

## **‘Four Pillars of Plumbing Forum’**

### **Participation: Training requirements for Plumbing Industries**

### **‘UK Plumbing Framework and Training Requirements’**

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# WPC Four Pillars of Plumbing Forum

## Introduction to Mr George Thomson (second generation plumber)



## Introduction to the UK Plumbing Industry – UK – Four Nations



**Country Population (m) - 65,648,100**

England - 55,268,100

Northern Ireland - 1,862,100

Scotland - 5,404,700

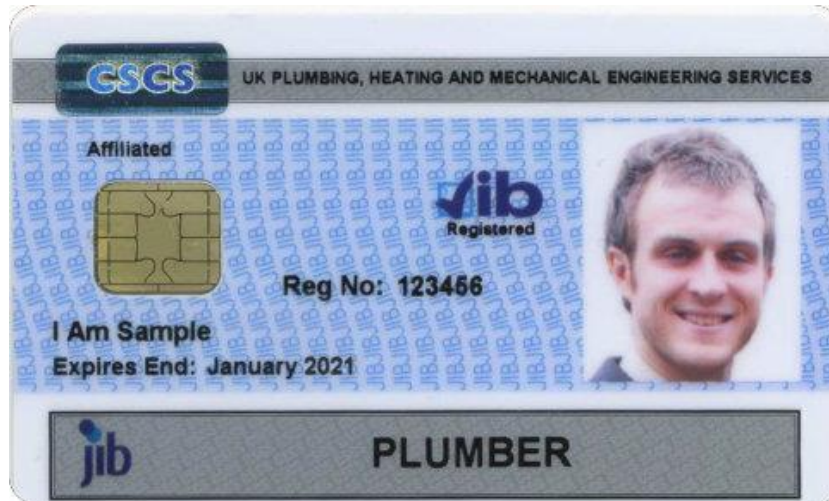
Wales - 3,113,200

## Introduction to the UK Plumbing Industry

- Approx. 80,000 plumbers working across the UK
- Majority of businesses are SMEs
- Require 3,000 plumbers qualified per year
- Scope of work (what's covered / what's not)

## Regulatory requirements

- No actual industry 'licence to practice' in place
- Lots of Health and Safety legislation



- Extensive Building, Water and Gas regulations
- Professional Trade Associations and Professional Bodies

