

Fletcher elected BESA President

3 years ago



Robert (Rab) Fletcher has been elected to serve as President of the Building Engineering Services Association (BESA) for 2022/23. He succeeds Neil Brackenridge who served a two-year term to help steer BESA through the pandemic.

The new President is mechanical services team manager at Fife Council Building Services. He has more than 30 years' experience in construction and building services engineering – and describes himself as “a time served plumber”.

In his address to the BESA Annual General Meeting in London, Fletcher said he was delighted to be the latest in a long line of presidents from a devolved nation further strengthening BESA's unique position as the only built environment trade body representing all four UK countries.

“Our enduring strength and influence depend on our ability to speak with a collective voice on behalf of the whole industry – and we are not afraid to speak ‘truth to power’ wherever that power may sit,” he said.

Fletcher also spoke about the difficult economic conditions and their impact on the building engineering sector, but said he remained optimistic.

“This Association has a proud history and we its members are fortunate that we can call on the collective experience and expertise of members past and present,” he said. “The ‘BESA Community’ has given us an amazing repository of technical know-how and business experience.

Community

“This means we are well placed to navigate choppy waters – and it is always better to do that together, as part of a community of like-minded people and firms, rather than having to work out the best way forward

on your own.”

He is a passionate advocate of training and apprenticeships, and a former chairman of BESA Scotland. He was one of the founders of the BESA Local Authority Forum, which he continues to chair. This brings together representatives from every local council in Scotland to address key industry topics and find solutions to common problems. It attracts more than 500 attendees every year.

Fletcher has been working for the £130m turnover building services division of Fife Council for 25 years having started in a plumbing role before progressing through the ranks to supervisor and co-ordinator. He was promoted to team manager in 2012.

As team manager, he was initially responsible for delivering an annual £15m programme of more than 2,000 domestic heating installations for council tenants, and since 2017 he has overseen all the mechanical services in Fife Council’s 3,000 non-domestic properties.

The bulk of his £9m installation and maintenance programme is delivered by BESA member companies and includes the upgrading of commercial gas installations. It is a requirement of the Council that firms tendering for its work packages are members of the Association.

The new BESA President is also lead mentor for Fife Council Building Services mechanical apprentices, of which there are more than 30 working in plumbing/gas and mechanical disciplines. Several of the current group were taken on after being made redundant by private firms.

BESA chief executive David Frise congratulated Fletcher on his election and paid fulsome tribute to his predecessor.

“We are hugely grateful to Neil for his steadfast service through two unprecedented and extremely challenging years,” he said. “His leadership helped to steer us through some tough times and means we can now look ahead with optimism.

“Rab has already given great support to members through his work as chair of BESA Scotland and the Local Authority Forum. The whole team are looking forward to working with him on several exciting projects over the next 12 months.”