



Press fitting solution is 'to the manor' born with >B<Press.

Background

Always keen to use the latest techniques, when Shaun Da Silva won the contract to replace an ageing heating system in a sprawling Surrey manor house, he chose press technology as the pipework jointing solution.

Products

His interest in a flame-free alternative to traditional brazing was sparked via social media and the growing popularity among other heating engineers and installers of this 'new' fast-to-fit and safer method.

Shaun, director and senior engineer at Dorking-based Heatworks Plumbing and Heating, partnered with Matt Lancley, of Hartswood Heating, for the install at the 12-bedroom, six-bathroom property in South Holmwood.

They used Conex Bänninger >B< Press copper fittings for the vast majority of the installation, which included removing two 30-year-old floor standing LPG boilers (50kW and 70kW) and replacing them with two 64 kW Vaillant boilers. "They were big old things," said Shaun.

It also involved reconnecting more than 50 radiators and extensive pipework runs in the 10,200 sq ft property.

Shaun said that at the time of the manor house job (September 2021), he'd been using press for just six weeks but had been won over by its benefits and advantages over brazing.

"I'd seen other guys using press on Instagram and as I like a tool and keeping up with the latest technology, I went for it," he said.

"It was like 'day and night'. It's so much quicker than soldering and it's safer, better for my health, with no fumes.

"There no hot works, so no forms as we wouldn't be burning anything and saying 'where's the heat mat?'"

No soldering

Another benefit of using press was not having to keep draining the system. "With 50 radiators above us there was no way we would want to have to keep draining the whole system down, which we would have done with soldering if there was a leak – there's no chance of soldering with water in the system," said Shaun.

"After we'd completed the whole preparation and set it all up, we went around and 'press,

press, press', we did the whole lot in 10 to 15 minutes between us."

A huge benefit of >B< Press fittings is that they create secure, permanent leak-free joints that are suitable for multiple applications, having one press either side of the bead and a third on the O-ring.

The fittings also have an unpressed joint indicator, so joints that are not completely secure can be easily identified. Shaun said he preferred the 'B' profile over the 'M' profile because of its innovative 3-point press, compared to two press points. He added: "With the exception of where we used compression fittings on the brass tails coming out of the two heat exchangers, we used >B< Press fittings throughout.

"The press tool is comparatively expensive, but all the benefits outweigh the cost, and with the faster speed at which you can complete installations, I believe it's paid for itself in those six weeks."