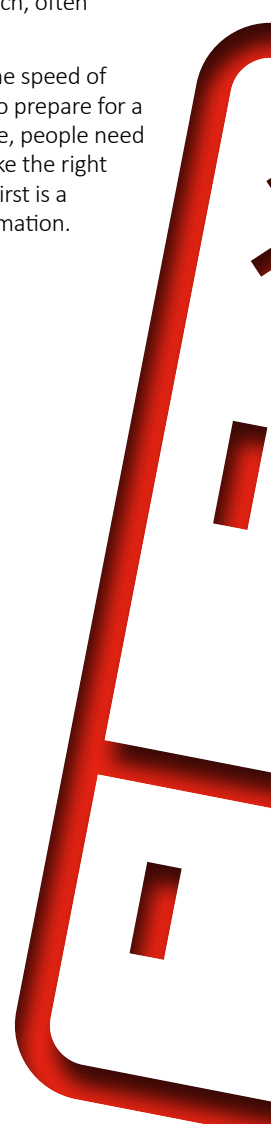
In supporting public affairs events, template releases for parliamentarians have proved particularly effective, allowing our voice to be heard in their blogs and constituency columns in local press, as well as on their own websites. We have also produced material for MPs to reproduce under their own byline.

In addition to our membership of various standards setting committees and working groups, we provide briefings and information to various government departments and NGOs. The Charity now has an established presence in the Intellectual Property Office (IPO) annual report, where our work addressing the rising tide of electrical counterfeits is clearly showcased; and supporting feature material has also been developed for the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS).

An important element of the Thought Leadership strategy is supporting the practical application of better regulation, based on effective policy which needs to be informed by rigorously established and objective evidence. In addition to our regular consumer surveys, we also commission in-depth research, often from an academic body.

We live in a time in which the speed of change is unprecedented. To prepare for a smart and sustainable future, people need the right information to make the right decisions. Electrical Safety First is a trusted source for this information.

## WE LIVE IN A TIME IN WHICH THE SPEED OF CHANGE IS UNPRECEDENTED



# Working in Partnership

By working with manufacturers, retailers and other organisations, we are able to reach a much wider audience with our campaigns. Our successful partnership work continued during the year, including working with the Government's **Fire Kills** campaign for **Electrical Fire Safety Week**, for which our campaign collateral is shared with Fire and Rescue Services across the UK for use on a local level.

Working with **Dixons Carphone**, we launched a microsite, 'Done in 97 Seconds', that stresses the importance of product registration, provides a link for anybody wanting to register Currys PC World brands and gives advice on how to register brands sold by other manufacturers and retailers.

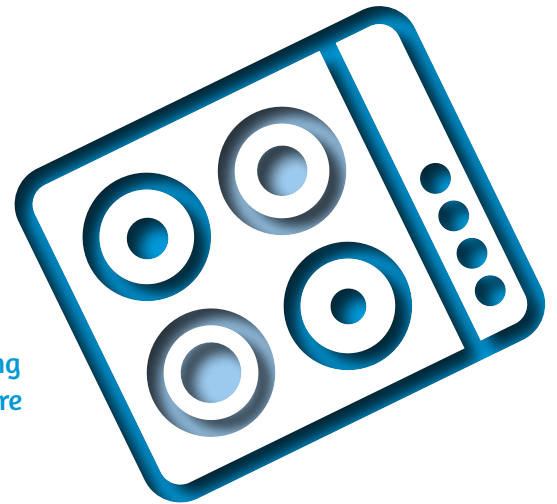
Our 'Nan Knows Best' campaign, produced in partnership with **Beko**, was awarded a Highly Commended certificate at the CorpComms Awards in the Best Consumer Campaign and Best Use of Video categories. It was also shortlisted for Marketing Partnership of the Year in the Business Charity Awards.

As more consumers look to adapt their living space using smart technology, we worked with law firm **DLA Piper** to set up the **Smart Technology Product Safety Stakeholder Group**. Comprised of key businesses and organisations involved in the production and sale of smart devices, the group was established to help create a 360 degree approach to product safety in the digital age. In November we launched a new guide that can be downloaded from the Electrical Safety First website, *Your Guide to a Safer, Smarter Home*, providing easy to understand advice for consumers to help them plan their smarter homes.

