

Rogue electricians prosecuted



Evidence that the authorities are stepping up their efforts to police the electrical industry can be found in three cases that have recently passed through the courts.

In the first a Llandrindod Wells electrician was fined £1,500 for dangerous work he carried out on a barn conversion, which caused electric shocks to residents. In the second, a rogue workman pleaded guilty to four charges brought against him by High Peak Building Control at Buxton Magistrates court for unsafe electrics which were deemed seriously harmful and fined £2,237.

In the third case, Trading Standards were alerted by Competent Persons Scheme Provider, NAPIT, to the illegal activities of Lee Naughton of Wolverhampton. NAPIT Sales & Marketing Director Andy Sharp was asked to provide Trading Standards with a witness statement proving that Naughton was not part of a Competent Person scheme and not qualified to tackle the work.

A court was told that Naughton had been sent to prison previously for committing similar offences. Trading Standards are now seeking an enforcement order permanently banning Naughton from carrying out electrical work once he is released from prison. Naughton undertook a full re-wire of a property leading to a complaint that revealed further mis-described work and the issue of an invalid compliance certificate.

At Wolverhampton Crown Court, he pleaded guilty to one count of fraud and 12 counts under the Trade Description Act 1968. These charges relate to properties in Wolverhampton, Sandwell, Dudley and in Staffordshire.

These successful prosecutions continue to pave the way towards the better enforcement of Part P of the Building Regulations, for which Registered Trade Professionals and Competent Person Scheme Providers have campaigned for so long.

John Andrews, chief executive of NAPIT, said: "I am really pleased that there has been a significant increase in enforcement activity over noncompliance with Part P. For far too long the conscientious electricians have seen their sacrifices to raise and maintain standards in our

industry undermined by the unskilled criminals who undercut them, produce unsafe work and rip customers off.

"As the Chair of the Competent Persons Forum Enforcement Sub-Committee I hold this topic dear and together with my colleagues on that committee and elsewhere, have worked hard to get both Central and Local Government to take the lack of enforcement seriously and I am gratified that at last our efforts are being rewarded."

Any rogue traders suspected of working dangerously or fraudulently can continue to be notified to the authorities by contacting a Competent Person Scheme, who will then follow the correct routes to bring them to justice.