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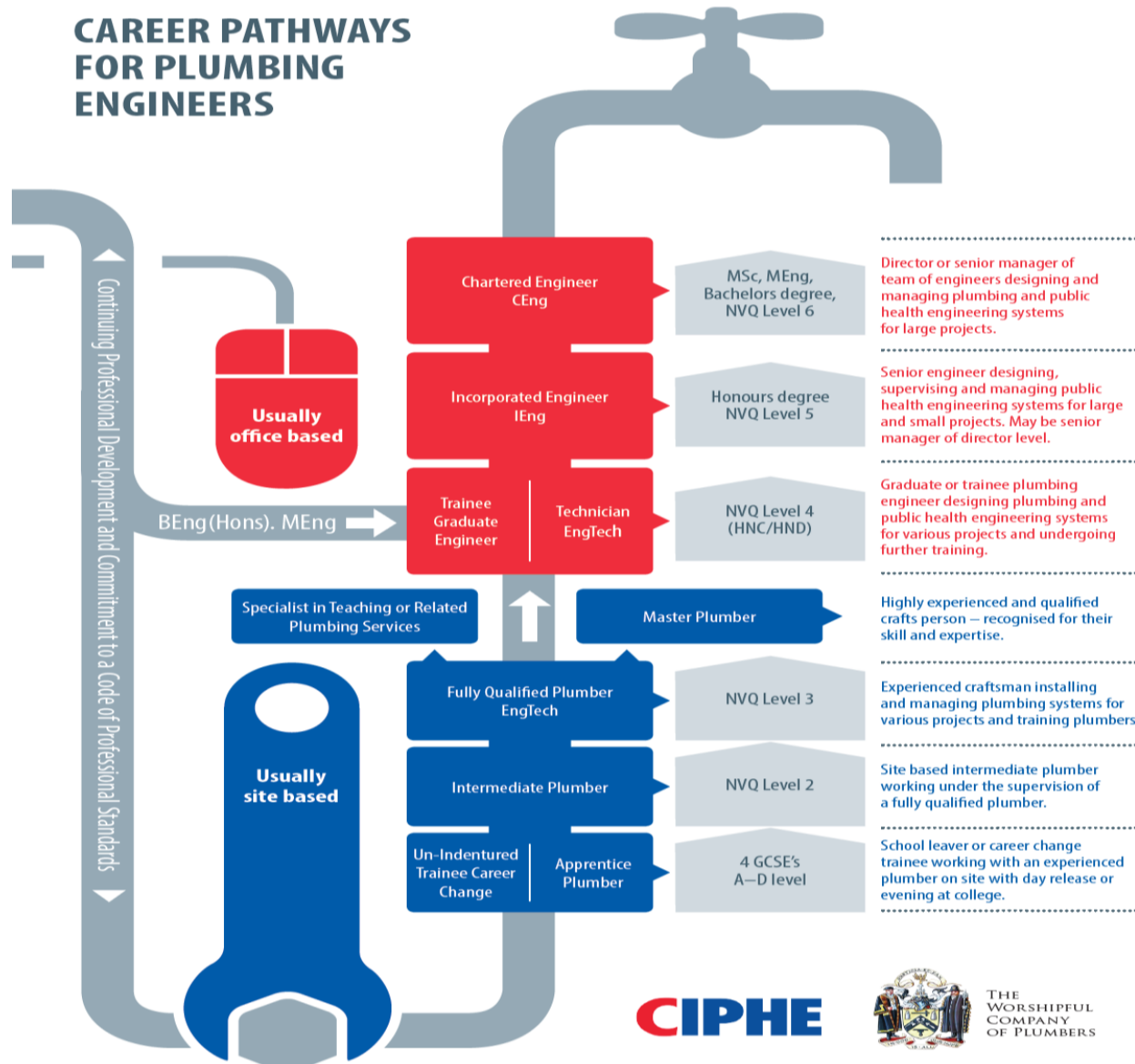
**Mr Kevin Wellman (CEO of CIPHE)**



## Entry and Training Pathways

- Employer-led Apprenticeships
- Day-release at College to provide off-the-job training
- 4 years the norm to get fully qualified
- Require 3,000 qualified plumbers a year
- Scope of work (what's covered / what's not)

