

## Focus on the EDA's Forums

Networking, information sharing, new business opportunities, supply chain developments, developing business connections – all reasons to add EDA Forums to your diary

Sometimes it pays dividends to take a step back from the day-to-day running of a business to see the bigger picture. A great way to do that is to attend one of the EDA's Forums.

### EDA on the road

Each year, the Association offers up to four Regional Forums, and a themed Digitalisation Forum. During 2023 and 2024, the EDA visited Peterborough, Glasgow, Bradford, Cardiff, London, Belfast, Reading and, most recently on 12 September, Coventry. Since March 2023, 690 EDA businesses representatives have joined us at these events.

### Hear from contractors

Wholesalers and Manufacturers want to hear what's happening in the contractors' world, which is why the Electrical Contractors' Association is often invited to deliver sessions at Forums. More recently, we've invited contractors to join our discussion panels.

### Green opportunities

Helping EDA businesses benefit from the drive for cleaner energy has put green technologies firmly on the Forum agenda, with subject specialists invited along to help wholesalers navigate this market.

In our April 2024 State of the Sector Survey, about 30% of



wholesaler respondents said they were planning to diversify into heat pumps during 2024, and the same number will diversify into the renewables market generally.

This rising demand for renewables and other energy/ carbon-saving products is most notable in PV systems but there's also growth in electric vehicle charging, lighting and controls, with growth potential for heat pumps and battery solutions.

### Who can attend?

Anyone from an EDA business can attend a Forum and they are free. As soon as the dates and venues are confirmed, all the details are available in the Events section of our website at [www.eda.org.uk](http://www.eda.org.uk).

Look out for the 2025 dates coming soon. ■

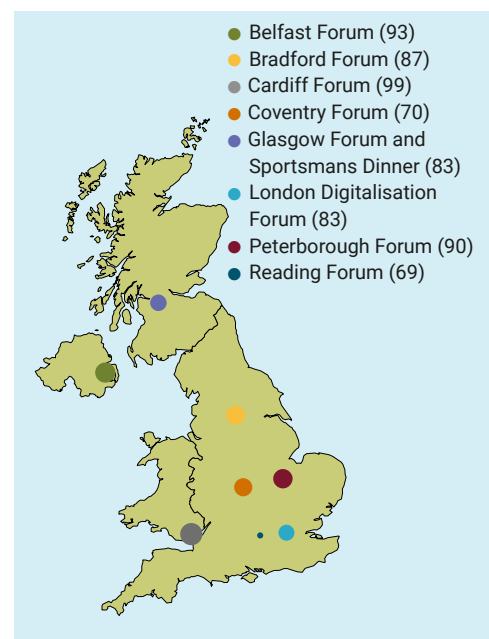
### Forums in action

Drawing Office 1 at the Titanic Hotel in Belfast (above) Reading (top right) and the contractor panel at Coventry (bottom right)



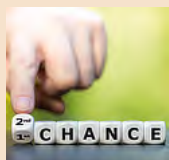
### Forum venues

The map indicates the sites of the 2023 and 2024 Forums – the size of the dots indicates the number of Members and Affiliates that attended (see numbers in key)



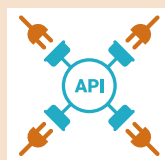
## IN THIS ISSUE

### Going straight: the untapped talent of ex-offenders



Recruitment is a pressing issue for EDA members – are ex-offenders an untapped pool of talent?

### Working smarter with data in the EDATA data pool



Reduce workloads, improve customer service and increase sales by signing up for free access to the EDATA data pool

### An engaged business is a successful business



The EDA handed out its Engagement Awards on board the Silver Sturgeon river yacht during this year's Summer Event

# DIARY DATES

Events are subject to change, so visit [www.eda.org.uk](http://www.eda.org.uk) for the latest details, or call the EDA on 020 3141 7350.

## Tuesday 1-Friday 4 October 2024



### EDA Scottish Function

A senior networking event at the five-star Cameron House Hotel in Loch Lomond.

## Tuesday 29 October 2024

### Talking Shop Teams Dialogue

Virtual event for EDA businesses. Register at [www.eda.org.uk](http://www.eda.org.uk)

## Wednesday 13 November 2024



### Power It Up: EDA Industry Insight Conference 2024

At Crewe Hall Hotel and Spa, Weston Road, Crewe. For more information, visit [www.eda.org.uk](http://www.eda.org.uk)

## Thursday 5 December 2024



### Digitalisation Forum & Data Quality Awards 2024

At America Square Conference Centre, London. Register at [www.eda.org.uk](http://www.eda.org.uk)

## Thursday 6 March 2025

### EDA Annual Awards Dinner

At the InterContinental Hotel, Park Lane, London.

## Thursday 5-Friday 6 June 2025

### EUEW 2025 Business Convention

The European Union of Electrical Wholesalers has announced that its next convention will be in Helsinki, Finland.

