

Electrical Training (N.I.) Limited
Company limited by guarantee

Reference and administrative details

Trustees	Mr Lewis Darragh Mr Michael Hilland (Resigned 26 March 2024) Mr Peter Williamson Mr Michael Dowds Mr Colin Cherry Mr William Connolly
Company number	NI032292
CCNI number	101034
Registered office	Units 57-59 Ballymena Business Centre 62 Fenaghy Road Ballymena Co. Antrim BT42 1FL
Independent auditor	John Finnegan Potter Finnegan Limited Unit 25 The Courtyard Business Park 190 Galgorm Road Ballymena Co. Antrim BT42 1HL
Bankers	Ulster Bank Limited 91 – 93 University Road Belfast BT7 1NG
Solicitors	McKervill Neilly 1 Broadway Avenue Ballymena BT43 7AA

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Trustees Report
Year ended 31 August 2024

The trustees present their report and the audited financial statements of the company for the year ended 31 August 2024.

Electrical Training (N.I.) Limited is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated in Northern Ireland, and was set up on 22nd April 1997. The company registration number is NI032292, and its charity number is NIC101034. Charitable registration was granted by the Charity Commission of Northern Ireland on 24th November 2014. The registered office is 62 Fenaghy Road, Galgorm, Ballymena, Co Antrim, BT42 1FL. The charitable company is governed by its memorandum and articles of association supported by a set of standing orders. In the event of the charitable company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding a £1.

Objectives and Activities

Charitable objectives

The charity's principal object as set out in its Memorandum and Articles of Association includes the following goals:

- (a) To promote and advance for the public benefit the education and training of persons employed or intending to be employed in the Northern Ireland electrical installation industry.
- (b) To promote useful research into any matters relating to the training for employment in the Northern Ireland electrical installation industry and other related industries and to publish and disseminate any useful results of such research for the public benefit.

The organisation's core business activity includes the provision of customised and accredited training, AM2 Skills assessment, and the management of the SparkSafe Electrical Licence to Practise system.

The charity seeks to improve the productivity, safety, and performance of the electrical contracting industry, and to increase the employability of existing and new entrants within the sector. The charity dedicates its time and resources to supporting individuals, employers and professionals working within the industry to improve their knowledge, enhance their skills and prove their competence.

Public Benefit

The trustees confirm that they have had due regard for the guidance produced on public benefit by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland. The organisation ensures income received from its charitable activities is used effectively to support the development and quality improvement activities for the industry. Public benefit activities include but are not limited to –

- Participation in forums and engagement with industry stakeholders to develop resources and partnerships that are of benefit to electrical installation employers and the wider BSE sector.
- Campaigning for the improvement of quality and standards within the industry, emphasising the role of the qualified electrician.
- Promoting the LtP system to clients and contractors with the aim of reducing the safety, quality, and value for money risks associated with the use of unqualified, underqualified, and semi-skilled electrical workers on construction and maintenance projects.
- Encouraging contractors and workers to remain up to date with national occupational standards to improve productivity, safety, and quality outcomes.
- Promoting the apprenticeship and training needs of the electrical contracting industry to the school leavers and others within Northern Ireland.
- Engaging with electrical installation employers regarding their current employment, training, and recruitment needs, incentivising the recruitment of apprentices.
- Supporting initiatives which positively promote careers within the industry, as well as best practice, and the importance of competency and electrical safety within the industry.

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- Organising industry awareness events, providing access to new and innovative resources, as well as providing discounts and incentives to improve industry productivity and employability outcomes.

Achievement and Performance

The charity is committed to improving quality and raising standards within the NI electrical contracting industry. Part of ETT's mission is to share the latest thinking and best practice to those within the industry, as well as promote continuous professional development.

ETT's Stay Connected NI Industry event is just one of the ways the charity seeks to achieve this. Stay Connected returned on 22nd November 2023, building on the success of the previous year by providing a unique opportunity to get together in person with industry experts, business advisors and other specialists to share ideas, discover the latest products and innovations and gain insights into the emerging technologies that are driving the electrical industry forwards. Feedback from attendees, speakers and exhibitors was excellent, with plans underway for Stay Connected 2024.