## ELECTRICAL SAFETY FIRST'S FIRE SAFETY FUND RECEIVED

# 86

APPLICATIONS FOR COMMUNITY-BASED PROJECTS



WORKING WITH DIXONS CARPHONE, WE LAUNCHED A MICROSITE,

# Done in 97 Seconds



During the year, we presented at several high profile **industry events** run by organisations including the International Consumer Product Health and Safety Organisation (ICPHSO), the European Commission, Local Government Association, National Consumer Federation (NCF) Congress, Corgi, AESM (Association of Electrical Safety Managers) and ANEC (formerly European Association for the co-ordination of consumer representation in Standardisation). We were also invited by the EU Commission to join its expert group on product recalls.

Electrical Safety First's **Fire Safety Fund** received 86 applications from organisations looking to work with their communities on projects that aim to reduce the numbers of electrically-related fires and injuries within UK homes. The successful applicants, who were announced in May 2020, were awarded grants of up to £5,000.

# Working in Partnership

continued

## The Office for Product Safety and Standards

Following its establishment in 2018, the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) set out a clear strategy to establish effective partnerships that will enhance consumer product safety. Since then, Electrical Safety First has worked closely with the OPSS on events, raising consumer awareness of product safety issues and on specific projects.

## Second-Hand Electrical Products

The OPSS commissioned Electrical Safety First to carry out research into the sale of second-hand electrical products.

This involved a limited UK-wide field study into sales of second-hand electrical and electronic appliances sold offline. Following a pilot study eight regions were investigated, providing a representative sample of the UK market. Selection criteria included Indices of Multiple Deprivation to confirm assumptions regarding poverty and a corresponding supply and demand for second-hand electrical goods.

# 54%

OF THE SECOND-HAND PRODUCTS ON SALE WERE ELECTRONIC ITEMS LIKE MOBILES PHONES AND LAPTOPS.



A TOTAL OF

# 222

SECOND-HAND SALES OUTLETS INCLUDING CHARITY SHOPS, RETAIL CHAINS AND CAR BOOT SALES WERE VISITED



A total of 222 second-hand sales outlets including charity shops, retail chains and car boot sales were visited, with over a third (35%) of them selling or advertising electrical goods. Some regions had community shops contracted by Local Authorities to sell goods taken from recycling centres, predominantly household goods, kitchenware and white goods.

Only half of the businesses visited said they undertook product safety checks before selling and awareness of the need to check whether an item was subject to a recall notice was generally low. The condition of the items on sale varied widely, going from unused to damaged and potentially dangerous.

We found that:

- The largest category of second-hand products on sale (54%) was electronic items such as mobile phones and laptops, sold primarily in pawnshops.
- White goods (13%) and household appliances (13%) were the second most prevalent categories.



- The “household appliances” category includes lighting, which is the fifth most popular product overall and the top non-electronic item sold second-hand.
- Fridge/freezers were the most popular white goods, which is possibly related to their longevity compared with other appliances.

The research confirmed a sustained appetite for second-hand electricals via offline sales, with a significant number being sold untested or unchecked for safety. It illustrated a need for risk mitigation through increased legislative awareness and enforcement.

# Industry Events

2019 saw the 11th year of our annual Product Safety Conference, the Charity's flagship event which helps the cause of protecting the consumer by working closely with industry to share solutions and best practice. November's conference had the theme **Think Like a Consumer: Behaviour-led Insights for Safer Products** and put consumers at the heart of the discussion, looking at how what we know about behaviour can shape the intelligent, safety-led design, manufacture and sale of electrical products.

The 2019 **Safety Innovation Award** saw four organisations shortlisted for their innovative product or project that was able to demonstrate an improvement to consumer safety. This year's winner was **Vodafone Group Services Ltd** for their Safety Message Alert Indicator. It communicates over the Vodafone network to relay product safety recall status to an end user for any product into which it is fitted or integrated.



## THE OPSS COMMISSIONED ELECTRICAL SAFETY FIRST TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH INTO THE SALE OF SECOND-HAND ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS.



This research project and its outcomes clearly support the key tools and principles of the OPSS. It will be used to:

- Raise compliance standards
- Promote good practice
- Champion local regulation
- Enhance consumer protection
- Help businesses to understand obligations.

Additional research is in development to help establish evidence-led policy on the issue of second-hand electricals. Illustrative of its integrative approach to electrical safety, Electrical Safety First is also undertaking work regarding the online sales of electrical products, including second-hand items.



# Certsure LLP

Electrical Safety First's charitable objectives continued to be delivered through the Certsure LLP joint venture, of which the Charity owns 75 per cent (the remaining 25 per cent is owned by the Electrical Contractors' Association).