For more details, contact Margaret Fitzsimons, CEO at the EDA on 020 3141 7350.



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## Still to come in 2024 Power It Up Conference



Bringing together business leaders from the three-step supply chain – manufacturers, wholesalers, and contractors –

to hear from international calibre speakers on important topics affecting the supply chain. ■

### Economic Forecast



**Professor Noble Francis**, Economics Director, Construction Products Association

### A strategic look at the sector



**Tom Diplock**, Strategic Advisor, L.E.K. Consulting

### Sustainability



**Thomas Rau**, Architect, Turntoo & Rau

### Attracting talent



**Thimon de Jong**, Founder and Director, think tank Whetston, Social Psychology Lecturer, Utrecht University

Photo: Tessa Postuma de Boer

### Thank you to our Power It Up 2024 Conference Sponsors



Sponsors are allocated a number of tickets, but for more information on tickets, contact Nancy Adolpho, details below.

### Digitalisation Forum & Data Quality Awards

For any EDA business keen to benefit from digital technologies to gain business advantage, join us on Thursday 5 December 2024 at America Square Conference Centre, London, EC3N 2LB. For those with an open mind,

and an appetite for improving business performance, book now at [www.eda.org.uk](http://www.eda.org.uk) in the Events section – free to attend, and lunch and refreshments are included. The speaker programme will be announced shortly. ■



# CEO verview

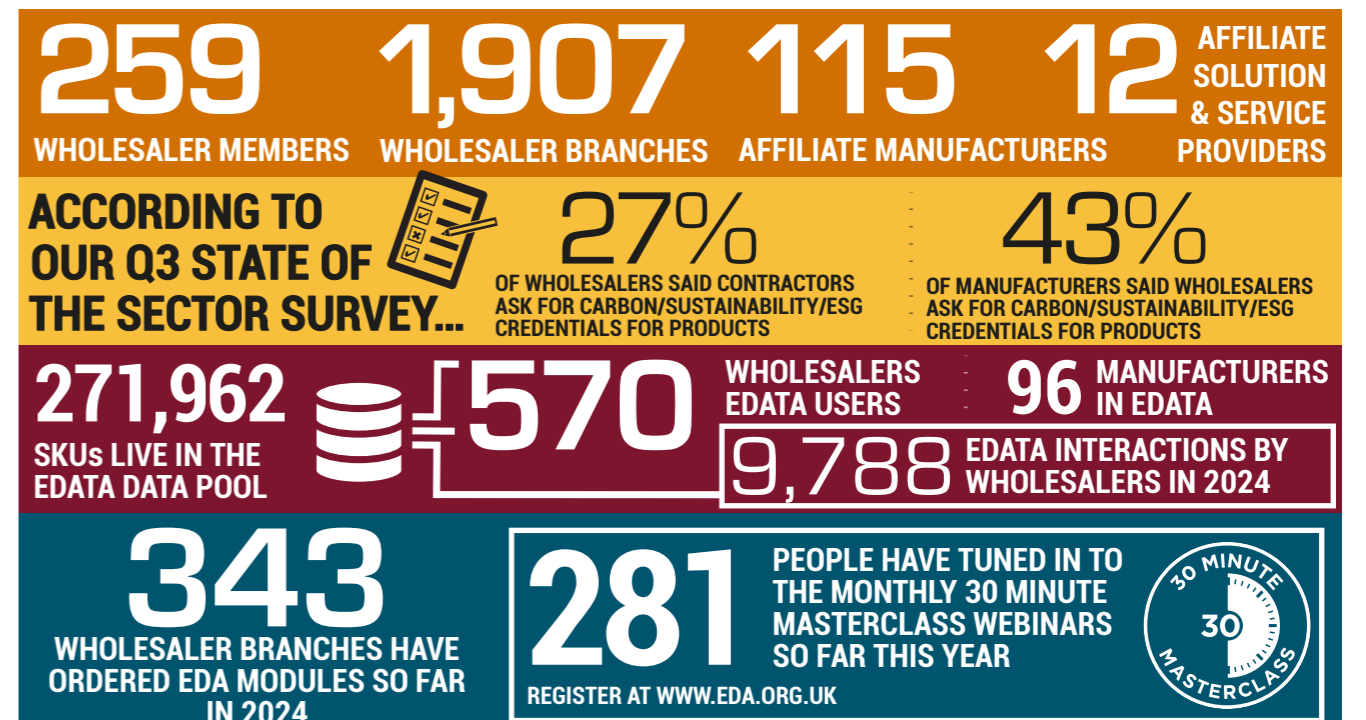
EDA Chief Executive **Margaret Fitzsimons** rounds up events in the sector over the past three months.

For the past year, 'market and economic uncertainty' have been the biggest business concern of the electrical wholesaler as revealed in the EDA's quarterly survey. This is not surprising. Government statistics show that new housebuilding is way down on where it should be. Spending on repairs, maintenance and improvements (RMI) has fallen as consumers tighten their belts and M&E businesses are failing at an unprecedented rate. One of the ways to deal with a slowdown in market demand is to cut costs, reduce stock, cut prices to win business and hope that things will eventually get better.