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## Training and Assessment

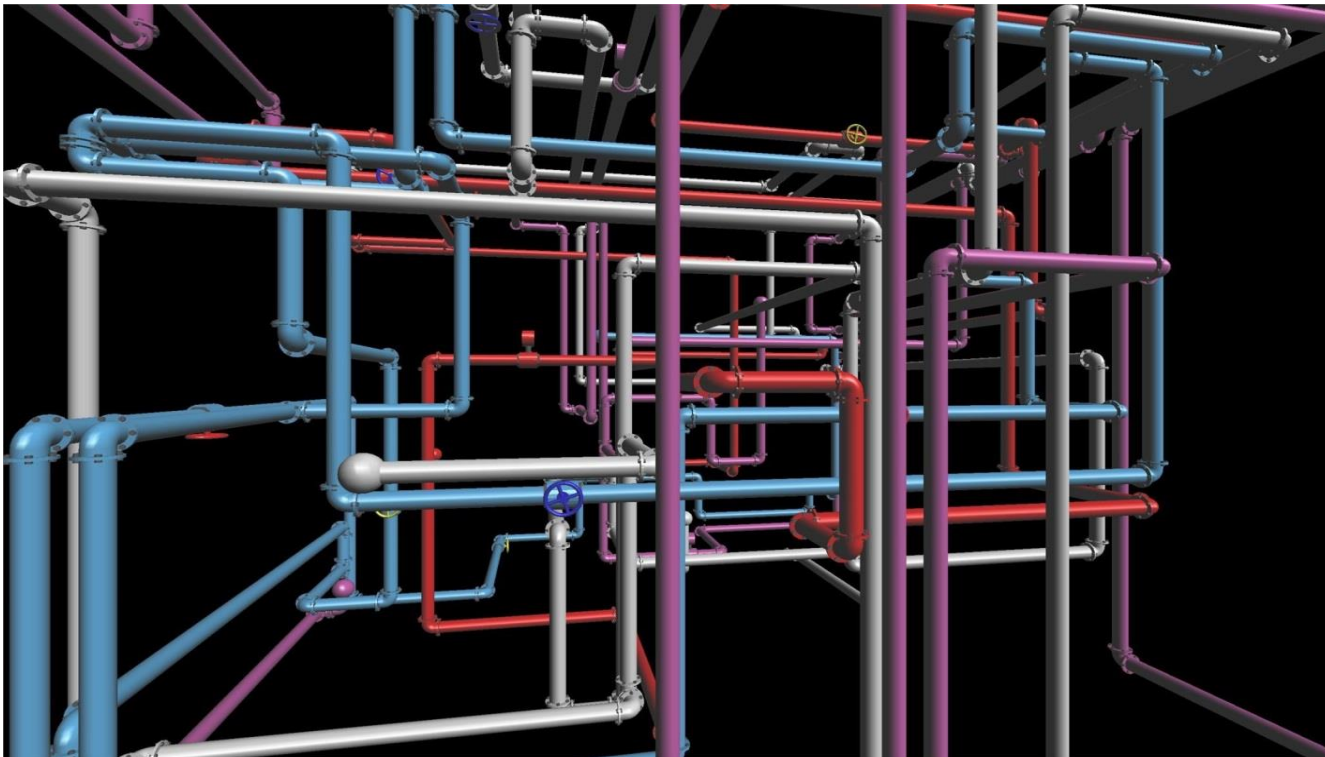
- UK wide employer derived National Occupational Standards
- Core knowledge and skills requirements
- Additional skills and knowledge requirements
- Work based evidence
- New Trailblazer Apprenticeship – End Point Assessment

## Continuing Professional Development

- Updating on new regulations, standards and procedures
- Technological advancements, e.g. for Renewable energy
- New product training via manufacturers
- Enhancing skills in other trade areas, e.g. electrical etc.
- Training and assessment in non-traditional fuel options, e.g. biomass boilers etc.

## Current challenges and industry wide solutions

Complex skills infrastructure / Lack of investment in training



## Current challenges and industry wide solutions

- DIY culture / lack of licence to practice
- The erosion of content and duration of apprenticeships
- Disparity between academic and vocational career options
- Inconsistencies across the four nations within the UK
- The Plumbing and Heating Skills Partnership (PHSP)

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## Charitable role in raising knowledge and skills overseas

BPEC life award and legacy funded projects

- South America (Nicaragua)
- Africa (Malawi, Uganda, Johannesburg and The Gambia)
- Eastern Europe (Moldova)

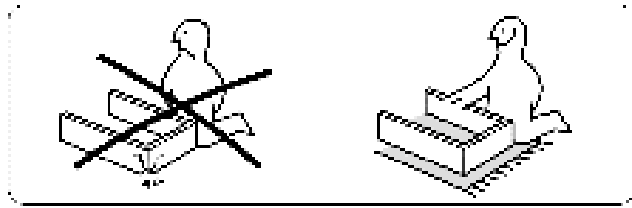
Key lessons and observations

- Big divide between academic and vocational occupations
- Different approach to teaching and learning

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## Charitable role overseas (key lessons and observations cont.);

- Ikea style of learning works well



- Appropriate and sustainable methods work the best



## Summary and conclusions

- Supportive of the four pillars of plumbing initiative
- One size fits all approach will definitely not work
- Appropriate support to under developed countries is essential
- Tapping into other international standards (WorldSkills)



## Any Questions?







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