It operates the NICEIC and ELECSA brands which offer industry leading certification services, Building Regulations schemes, training and technical content for professional development and consultancy services to support the construction industry and beyond. Profits from these activities provide a significant part of the Charity's income.

## Industry Standards

Certsure scheduled and delivered over 39,000 assessments over the course of the year, ensuring that registered contractors are adhering to the latest industry standards and providing assurance to customers through safe and compliant installations.

OVER  
**39,000**  
ASSESSMENTS OVER THE  
COURSE OF A YEAR



## Technical Advice

Certsure staff provided industry leading technical development to electrical contractors, through the production of technical publications and articles, whilst its technical helpline answered more than 72,000 calls during the year.

THE HELPLINE ANSWERED  
MORE THAN

**72,000**

DURING THE YEAR



## 18th Edition – 1st Amendment

Certsure worked with colleagues across the industry to prepare for the first amendment to the 18th edition of the wiring regulations. Its focus on electric vehicle installation was reflected in the programme of technical events held during the year.

## Live Events

NICEIC and ELECSA continued to reach out to more and more electrical contractors through regional technical conferences. Live North included a keynote speech from a leading electric vehicle advocate.

Over 2,800 contractors attended half day Tech Talks that were held across the country. This year all of the events were CPD accredited.

OVER  
**2,800**

CONTRACTORS ATTENDED  
HALF DAY TECH TALKS



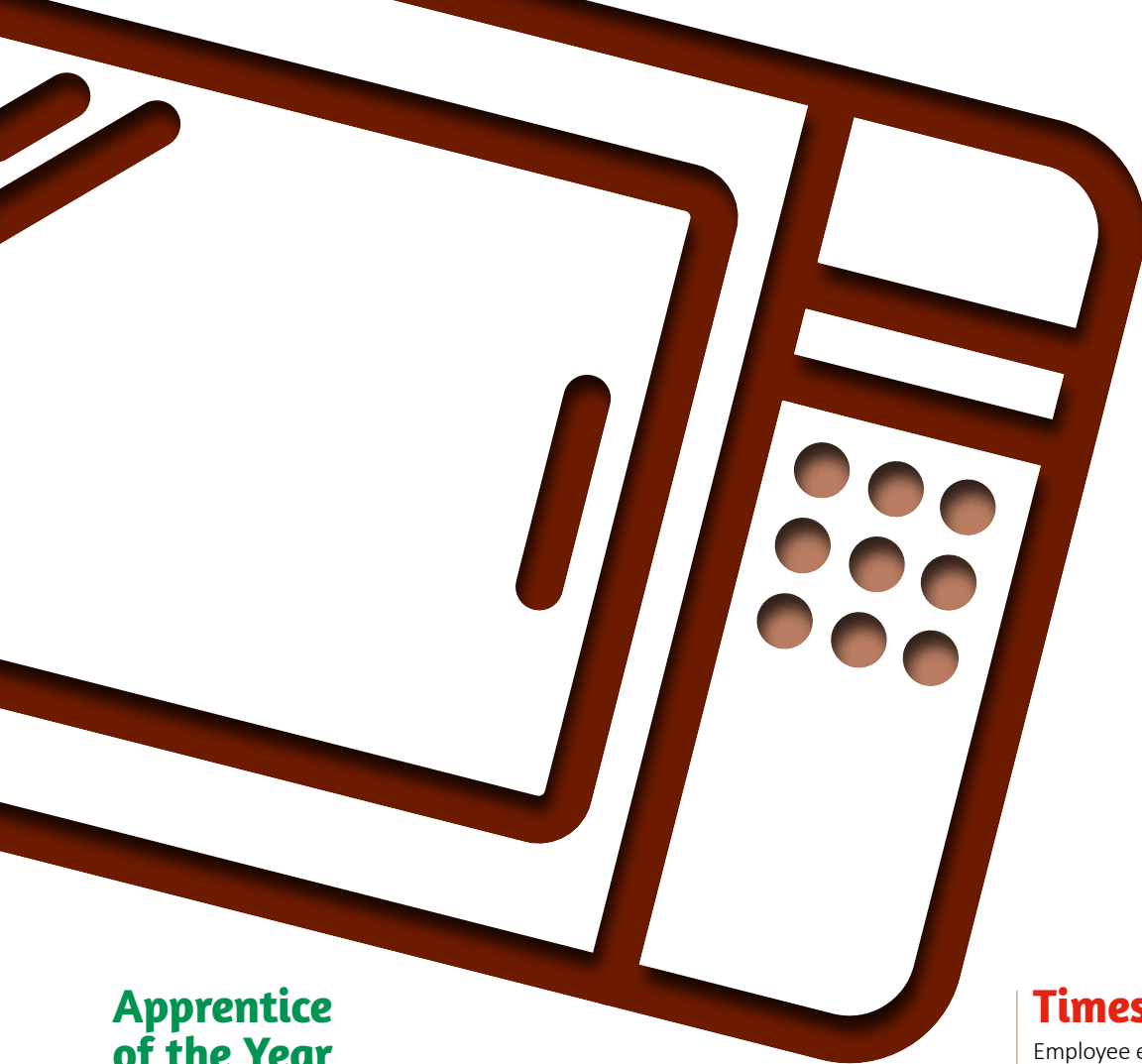
## Promoting Registered Contractors

Certsure is committed to raising awareness about the need to use a registered electrician, building the profile of professional, registered electricians and highlighting the importance of using competent tradespeople. The brands featured in trade, local and national press, including several consumer publications.