An alternative approach is to take a step back from day-to-day business and identify growth opportunities. And there are many for our sector. We are the supply chain that will deliver the products required for the electrification of the economy: solar PV, battery storage, heat pumps, EV chargers, controls, energy-efficient lighting... If Government targets are to be believed, the demand pipeline for these products is huge. EDA business leaders have an obligation to upskill themselves and their teams to understand these products and help their businesses grow and support their contractor customers and the economy at large.

The EDA is doing its bit to help in this transition. In all areas of our work, we provide support to the wholesaler to grasp these opportunities: presentations at our Regional Business Forums, online webinars (EDA's 30 Minute Masterclasses), training modules, making technical product data available. It was very heartening to see the amount of interest in presentations on battery storage and heat pumps at our recent Business Forum in Coventry. If electrical wholesalers don't grab these opportunities, there are plenty of other distribution channels that will. ■

## DASHBOARD: A SUMMARY OF Q3 BUSINESS ACTIVITY IN NUMBERS



## Going straight: the untapped talent of ex-offenders



More than 12 million people in the UK carry the stigma of a criminal record – a staggering statistic that reflects the complexities of rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

According to the charity Unlock, navigating life with a conviction can be an immense challenge, particularly when it comes to finding a job.

Respondents to our quarterly surveys consistently say recruitment is a pressing issue, and EDA members could embrace this relatively untapped resource.

Consider James's\* story. With a promising academic background and a bright future in chemical engineering, James encountered setbacks at university but carved out a successful career in retail and merchandising.

However, a personal crisis led to an encounter with the criminal justice system, and a conviction

that threatened to overshadow his accomplishments. James's journey, however, took a turn when a forward-thinking operations director with an EDA wholesaler member recognised his potential.

Thanks to the open-mindedness of his prospective employer and support from an organisation called Seetec, James was given a chance to prove himself. Nine months into his tenure, he has become a valued member of the team, praised for his dedication and eagerness to learn.

James's story reminds us that, by providing opportunities for redemption and rehabilitation, employers can tap into a pool of talent that is often overlooked. Behind every conviction is a human story – a moment of vulnerability, a lapse in judgment, or a challenging circumstance. ■

\* Names have been changed to preserve anonymity.

## Interviewing course delegates learn to ask all the right questions

Eight delegates from EDA businesses attended the first training course developed specifically to help them recruit the best candidates by using effective interviewing techniques.

The practical course – led by tutor Georgina Kvassay – covered interviewing skills, questioning techniques and understanding non-verbal cues. Delegates learned how to prepare for an interview, how to ask questions relevant to the role and level of the post applied for and successful assessment of a candidate's strengths and weaknesses. ■



**Learning to hire the best** Delegates on the course (l-r): Edward Webb, H&V Controls; Jonathan Inglis, CMSPLC; Natalie Grisman, Kingfisher Lighting Ltd; Simon Lane, Medlocks; Ebony Shuttleworth, Kingfisher Lighting Ltd; Max Curtis, Phase Electrical; Vickie Davis, Rifina Company Limited; Samantha Avenell, 3 Line Electrical Wholesale; with tutor Georgina Kvassay.

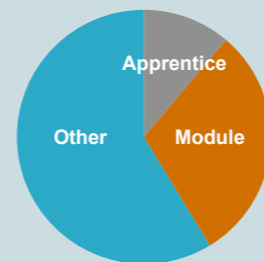
## Masterclass attendances top 300 in 2024

More than 300 people attended the Association's 30 Minute Masterclasses in 2024, with the most popular attracting 93 delegates.

# 309

Total number of Masterclass attendances in 2024

Although many of the attendees were studying the EDA's Product Knowledge Modules or on an apprenticeship, nearly 60% were in neither stream of education. ■



Read more about the EDA's 30 Minute Masterclasses in the News in Brief column opposite.

## An unforgettable experience

When Tracy Hewett, the EDA's Head of Education & Training, opened her email in early July, she was surprised to find a message from a student halfway through his A level studies who was looking for a work experience placement with an electrical wholesaler.

Jack\* had contacted the training team at the EDA because his parents work in a warehouse and were aware of the Trade Supplier Apprenticeship.

Although the request was unusual, Tracy got in touch with John Williamson, Sales Director at A T & T, who found Jack a placement at the company's Reading branch, reporting to branch manager Claude Carty.

Claude, who started in the sector as a van driver, says that Jack was 'very pleasant, very respectful' and would take on work enthusiastically when asked.

Jack started his placement in the warehouse packing orders, then he went on to the trade counter, working with Ryan Jackson. His next assignment was half a day in the sales office alongside Assistant Manager Phil Needs. Here he was put to work answering the phone and entering orders into the computer.