Effective links with UK industry stakeholders enabled the launch of the 'Save Our Sparks' NI Safe Isolation campaign. The findings of the 'Save Our Sparks' NI survey were presented at ETT's Stay Connected 2023 event with an expert industry panel discussing how we can improve safe isolation practises and save lives. Although a slight improvement on the UK 2022 survey results, it is clear that there is still more to be done. With this in mind, ETT made a commitment to

- Provide free safe isolation training for everyone who attended ETT's Stay Connected 2023 NI Industry Event.
- Deliver part funded safe isolation training in 2024 – giving 50% off the cost of the ½ day workshop (Normally £125 per person – discounted to £62.50 throughout 2024).
- Share Michael's Story and the 'Save Our Sparks' NI survey findings at all of our Industry breakfast mornings, electrical safety awareness courses and safe isolation workshops.
- Work with industry partners and campaign for funding to ensure NI electrical apprentices are provided with a free safe isolation kit as part of their 4-year apprenticeship programme.
- Engage in regular, effective communication to ensure safe Isolation remains front of mind with all SparkSafe system users including clients, main contractors, electrical contractors, and workers – we all have a part to play to ensure we improve safe working practices and to protect lives.
- Share free advice, guidance and resources provided by industry stakeholders regarding safe isolation training, support, and requirements.

In February 2024, the charity announced that it was working in partnership with CEF, the UK's largest electrical wholesaler to offer safe isolation kits to those who attend ETT's safe isolation training at a discounted price, making it more affordable and helping electricians stay safe at work. The charity is committed to working with industry partners and stakeholders to prevent anyone else from having to lose a loved one in an accident that could and should have been prevented.

Support for recruitment onto the industry recognised Level 3 apprenticeship programme continues with ETT running a number of successful apprenticeship aptitude tests sessions for employers. The tests have been developed to provide candidates with an understanding of the language, Maths and Science knowledge and skills that they will need when they enter the Electrical Contracting Industry. The test aims to provide measurable, objective data that should give a better all-round view of a potential apprentice's suitability, while reducing the work for the employer.

In 2024, ETT launched the first in a series of fully funded Industry Breakfast Mornings. These short but informative breakfast mornings provide an excellent opportunity for those working in the electrical industry to come together, share knowledge and insights, as well as make connections with other electricians and employers. Each event was well attended with excellent feedback received on the topics of stress and mental health within the electrical industry, Michael's Story and the importance of safe isolation practises, as well as the AM2 skills assessment and ETT's apprenticeship recruitment support services.

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Amendment 3 to the BS7671 Wiring Requirements was released on 31st July 2024 to include two new definitions and one new Regulation relating to the use of bidirectional and unidirectional devices. ETT marked the launch of the 3rd Amendment by part funding the first course delivered in September 2024 meaning electrical workers could complete the important update training on the most current edition at a discounted rate. These important changes were also shared via social media posts and ezine technical updates.

With construction workers nearly 4 times more likely to take their own lives than in other sectors, raising awareness of the importance of mental health and well-being in the workplace is a key priority for the charity. Accredited mental health training plays an important role in promoting well-being both within and outside the workplace. By providing fully funded, accredited Level 2 Mental Health First Aid training, the charity seeks to reduce the stigma around mental health in the workplace, promoting open conversations and encourage those who are struggling to seek help. The charity ran 2 fully funded Level 2 Mental Health First Aid courses, with excellent feedback from attendees. The charity plans to run more of these fully funded courses in 2025.

Building effective relationships with contractors, workers and other industry stakeholders remains a priority. The charity completed a number of college visits in the period providing valuable advice and guidance to apprentices regarding the AM2 Assessment. During the college visits, apprentices are signposted to tools and resources available on the National Electrotechnical Training (NET) website, as well as general hints and tips for success. The visits to NRC Ballymena, NRC Newtownabbey, Building Services Academy, Belfast Met - Millfield, NWRC Limavady, SERC Newtownards & SERC Lisburn help to build effective links and partnerships by communicating the purpose of the charity with apprentices, and college lecturers.

A significant number of those employed within the NI industry are unqualified or underqualified. there is the need At least 35% of NI industry are not qualified, EWA is the only route. EWA is the assessment process to recognise occupational competence for people who have been working as an Installation or Maintenance Electrician for over five years, but haven't been able to complete an apprenticeship, achieve an equivalent, recognised Level 3 vocational qualification or have qualifications from outside of the UK. ETT successfully ran its first Experienced Worker Assessment (EWA) programme in May 2024 with candidates completing the in-person induction at ETT. Further update and promotion of the EWA is planned for 2025.

