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SUMMER NEWSLETTER

2026

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EMERGENCY LIGHTING STANDARDS ARE CHANGING

The rules for emergency lighting in the UK are changing fast — and if you're responsible for a building, these changes will affect you. Here's what's new in 2025, what's coming in the next few years, and how it all impacts end users and operators.

Key Changes to Know

BS 5266-1:2025 — The New Standard

The new BS 5266-1:2025 is more than just a routine update. It broadens the focus beyond traditional escape routes, now formally requiring coverage for local-area and standby lighting. That means your emergency lighting setup may need to work for more scenarios — like when people need to shelter in place, not just evacuate.

Tougher Wiring and Testing

The new rules mean critical areas must have dual-circuit wiring and fire-resistant cabling, increasing system resilience. There's also a hard requirement for full photometric testing every five years, ensuring your lighting genuinely delivers the right coverage and brightness when you need it most. This isn't just a paperwork exercise — buildings that aren't up to scratch will need to be brought up to standard.

Alignment with European Standards

BS 5266-1:2025 now matches up with BS EN 50172:2024 and BS EN 1838:2024, which set stricter requirements for both the brightness and coverage of emergency lighting. For example, escape routes must now be lit across their entire width, not just down the centre. This brings the UK in line with the latest European best practice.

Documentation and Handover

The new standard puts a spotlight on documentation, structured testing, and ongoing record-keeping. There's a clear expectation for full risk assessments, detailed maintenance logs, and more rigorous handover procedures. Expect more regular audits and the need to provide robust evidence that your systems are compliant and properly maintained ([NICEIC](#)).

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WHY THIS MATTERS FOR YOU

- **Safety:** Stricter standards, dual-circuit redundancy, and regular photometric testing mean occupants and visitors can count on emergency lights working in real emergencies, reducing risk and liability.
- **Compliance:** Systems that haven't kept pace with the new requirements could now put you at risk of non-compliance, invalidate your insurance, or lead to enforcement action.
- **Cost:** Upgrades and regular testing do come with a price tag. But investing now helps avoid more costly problems later, from failed inspections to safety incidents.

WHAT'S NEXT? THE FUTURE OF EMERGENCY LIGHTING

- **Smart, IoT-Enabled Lighting:** The market is moving quickly towards automated, networked emergency lighting. Systems with remote self-testing, live monitoring, and instant fault alerts are becoming standard, making compliance easier and reducing the risk of lights failing unnoticed.
- **Long-Life, Sustainable Systems:** Advances in battery technology and LED efficiency mean less frequent maintenance, lower running costs, and reduced environmental impact. New emergency lighting is built to last, with fewer disruptions and more predictable performance.

THE KENT ELECTRICAL SOLUTIONS APPROACH

At Kent Electrical Solutions, our engineers are fully trained on BS 5266-1:2025 and the new European standards. We can audit your current system, design and install upgrades, and set up maintenance regimes that keep you compliant now and in the years ahead. Whether you need a compliance review, a full system overhaul, or just some practical advice, we've got you covered. Don't wait for an audit — or worse, an emergency — to discover your system isn't up to scratch.

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RAISING THE BAR

JAK'S NEXT STEP IN HIS APPRENTICESHIP



We're proud to share that Jak, our apprentice, is taking the City & Guilds 2391, widely regarded as the top qualification for electrical inspection and testing in the UK. This step is vital for electricians who want to independently inspect, test, and certify installations according to the latest standards. With new rules coming into effect in October 2026, having the 2391-51/52 qualification and relevant experience will be required for anyone carrying out Electrical Installation Condition Reports (EICRs), raising the bar for safety and professionalism across the industry.

Recent changes to the BS 7671 Wiring Regulations, published in April 2026, also mean stricter requirements for safety and compliance. By investing in advanced training for our team, we're making sure your installations are tested and certified to the highest standards.

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8TH FLOOR, 95 ALDWYCH

Work continues to move swiftly on the 8th Floor at 95 Aldwych, with several key milestones reached as our commercial fit-out takes shape. Our team is currently installing high-level containment to support the incoming lighting, air conditioning supplies, and fire alarm cabling. At the same time, we're relocating existing floor boxes to align with the revised office layout, ensuring power and data services will precisely match the needs of the finished workspace.



A major part of this phase includes the installation of new Cat6 data cabling throughout the floor. Cat6 is quickly becoming the standard in modern office environments, offering faster speeds, higher bandwidth, and a cleaner, more stable connection for everything from video conferencing to day-to-day business operations. As businesses continue to demand robust digital infrastructure, future-proofing with Cat6 delivers both performance and flexibility for years ahead.

The ceiling installations are clearing the way for our new lighting scheme. This will not only enhance aesthetics but also support the latest trends in office design, which emphasise comfort, flexible zoning, and lighting that feels more like home — elements that help boost productivity and employee well-being

Projects like this rely on seamless coordination between trades, site teams, and project management to keep everything on track and delivered safely, on schedule, and on budget. Effective project management ensures smoother execution, better communication among all stakeholders, and ultimately higher-quality results for our clients.



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