Claude says that Ryan, Phil and everyone else who worked with Jack were 'singing his praises'. Claude took part in a work



experience placement himself, and says he recommends it because school 'can't always prepare you for the outside working world... you've got so many options'.

For his part, Jack says he thoroughly enjoyed the placement. 'I saw everything they did and everybody was happy to explain what they did. My favourite session was in the office where they processed orders and chose the items to be despatched.'

He remains committed to an apprenticeship after he finishes his studies next year. 'I'm not keen to go to university so an apprenticeship would be a good alternative. I liked what I saw in electrical wholesale.'

He has been offered summer work at A T & T, which he is keen to explore after his holidays. ■

\* Name has been changed to preserve anonymity

**A taste of wholesaling** The team at A T & T in Reading where Jack did his work experience

## Power BI powerhouses – making your business data stand out



Learning how to turn run-of-the-mill business data into visually appealing charts, graphs and dashboards with Microsoft's Power BI software. EDA delegates at August's training course at BPP University's London City location, with tutor Bob Creamer (standing).

# NEWS IN BRIEF

### Watch your sales rocket

- Book now for the last Trade Counter Merchandising training course on Thursday 17 October 2024 at the EDA's London HQ.
- Visit the Events section at [www.eda.org.uk](http://www.eda.org.uk) or call Tracy Hewett, details below.

### Changes to skills/funding

- Prime Minister Keir Starmer and Education Secretary Bridget Phillipson have announced the launch of Skills England to create a shared national ambition to boost skills. It will bring together government, training providers, businesses and unions. The apprenticeship levy will become a more flexible growth and skills levy.

### 30 Minute Masterclass webinars available as bite-sized courses

- The knowledge-boosting webinars are now also mini training courses, available online at The EDA Academy. Live 30 Minute Masterclasses will continue in 2024 and 2025.
- Visit [www.eda.org.uk](http://www.eda.org.uk) to book. If you don't already have free access to The EDA Academy, contact Sabina Shaid, details below.

### Supplytrain is new partner for Affiliate apprentices

- To kickstart the Apprenticeship Service – especially for EDA Affiliate Manufacturers, Solution Providers and Service Providers – the Association is working with an organisation called Supplytrain. There was a webinar for Affiliates in August to introduce Supplytrain, but if you would like to know more, contact Tracy Hewett.

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## How green are the products on your shelves? The data pool lets wholesalers know

Customers are increasingly asking for information about the sustainability of the products that wholesalers sell, especially products destined for large projects or those in the public sector.

Sustainability is a broad, complex and evolving term that covers different types of data including embodied carbon, energy efficiency, batteries, packaging materials, recycling/end of life options, and so on; but where can wholesalers get this type of information quickly and efficiently?

### Working group

EDA has established an EDATA Working Group that includes manufacturers, wholesalers and supply chain trade associations. It will develop detailed data requirements to enable the EDATA data pool to include this type of information.

This is a long-term project that will inevitably evolve as standards and data requirements continue to develop. However,

this year wholesaler users of EDATA will start to see the first sustainability and packaging data appearing.

### Green credentials

Meanwhile manufacturers are busy collecting and reporting their sustainability credentials, both for their businesses and for the products they produce. In the EDA's July State of the Sector Survey, 51% of manufacturer respondents reported that they created Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) for 25% of their products, with 26% saying they had EPDs for 50 to 75% of their ranges.

Also on the horizon – for businesses that trade in Europe – details of the EU's requirements for Digital Product Passports are starting to emerge.

Look out for more information on this wide-ranging topic. ■  
If you have any questions about the EDATA data pool, contact the EDA on 020 3141 7350.



## EDATA team on the road for quarterly reviews with manufacturers



**ABB Meeting** ABB Ltd Electrification for an in-depth review of their EDATA portfolio covering changes to products, new products ready for listing on EDATA, and retaining ABB's Gold Quality Status. From left to right: Sukhveer Singh Matharu, ABB Ltd; Hamza Alali, ABB Ltd; Ian Parmenter, ABB Ltd; Richard Appleton, EDA and Javier Garcia, EDA. Behind the camera is the Association's Customer Success Manager Brigette Evans.



**Super Rod** The EDATA team in Coventry – at the ELEX Show and just after the EDA Forum – here with Vanessa Molloy, Super Rod's Marketing Manager (second from left), to discuss their latest product information in the data pool.



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## Your 30-second guide to working smarter with the EDATA data pool

It takes seconds to register or log in to the EDATA data pool. Over half of our member wholesalers are taking advantage of their free access, but many are not using it to work smarter, freeing up time to devote to revenue-generating activities.

Call us on 020 3141 7350 and we'll set up your access immediately. Once you're in, here's how your business can benefit.

### Reduce workloads

**Benefit** It can be a major headache to source and manage product data for your website. EDATA's recently launched suite of APIs (application programming interfaces) connect the data pool to your website or PIM (product information management) system, so rekeying or manually uploading new product information and images becomes unnecessary.