In July 2024, ETT formally launched its NI Electric Shock Survey with the Mayor of Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and Dr. Bryan Monson, Deputy Chief Executive, Health, and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland attending the official launch with the support of local employers. By collecting data from workers in the industry, we aim to gain insights into the prevalence of electric shocks and reporting behaviours, which is crucial to develop effective prevention and safety measures.

The charity also developed and delivered a number of new technical courses including a 1-day Inspection & Testing Practical workshop, 1-day Temporary Electrical BS7909 course and a 3-day City & Guilds Assured Emergency Lighting and Fire Alarms Course in partnership with NAPIT. Further development of accredited and non-accredited training courses feature for 2025.

The charity continues to actively promote the SparkSafe system and its wide-ranging benefits to both new and existing clients. A key focus remains on ensuring system users have access to comprehensive resources, practical advice, and clear guidance regarding the SparkSafe requirements. This includes providing step-by-step support to help users understand and implement the system effectively. There has been encouraging engagement with clients and main contractors, with many showing a strong interest in improving compliance and safety standards.

Online training sessions and system demonstrations have proven to be particularly effective tools for showcasing the importance of specifying License to Practice (LTP) in contract conditions. These sessions not only highlight the practical advantages of the system but also reinforce its role in driving higher standards within the industry. Through these efforts, the charity aims to continue building awareness and fostering a culture of safety and accountability.

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SparkSafe aims to ensure that those working in the industry stay informed about the latest developments and technical standards, contributing to improved productivity, quality, safety, and value for money. A central objective of this initiative is to enhance quality and raise standards by promoting the attainment of accredited electrical qualifications, emphasising the importance of qualified electricians while reinforcing a commitment to safety and competency.

In 2023/2024, SparkSafe delivered several online training sessions for clients, main contractors, and electrical contractors. These sessions help to familiarise system users with the online system, reporting tools, and functionalities, while providing guidance on meeting compliance requirements for LTP contract conditions.

SparkSafe remains an active participant in the Electrical Safety Roundtable (ESR), a prominent industry forum dedicated to advancing electrical safety in both homes and workplaces. The ESR brings together leading experts across the industry, fostering collaboration toward a shared goal of enhancing safety standards.

SparkSafe was honoured to join the judging panel for the prestigious Above and Beyond Awards (ABA), an initiative by the Electrical Safety Roundtable (ESR) Workplace group. These awards are dedicated to recognising and celebrating individuals and organizations that exceed their legal obligations to elevate electrical safety standards in the workplace. The ABA serves as a valuable platform to showcase best practices, promote safety, and build trust in products and services, while offering well-deserved recognition to those driving positive change.

The SparkSafe team actively participated in a number of industry exhibitions and conferences to promote the unique system and its benefits. Attendance at the NIFHA Asset Managers Annual Conference allowed for delivery of a comprehensive presentation titled, "How Do You Know You Have Qualified Electrical Workers on Your Sites?" The session was well received, highlighting the LTP initiative as a best practice tool, sparking interest from both public and private sector schemes. NIFHA, the representative body for all RHAs in Northern Ireland, provided an ideal platform for networking with key decision-makers and increasing awareness of the SparkSafe initiative within the sector.

The organisation continues to be deemed as low risk by awarding bodies, providing assurance that ETT and SparkSafe operate in full compliance with external accreditations and standards. This is further supported by positive feedback from EQA and ISO assessments, following three successful external audits conducted throughout the year.

Financial Review

The income for this financial year has increased to £546,134 from £466,249 in 2023. Expenditure has also increased to £682,296 from £570,777 in the previous year.

While a further deficit has been recorded during the period, a notable increase in income is reported. However, this has been accompanied by a significant increase in expenditure. This rise in expenditure has allowed the charity to complete development work as well as invest in resources and facilities needed to help meet the charity's future goals and objectives.

Moving forward, a key priority for the trustees will be the close monitoring of all expenditure, with a focus on reducing costs where possible. Raising income through a diverse range of accredited courses, skills programmes, and industry support initiatives will continue to feature. These initiatives, detailed earlier in this report, will also position Electrical Training (NI) Limited to access new revenue streams.

