

LEVEL-HEADED

Experienced plumber, James Bushell
with his invention, 150 and Level



Professional Builder's Lee Jones talks to plumber James Bushell about an invention that is doing its level best for the trades.

Tradesmen up and down the land will know the feeling. They've become accustomed to using a particular product but have never quite been satisfied with its performance – the problem is there just isn't anything else available. What sets James Bushell apart is that he has committed himself to finding an answer and, with 12 years of plumbing experience behind him, his solution is focused firmly on the installer.

"There are already a number of shower plates on the market, and some of them are advertised for use when chasing out brickwork, but I've only ever been comfortable using them on studwork, to be honest," explains the Cheshire-based proprietor of Neston Complete Bathrooms. "Even then chasing the wall behind the pipework and making sure the pipes are bang on level and 150mm centred is not always easy. You find yourself trying to clip pipes while holding a level and a tape to get the accuracy, and that's made even worse when there's nothing to clip to but dry mortar joints.

Modern bar showers, and thermostatic mixer taps that are built into the wall, demand accuracy in the installation, with very little tolerance for anything less, and that's where 150 and Level idea was born as an idea."

James utilised his previous experience as a fitter and welder to fabricate some prototypes that would solve the problem



and was able to construct a rudimentary device with the help of his friend Kevin Owen that proved his concept's validity. "It started in my garage as a flat plate with the street elbows mig braised to the plate. Looking back on those early models, it was a terrible way to do it, but it's a testament to the original idea that it worked."

Time is a precious commodity for busy tradespeople and the real win with 150 and Level is in making levelling and centring a much easier and quicker proposition.

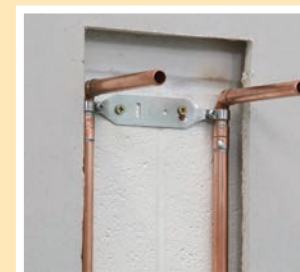
Bringing a new product to market is rarely straightforward, but James has moved from early prototype to full launch relatively quickly. Having partnered with experienced manufacturer, Paul Souber, who immediately believed in his idea, Plumbcraft Tools became a going concern, and its first product is 150 and Level. "When we searched the market to see if there was anything like it out there already, there was nothing, and we now have patent pending on the product. I'm convinced that it will become the solution of choice when you're looking for a shower plate."

Installation procedure

- ▶ Mark out the 200mm width and depth/height required for supply pipes to be installed.
- ▶ Cut plasterboard back to brick.
- ▶ Offer up bracket in position required and mark one hole and a vertical slot.
- ▶ Drill these marks with a 6mm masonry bit and insert plug fixing to suit.
- ▶ Screw plate to the wall checking for correct level, use vertical slotted hole to do this.
- ▶ Cut two small lengths of 15mm copper for forward feeds to shower.
- ▶ Cut two incoming supply pipes to required length from floor or ceiling.
- ▶ Clean and flux all 4 pipes, use two 15mm end feed couplers to connect the supply side and use short lengths for forward feed to shower.
- ▶ Solder all joints and clean off any remaining flux.
- ▶ Check the 150 centres of feed pipes in case of any movement. If required, slacken off the two fixing screws and adjust accordingly then retighten.
- ▶ Secure the incoming supply pipes were required.



- ▶ Proceed to add other finishes like tiling etc.
- ▶ Cut down the forward feed pipes to suit your fast fix kit usually around 25mm from finished surface mark holes and fix accordingly.
- ▶ Silicon seal around any holes in fast fix kit that will allow water ingress.
- ▶ Screw on chrome shrouds, flush out all pipework then fit your new thermostatic bar mixer shower or wall mounted tap.



"When you're running a busy plumbing business developing a product in your spare time is a big commitment and there's time when I'd wake up in the middle of the night, remembering something else I had to do," concludes James. "What has been very encouraging along the way is the feedback we've had from tradespeople I trust who I've shown the product to – everyone who's tried it has grasped what we wanted to achieve."

For further information on 150 and Level from Plumbcraft Tools visit www.rdr.link/BAC000 or @plumbcrafttools on Instagram were you will find an installation video and further details on how to become a stockist.


SEE IT...
SEARCH IT
...SHARE IT

**Professional
BUILDER**
BUILDING ■ FLOORING ■ PLUMBING ■ ROOFING
CARPENTRY ■ PAINTING AND DECORATING
ONLINE




Be Social...
join the conversation

 @PB_mag

 @probuildermag

 www.facebook.com/ProfessionalBuilder/

 www.probuildermag.co.uk