EDATA APIs include options to download products individually, or to download all products from a specific manufacturer, with an option to retrieve data for products that have been updated recently.

**Who needs to know** Tell your web developer or PIM system provider – anyone internally or externally that needs access to product information in bulk.

### Improve customer service

**Benefit** EDATA's wealth of detailed technical product data enables you to find the right product for your customer and answer technical queries to win a sale. Everyone in your branch can have a login to the data pool – for free.

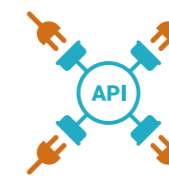
Detailed product data is even more powerful when linked to your sales order processing, or ERP, system. Users of Agathos already have access to EDATA without having to log in to a separate site. Several other suppliers of ERP are linking their systems to EDATA.

**Who needs to know** Tell your ERP system provider and anyone working on trade counters, phone sales or reps visiting customers.

### Increase sales

**Benefit** If your clients are quoting for major or public installation projects, they will need to provide data sheets for the products they plan to install. EDATA's product data sheets are great for this, they are comprehensive, easy-to-read, in a consistent format, and perfect for submittals and operation & maintenance manuals.

**Who needs to know** Anyone responsible for tenders, submittals and creating O&M manuals. ■



### Plugged in

Automated product data updates help wholesalers drive efficient working and improve customer service

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Don't miss out on free access to EDATA's 272,000 products

If you're not benefitting from free access to the EDATA data pool – and information on nearly 272,000 products – your business is missing a trick. Wholesalers are using the data pool to answer technical queries quickly, to bulk download product data, and to download PDF data sheets. Visit [tinyurl.com/EDATAforFREE](http://tinyurl.com/EDATAforFREE) to sign up online, or call Diana on 020 3141 7350. If you'd like a training session to get the most from the data pool, call Brigette Evans, details below.

### Join the forward thinkers

For any EDA business keen to benefit from digital technologies to gain business advantage, join us for the Digitalisation Forum & Data Quality Awards 2024 on Thursday 5 December 2024 at America Square Conference Centre, London EC3. Book your place at [www.eda.org.uk](http://www.eda.org.uk) in the Events section – no cost to attend, and lunch and refreshments are included.

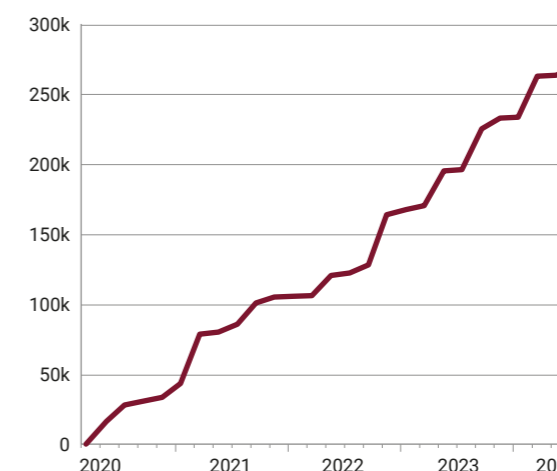
To set up a one-to-one meeting to discuss how your business can take advantage of the data pool, contact Brigette Evans, details below.

## Data pool goes from zero to 272k in four and a half years

There's a huge volume of manufacturer product information available to EDA wholesalers in one central hub – that's EDATA.

As the graph shows, the EDATA data pool has grown steadily and now contains 271,962 products – and counting. The product information inside EDATA can be used in many ways to drive your sales process. ■

Scan the QR code for FREE access and to sign up online, or call Diana on 020 3141 7350.



### Board moves at ETIM UK Ltd

ETIM UK Ltd is a joint venture between the EDA and the Builders Merchants Federation, with each organisation championing the ETIM data standard in their sector. Nico van der Merwe, CEO of Signify, takes over as Chair of the ETIM UK Ltd Board after the retirement of Edgar Aponte, CEO of Rexel UK. Glyn Prestwood, MD at Stearn Electric Co Ltd and a member of the EDA Board of Management, also joins the Board of ETIM UK Ltd.



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## Cautious optimism in a time of economic turmoil

Delegates at the EDA's latest quarterly Talking Shop Teams Dialogue were presented with the results of the July edition of the EDA's quarterly State of the Sector survey, which covered the second quarter of 2024



The EDA's quarterly survey always starts with a series of questions covering turnover and the performance of the sector.

This particular survey is unusual in that it includes a period of uncertainty in the run-up to the general election. Survey questionnaires went out four days after the election, at a time when Reuters headlined a story 'Election uncertainty pushes UK business growth to 7-month low'.

### Turnover

First, wholesaler participants were asked to compare turnover in the second quarter of 2024 with that in the same period in 2023.