## Training

NICEIC and ELECSA are at the forefront of providing electrical contractors with access to the latest training. As well as offering traditional electrical based courses Certsure expanded its training portfolio to include project management and new technology. Weekend training courses were introduced on a trial basis.





## Apprentice of the Year

Certsure's commitment to the future of the industry is reflected in their Apprentice of the Year Competition. More than 650 apprentices took part in this year's contest which promotes the benefits of apprenticeships in the electrical industry. Unfortunately due to the COVID-19 pandemic the competition was not able to conclude, but the eight finalists were rewarded for their efforts.

MORE THAN

# 650

APPRENTICES TOOK PART



## Working in Partnership

Certsure continued to work in partnership with some of the biggest names in the home improvement sector to offer the best protection for consumers. It is a founding member of the **Consumer Protection Alliance** which also includes Gas Safe Register, Which? and the Dispute Resolution Ombudsman. The Alliance had great success during the year with the **Check It!** campaign, which aimed to increase consumer awareness of the importance of having home safety checks carried out by qualified and registered gas and electrical engineers.

## Times Top 100

Employee engagement remains a key driver at Certsure. The organisation took part in the Times Top 100 survey. This year Certsure achieved a One Star rating, which is a significant achievement and awarded to companies that demonstrate very good levels of workplace engagement.

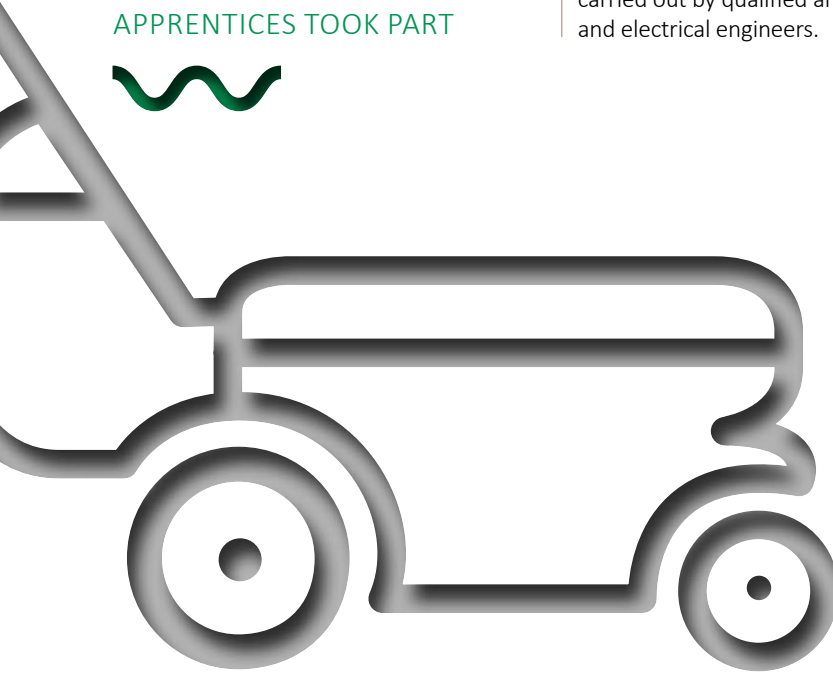
## Support for Charity

Certsure helped raise more than £26,000 for Alzheimer's Research UK (ARUK) through various funding initiatives.