To address the current deficit, detailed financial plans and projections will be implemented with the aim of reducing net expenditure in the short to medium term. These measures are expected to position the charity for a return to net income in the medium to long term.

Reserves policy

The Board of Trustees have established a policy whereby the funds held by the charity should not be less than six months of resources expended. The trustees consider the amount in reserves as appropriate.

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Plans for Future Periods

The organisation will continue to build a network of associations with other responsible UK and ROI industry stakeholders with the aim of promoting competency, via planned continuous professional development, Level 3 apprenticeship recruitment and structured workforce development plans.

Efforts to build on the SparkSafe LtP achievement by progressively adding further projects features as a recurring objective. Actions to explore opportunities in other parts of the UK and in the ROI continue with a view to extending use of the system.

Objectives

- Promote accredited Level 3 courses in EV, EESS, and Solar PV to individuals and employers, supporting Northern Ireland's efforts to achieve the government's Net Zero objectives and targets.
- Position ETT as a leading skills hub for renewable energy and workforce upskilling. Prioritise engagement with businesses in the renewables sector—particularly those already operating but lacking proper qualifications—and strengthen connections with MCS accreditation.
- Communicate effectively with the industry about NI Climate Change Act targets and highlight the critical role of qualified electricians in the journey toward Net Zero.
- Continue to raise awareness of the importance of safe isolation, sharing Michael's Story with as many electrical workers as possible
- Share the finding of the 'Ending Shock Silence' campaign to improve safety standards and protect lives within the sector.
- Develop an industry led working group to shape ETT's Ending 'Shock Silence' action plan as well as highlight broader challenges facing the sector, including those related to electrical safety, competency, and skills development.
- Expand the range of technical and health & safety training services available to electrical contracting businesses and the broader building services engineering (BSE) sector, addressing specific local needs.
- Foster strong relationships with the college network to better support employer recruitment, training programs, and apprenticeship opportunities.
- Enhance and refine the organisation's AM2 assessment capabilities, including AM2S and AM2E, ensuring high standards and continued improvement.
- Build and strengthen collaborative partnerships with industry stakeholders across the UK and Republic of Ireland to promote the adoption of the Licence to Practise initiative.

Structure, Governance and Management

The trustees act both as trustees and directors and have overall responsibility for matters relating to the company.

The day-to-day operational activity of the organisation is overseen by the Chief Executive, who reports to the appointed Board Chairman and Trustees. The Board determines remuneration for key management personnel from market rates of similar organisations.

Trustees are appointed by referral or a declared interest. Trustees are unpaid and provide their service voluntarily. Each trustee is required to be actively engaged in the strategic decision-making processes within Electrical Training (N.I.) Limited. Board members are informed of progress about the organisation's activities through scheduled meetings and by electronic updates and reports.

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Related parties

Many employers and wider industry stakeholders consider ETT a trusted advisor, seeking advice, guidance and support regarding technical skills training and apprentice recruitment needs. The charity has developed extensive, good quality links with employers and other external bodies. These links are used very effectively to help develop products and services that are closely aligned to industries and employers' needs.

During the year, relationships with the Construction Industry Training Board NI (CITBNI), NET, NAPIT, and the Northern Ireland Branch of the Electrical Contractors Association have been maintained. The organisation continues to develop new relationships with other existing and emerging stakeholder organisation based in GB and ROI based on collaboration around electrical Licence to Practise, as well as local, regional, and national industry training and assessment objectives.

Risk management

The charity performs an annual risk review, and appropriate systems have been established to mitigate identified risks. Renewal of the new ISO 9001:2018 Quality Assurance Standard has been achieved in July 2024. The scope of the award covers the delivery of industry training courses, the Achievement Measurement 2 Test, and the SparkSafe Licence to Practise System.

During the period, the organisation also renewed its charitable status with the Charity Commission.

The trustees have assessed the significant risks to which the charity is exposed and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to substantial risks.


Financial instruments

The charity's principal financial instruments comprise of investments, bank balances, trade debtors and trade creditors. The purpose of these instruments is to finance the charity's operations.


Small Company Provisions

This report has been provided in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small company's exemption.

This report was approved by the Board on 28 April 2025 and signed on behalf of the Board by:



Ms Charlotte Bamber – Chief Executive



Mr Lewis Darragh - Trustee