The number that reported turnover was up 11% or more has fallen slightly, to 18%. This continues a trend. In January 35% said turnover was up, in April it fell to 21%. Nearly half – 49% – of wholesalers said turnover was down, although this covers any drop in turnover, however small. And 14% said turnover matched the same period in 2023.

Comparing turnover with the previous quarter, 57% of wholesalers said it was down, 18% said it was the same, and 12.5% said it was up 11% or more.

It is a similar picture for manufacturers. Comparing Q2 2024 with Q2 2023, there is a decline in the number of respondents who said turnover is up and 32% said it was down.

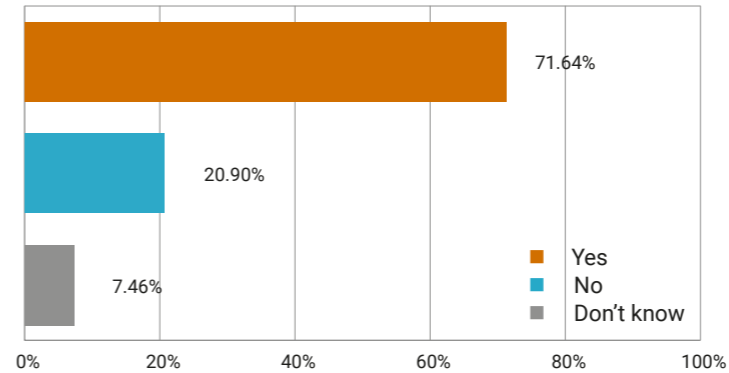
Comparing Q2 2024 with the previous quarter, only seven per cent said turnover was up and 43% said it was down.

### Operational challenges

For wholesalers, the biggest operational challenge was competition from online sales driving down margins. Next, they were concerned about a general downturn in demand – this has been the top concern for the past two quarters. The third challenge for wholesalers was increasing competition for work. There is a feeling that there is a lot of activity in the sector, but not much of it is converting to actual projects.

Again, manufacturers broadly agree. Their top operational challenge was the general downturn in demand, followed by increasing competition for work.

Manufacturers also expressed concern about the large amount of tendering that is not converted into business, and difficulties in attracting and retaining staff.



**Digital or analogue** We asked wholesalers if they are being asked by their contractor customers to deliver digital pricing information

### Sector-by-sector change

Both wholesalers and manufacturers were asked about turnover in a number of different sectors, and to identify any significant changes.

For wholesalers, the biggest growth was in the commercial, industrial and infrastructure sectors. These three sectors are frequently at the top of the table and simply move around from one quarter to the next.

Private housing is in the middle of the table, but private housing repair, maintenance and improvement is in the doldrums at the bottom.

It's a similar picture among manufacturers, with infrastructure and industrial swapping places near the top of the table.

### Education

Wholesalers were asked to respond to anecdotal evidence that there has been a slowdown in the number of projects in schools and colleges, possibly the result of spending on replacing reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete in education buildings.

Although some respondents said they were experiencing increased spending on lighting in schools, or a general upturn in school and college work, many felt they were not seeing the amount of work they would expect from the education sector, and that there was a general slowdown in all sectors.

### Product demand

Turning from projects to products, wholesalers reported a significant increase in demand for renewables equipment. This has been the case for some time.

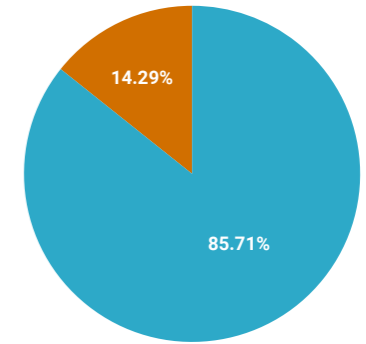
Some wholesalers are spending a lot of time and resources providing digital pricing information for contractor portals, so we asked wholesalers if their contractor customers were asking them to deliver this data. About a fifth said they were, but many more – over 70% – said they weren't. However, there has been an increase in these requests over the past year, according to 85% of respondents.

Digging deeper, the survey asked how often wholesalers were expected to upload pricing data, and over 40% said it was done on an ad hoc basis. Nearly 80% of wholesalers said this price data was customer specific.

While some have automated this process, others said the work was difficult. One said: 'We're having to share the workload, recruit additional staff if you can find them, but it actually is a bit of a headache.'

### Environment

Manufacturers were asked if their corporate strategy included an environments, social and governance (ESG) pillar of work, and two-thirds said it did. Just over 40% of wholesalers were asking for third party assessments of the ESG credentials of products and just



**Going digital** Most contractors say they have seen a moderate increase in requests for digital pricing information

under 40% for business assessments.

Nearly three-quarters – 72% – of manufacturers are working to make environmental products declarations (EPDs) available for their product ranges, although only 7.6% said they were available for all their products.

Wholesalers said that two-thirds of customers were asking for third-party sustainability/ESD assessments of the products they sell and their businesses. About 40% of manufacturers said their businesses' ESG credentials are extremely important when quoting or tendering for publicly funded projects. A further 39% said they were moderately important.