HELPED RAISE MORE THAN

# £26,000

FOR ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH UK



# Finance report

## 2019/2020

The summary group financial statements are not the statutory accounts but a summary of information relating to the consolidated income and expenditure account, consolidated balance sheet and cash flow statement, derived from the full audited Trustees' Report and financial statements of the Charity which were approved by the Board of Trustees on 8th October 2020. The Auditor's statement under Section 496 of the Companies Act 2006 was unqualified. Copies of the full financial statement will subsequently be filed with the Charity Commission, the Office of the Scottish Charities' Regulators and Companies House.

### Basis of Summarisation

As noted above, the summary financial statements do not contain all the disclosures required by United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law (United Kingdom General Accepted Accounting Practice). Summaries of certain primary statements have been included with no accompanying notes. The summary consolidated income and expenditure account does not split the funds into unrestricted and trading and amalgamates the following balances:

- Investment income from investments and properties
- Income from charitable activities and other incoming resources
- Investment management and fundraising costs
- Expenditure on charitable activities
- Net investments (losses)/gains on investments and properties.

The summary consolidated balance sheet discloses the subtotals only with the exception of fixed assets which splits out the investments in joint ventures separately.

The summary cash flow statement provides the total by main category only.

These summarised financial statements may not contain sufficient information to gain a complete understanding of the financial affairs of the Charity. The full audited Trustees' report and financial statements may be obtained on application to the Charity's head office.

**Alison Parkes, Chair**

### Independent Auditor's Statement to the Trustees of the Electrical Safety Council

We have examined the summary financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2020 set out on the following pages.

### Respective Responsibilities of the Trustees and the Auditor

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the summary financial statements in accordance with applicable United Kingdom law and the recommendation of the Charities SORP (2019 – second edition).

Our responsibility is to report to you our opinion on the consistency of the summary financial statements with the full annual financial statements.

### Basis of opinion

Our examination involved agreeing the balances disclosed in the summary financial statements to the full annual financial statements. Our audit report on the full annual financial statements of the Electrical Safety Council describes the basis of our audit opinion on those financial statements.

### Opinion

In our opinion the summarised financial statements are consistent with the full annual financial statements of the Electrical Safety Council for the year ended 31 March 2020.

Kingston Smith LLP  
Statutory Auditor  
4 Victoria Square, St Albans, AL1 3TF  
8 October 2019



## Overall Result

The Charity recorded a net increase in funds of £8,010k. This included a pension adjustment representing a gain of £4,600k. It also includes the share of joint venture profits of £3,474k, the investment losses over the year amounting to £1,309k as well as £878k of investment income.

Gift Aid of £3,075k (2019: £3,400k) was paid to the Charity from its subsidiaries. Reserves at the end of the year stood at £34,239k.

## Income

Total income of £7,007k included the £3,474k share of profit from Certsure LLP, the Charity's Joint Venture with the Electrical Contractors' Association.

## Expenditure

Charitable expenditure for the year amounted to £2,072k (2019: £2,233k). The reduction is a result of both the deferral of the annual grant scheme from the last quarter of the year to the first quarter of 20/21 and the ongoing control being exercised over costs.

## Fixed Assets

The market value of investment properties rented to tenants by the group has reduced by £149k over the year. Formal lease arrangements exist between the Charity and tenants for all investment properties.

## Pension Scheme

The pension deficit on the closed defined benefit scheme impacts the Charity's cash flows by the funding arrangements agreed with the Pension Scheme Trustees which, following the 31st March 2017 triennial review, were agreed as £7,600k for 18/19 with further payments of £600k pa to March 2021 and £250k pa thereafter. The Charity Trustees decided to pay an additional £3,000k into the scheme during the year to accelerate the progress of the Scheme to a position of self-sufficiency.

## Outlook

The Group's financial position remains satisfactory and the Charity intends maintaining its current range of activities. Significant work has been done to model possible impacts of Covid-19 and the Charity believes it is very unlikely that it will impact on its ability to continue its work, but the situation will be kept under review.