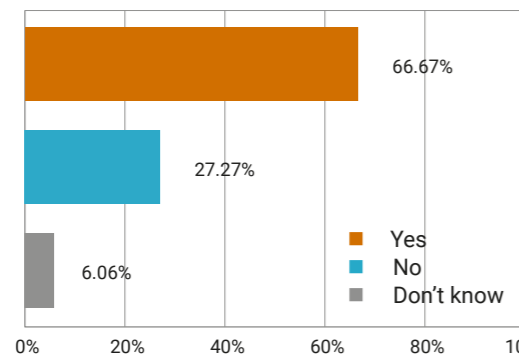
Corresponding figures for privately funded projects are 20% and 53%.

### Like for like sales

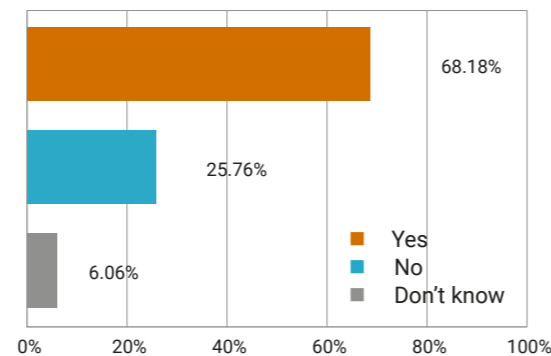
Finally, wholesalers and manufacturers were asked to compare like-for-like sales between 2023 and 2024 so far.

Manufacturers are the greater optimists, with 40% expecting higher sales this year and nearly 40% saying they will stay the same. Only 14% of wholesalers expected sales to go up, with 42% saying they will stay the same.

Overall, however, both wholesalers and manufacturers agree that, on a scale from 1-10 the sector's performance potential is six. Not too bad in the wake of recent uncertainty. ■



**Evaluating wholesalers' ESG credentials** We asked wholesalers if their customers are asking for third party assessments of the sustainability of the products they sell (left) and of their business (right)



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# EDA COMMUNITY

## Engaged businesses get the most from their EDA memberships

The Association handed out this year's Engagement Awards on board the *Silver Sturgeon* river yacht during the Summer Event on

the Thames in central London. Vice President David Moore was on hand to announce the winners and present the awards. ■



**Most Engaged Affiliated Member**  
Kingfisher Lighting Ltd (Luceco Group)



**Highly Commended Affiliate Member**  
Marshall-Tufflex Ltd



**Most Engaged Newcomer Manufacturer** This award was shared by two manufacturers that joined the EDA this year – Armorduct Systems Ltd and Super Rod Ltd



**Most Engaged Member – 100+ branches** Edmundson Electrical Ltd



**Most Engaged Member – 21-99 branches** Medlock Electrical Distributors



**Most Engaged Member – 6-20 branches** Steam Electric Co Ltd



**Most Engaged Member – 2-5 branches** A T & T (GB) Ltd



**Most Engaged Member – one branch** A tie between ABM Electrical Wholesale Ltd and Lightsave Ltd

## Laura completes half the EDA modules in just over a year

Laura Coakley of Kingfisher Lighting has completed six of the EDA's 12 Product Knowledge modules in only 12 months.

As *Taking Stock* went to press, Laura was due to take part in the Kilimanjaro Challenge in aid of the Electrical Industries Charity. ■



## Samantha McFall celebrates 20 years at ANEW

The Chief Executive Officer of the ANEW Buying Group, Samantha McFall, is celebrating 20 years with the organisation, the largest independent electrical wholesale Buying Group in the UK.



## New Members and Affiliates

A warm welcome to the new wholesaler members who joined the EDA from 1 August:

- **DBM Electrical Supplies Ltd** (part of The IBA Buying Group Ltd),
- **Rapid Renewables Ltd** (part of the Fegime UK Buying Group Ltd) and
- **Superlec Electrical Distributors Ltd** (part of the Fegime UK Buying Group Ltd).



The latest manufacturers to join the Association as affiliates are, from 1 July:

- **GivEnergy Ltd,**
  - **Qing Cables Ltd**
  - **Ventcroft Ltd (An NKT Company)**
- From 1 August:
- **Scame UK Ltd.**



Qing Cables Ltd



From 1 September, **Aurora Lighting UK Ltd** rejoined the EDA.



Finally, from 1 August, a new solutions provider joined the fold:

- **Epicor Software (UK) Ltd.** ■



Send any news for this section to [takingstock@eda.org.uk](mailto:takingstock@eda.org.uk).

## A trio of retirements



**Vicky Ordish retires** Keith Avenell, Chair of the EDA Education & Training Ambassadors, thanks Vicky Ordish, Apprenticeship Programme Manager at Rexel UK, for her contributions to EDA education and training initiatives. Vicky is retiring after a long career at Rexel UK and as a valued EDA Ambassador.



**Edgar Aponte departs from the Board** At the end of August, the EDA Board of Management bade farewell to board member – and CEO of Rexel UK – Edgar Aponte. Here's Edgar receiving a farewell gift from EDA President Chris Ashworth.

**Philip Elsegood retires from Edmundson Electrical** Philip has been an integral part of the Edmundson team and Finance Director for the past 22 years. Here he is with his suitably finance-related retirement cake.



## Claire Lomas MBE

Campaigner and fundraiser Claire Lomas MBE, special guest speaker at the EDA Annual Dinner this year, has died in an accident in Jordan.

Her speech on the night was very well received. Our thoughts are with her family and friends. ■



# WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



## JOANNE SOUTHGATE

Joanne is MD at MDE Electrical Supplies. She recently bought the business from her father.

### 2001-12

'After I completed my business management degree, I temped at a large insurance company, and that turned into a permanent role. I was there for 12 years and did my ACCA accountancy exams. I did long days, and by this time I had a family and wanted a better work/life balance.'

### November 2013 to 2024

'My dad launched MDE in the 1980s, and he was thinking about selling. I'd always helped out on Saturdays and holidays, tidying the shelves, so I thought I'd give it a go. My dad and auntie trained me up and our customers are very patient and accepting. Dad's very first customer is still a good customer now.'

### April 2024

'My dad has retired a few times! Now I've bought him out, and from April 2024 it's my official first year as business owner. I'm also on the IBA's commercial team and their board of directors – that's been a great confidence booster.'

# SECTOR INSIGHTS:

## UPDATES, PERSPECTIVES, AND RECOMMENDED READING



### Construction Industry Forecasts 2024-2026

Construction output is set to fall by over 2% this year – find out why by reading the CPA's latest forecast.

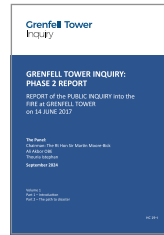
**£250, or free through the EDA**

The summer 2024 edition of the Construction Products Association's industry forecasts is now available – free to EDA businesses.

It paints a slightly more negative view than last quarter's edition, predicting that total construction output will fall by 2.9% in 2024 before recovering by 2.0% in 2025. This is the result of the recovery in private housing new build and private housing repair, maintenance and improvement being pushed back thanks to reduced demand as mortgage rates rise.

Forecasts in all other construction sectors are similar to last quarter, with firms operating in industrial, commercial refurbishment and fit-out or working on major infrastructure projects performing well. ■

EDA businesses can request a copy of the CPA's forecasts for free rather than pay £250. Email [margaret.fitzsimons@eda.org.uk](mailto:margaret.fitzsimons@eda.org.uk)



### Grenfell Tower Inquiry report

The inquiry published its final report on 4 September 2024 laying the blame for the tragedy on failures in both the Government and the private sector.

**Download from [grenfelltowerinquiry.org.uk](http://grenfelltowerinquiry.org.uk)**

The construction industry in the UK comes in for criticism in the report, along with local and national government, architects, contractors and product suppliers.

In its conclusion, it says building safety management in England and Wales is 'seriously defective'. It says that a single regulator should be established, reporting to a government minister.

The entire 1,700-page report is available to download. ■



### The Education Landscape: A Guide for Employers

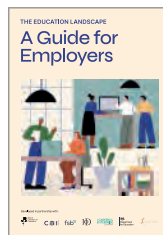
Learn how to work with schools, colleges and universities, young people and older learners.

**Free**

This guide, from consultants The Education Landscape, is intended to help employers who get requests to work with local schools, colleges and universities – and describes the many different ways in which they can get involved.

It sets out how businesses can benefit and explains how technical education – including apprenticeships, T Levels and Higher Technical Qualifications – can meet an employer's skills needs.

Included in the download is an index that describes the business benefits of different opportunities – from providing workplace experiences for students using your industry expertise to help design courses, to getting training for new employees and existing staff. ■



### Connection of Unidirectional and Bidirectional RCDs and MCBs to power supplies

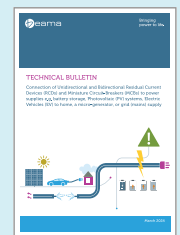
In this publication, BEAMA aims to clarify the differences between connections for unidirectional and bidirectional RCDs and MCBs.

**Free**

The key change in this update is a requirement for bidirectional protective devices on 'prosumer' equipment – including solar PV, battery storage and EVs that can supply 'vehicle to grid' energy back to the charger.

The new amendment aims to ensure safety and reliability for a growing number of prosumer energy sources that enable bidirectional energy flow.

EDA wholesalers could find this guide useful to share with their contractor customers. The amendment will be an addition to BS 7671: 2018 +A2: 2022 and it will be free to view on both the IET and BSI websites. ■



# TAKING STOCK

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TAKING STOCK is published quarterly by **The Electrical Distributors' Association**  
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