## Cash, Investment Policy and Returns

The Charity holds the majority of its reserves in a long-term investment portfolio, currently valued at £10.2m, which is managed by two investment managers. Overall cash and investment balances have increased to £14,253k (2019: £13,987k) during the year. The inclusion of the additional £3m paid into the Pension Scheme meant operating activities used £3.4m of cash but this was more than offset by £3.9m paid by the Joint Venture and £0.9m received in investment and rental income. Overall cash balances increased by £1.5m, the investment portfolio however lost £1.2m in value due to the market conditions at the end of the year.

The Charity's investment policy has as its objective "to produce returns and be a vehicle for holding the agreed level of Charity reserves". The investment target return is to maintain and where possible enhance the real value of the portfolio without taking unnecessary risks. The objective is to generate a long-term return of inflation plus 3-4% after expenses. This should enable income of towards the lower end of that range (to allow for volatility) to be taken from the fund without diminishing the real value of the portfolio. A total return approach to investment is taken, i.e. generating return from income and capital gains and losses.

The investment policy is maintained under ongoing review in light of changing Group funding requirements and portfolios are now balanced between equities, fixed interest investments, alternative investments and cash based on an intermediate risk profile. All income generated during the year is utilised to fund Charity expenditure.

The Charity's investments in joint ventures relate to Certsure LLP.

## Reserves and Risk Assessment

The reserves policy states that reserves, which are defined as the Charity's and its wholly owned subsidiaries' cash and investment portfolio, amounting to at least two years pure/discretionary charitable expenditure, should be maintained after provision for the next three years' pension deficit payments.

If the Charity reserves exceed the minimum level as they currently do, the policy states that the Trustees will consider the best use of the additional funds. Matters they take into account include the progress of the defined benefit pension scheme to self-sufficiency, the merits of holding or investing the additional amount to fund future spend and the merits of undertaking additional charitable activities. Consideration of holding the additional amount to fund future spend includes assessing the risk to future income from Covid-19 (or any similar pandemic).

Risk management processes are embedded in the day-to-day operations of the Charity and risk registers are reviewed regularly by management to ensure completeness and that the risk ratings and impacts remain appropriate.

## Summary Group Financial Statements

### Summary Consolidated Income and Expenditure Account including Other Comprehensive Income for year ended 31 March 2020

	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
Income from investments	879	816
Share of profits in Joint Ventures	3,474	3,903
Other income	2,654	124
Total income	<u>7,007</u>	<u>4,843</u>
Expenditure on continuing trading activities	-	-
Expenditure on discontinued trading activities	(14)	5
Other expenditure on raising funds	93	152
Expenditure on charitable activities	2,072	2,233
Other expenditure	137	1,399
Total expenditure	<u>2,288</u>	<u>3,789</u>
Pension adjustment	4,600	(600)
Net investment (losses) / gains	<u>(1,309)</u>	<u>184</u>
Net movement in funds	<u>8,010</u>	<u>638</u>
Fund balances brought forward at 1 April	26,229	25,591
Fund balances carried forward	34,239	26,229

### Summary Consolidated Balance Sheet at 31 March 2020

	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
Fixed assets and investments	<u>16,351</u>	<u>17,846</u>
Investments in joint ventures: Share of net assets	<u>3,474</u>	<u>3,903</u>
Current assets	4,212	2,741
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(398)	(561)
Net current assets	3,814	2,180
Pension asset / (liability)	10,600	2,300
Reserves	<u>34,239</u>	<u>26,229</u>

### Summary Cash Flow Statement for year ended 31 March 2020

	2020 £'000	2019 £'000
Net cash (used in) operating activities	(3,356)	(9,664)
Net cash provided by investing activities	4,821	3,615
Net increase / (decrease) in cash in the year	<u>1,465</u>	<u>(6,049)</u>









## **PRINCIPAL PLACES OF BUSINESS**

### **Electrical Safety First Registered Office**

45 Great Guildford Street  
London SE1 0ES

Telephone: **+44(0)203 463 5100**

Email: **[enquiries@electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk)**

### **Scottish Office**

The Walled Garden  
Bush Estate  
Midlothian EH26 0SD

Telephone: **+44(0)131 445 9223**

Facsimile: **+44(0)870 040 0560**

### **Certsure LLP Registered Office**

Warwick House  
Houghton Hall Park  
Houghton Regis  
Dunstable LU5 5ZX

Telephone: **+44(0)1582 531000**

Facsimile: **+44(0)1582 531010**

### **NICEIC Certification**

Whitting Valley Road  
Old Whittington  
Chesterfield S41 9EY

Telephone: **+44(0)1246 261126**

Facsimile: **+44(0)1246 261127**