

My name is Joshua Eckett and I have been working as a building services Consultant for the past 7 years now from junior, through to graduate, to my current position of services Engineer with Buro Happold. I discovered building services really by accident whilst looking for a summer job before I went to University.



I was looking to study robotics and sociology when I had an interview for a job as a junior designer, so I took along a portfolio of the 3D design work I'd done at college using a software called Solidworks. "We don't do that sort of thing in this industry" my soon to be line Manager said. From that point to now I have been looking for a way to change that!

I've been working closely with the CIBSE South West Young Engineers Network now for over 2 years. In which time I have had the pleasure of holding the role of Vice Chair for around a year to date. I have been LCIBSE EngTech for around 9 months.

BECOMING A BUILDING SERVICES ENGINEER

What inspired me to become a building services engineer? This is a very difficult question to answer and through my work with YEN I have tried to identify

it. Knowing what inspired people like me would better inform the publications YEN send out. I was inspired from a very young age to build things. I enjoyed playing with Lego, Meccano and other such toys. I echoed this through school in Design and Technology and to a degree, Art and Design. At that age and at that point I wasn't really aware of Building Services or even Engineering as a principle. It wasn't until after College that I then had a better grasp on what these terms meant. As for inspiration in building services, I think this came with the realisation of the amount of research and development that is yet to be made. We are so very far behind the automotive and aeronautical industries.

MOST ENJOYABLE ASPECT OF MY JOB...

Umm... Getting paid? No... sorry, however satisfying it is being paid for what I do best, it doesn't hold a candle to the enjoyment I receive from a completed project. Having the opportunity to walk down the road and say "Yeah I had a hand in the construction of that...". There is also an element of leaving your mark on a project as well, having the opportunity to say "and if it wasn't for my team and I, that building wouldn't be as good as it is".

GREATEST PROFESSIONAL ACCOMPLISHMENT

This is also a hard question to answer, without meaning to sound too ostentatious there is a lot to choose from. Completed designs,

opportunities in YEN, solving site issues, out-smarting my peers, completing a part time degree whilst working full time? In truth the professional accomplishment I am most proud of is getting to where I am now with the opportunity to even be considering chartership at the age of 24. The youngest CEng Engineer in CIBSE is 26. I am by no means assuming I will achieve this, just working hard to do so.

ADVICE TO OTHERS THINKING ABOUT BECOMING A BUILDING SERVICES ENGINEER

Pick your education route carefully. Immerse yourself in BIM. Remember "a designers work is not complete when there is nothing more to add, but when there's nothing left to take away" [Antoine de St-Expurey]. People are not interested in massively complicated systems they don't understand and therefore don't want to control. Break it down into the component parts, keep it simple... Oh and physics is physics, you can't break the rules for anyone no matter how much they complain!



BECOMING LCIBSE, AT LEAST IN MY CASE, SHOWED MY EMPLOYER THAT I WAS WILLING TO GROW AND DESIRED TO DO SO.



APPLYING FOR LCIBSE

I saw LCIBSE EngTech as the next step forward in my career. In reality it helped me affirm, to my peers, my position as a design engineer. Before LCIBSE it was difficult to justify me working alone on projects to the client. At the time I only had a mere Btec National Diploma. Becoming LCIBSE, at least in my

case, showed my employer that I was willing to grow and desired to do so. It also made my peers review the structure they had in place to facilitate that growth, unfortunately to no avail. This became one of the reasons for me leaving my previous practice.

It can be a task trying to get all the information together for the application. The wealth of support on the website helps. I hear a lot of people complaining that their applications (Associate and Member) can only be granted twice a year.* Personally I think this makes the Institute more exclusive!



YOU CAN ALWAYS ASK YOUR REGIONAL COMMITTEE FOR HELP OR REQUEST A MENTOR. IF YOU FIND IT TOO DAUNTING TALKING TO THEM, YOUR YOUNG ENGINEERS NETWORK (YEN) ARE HERE TO HELP.



My advice to newcomers? Eh hmm... Firstly, keep it personal. Me, Myself and I. The L21 document is all about your achievements, not your office or teams'. Secondly, tell your "career story". At the end of the day someone has to read the document. Make it something worth reading with well-constructed sentences and don't fill it with bullet points. Thirdly, a picture speaks a thousand words! Don't plaster your document with them, but they are a great way of getting your point across and they add to your evidence! Finally, don't be shy, there are loads of people who have been through the same

process, if not in your office then in your regional committee. You can always ask your regional committee for help or request a mentor. If you find it too daunting talking to them, your young engineers network (YEN) are here to help.

HOW CIBSE MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS ME

As I have mentioned before, I saw CIBSE membership as the next step forward in my career and it helped me affirm my position as an engineer. It's a way of ensuring your responsibility on a project. If you have the "backing" of an institute it means you have the approval from a group of industry recognised professionals. This reassures people that know that you know what you are talking about. There is a social benefit to joining CIBSE with numerous CPD and talks held all year round and the annual dinner is always good fun. These events give you the opportunity to meet likeminded people and discuss with them your experiences. I would urge people looking to achieve LCIBSE to join your local YEN first.

GETTING INVOLVED IN CIBSE

I am the YEN Vice Chair for the South West Centre, a position I've had the pleasure of holding for a year now. In which time we have done some great activities! We tend to run a workshop every month, sometimes more. Socials are "limited" to four a year, mainly because they take a lot of time to set up! They are all centred around the fundamentals of building services engineering as well as the new ideas on the block, BIM for example. Just recently we invited a local expert from Buro Happold to provide a talk on the importance

of intelligent content and standardised shared parameters. We encourage the "silly questions" to be asked and explored, the questions you may feel it difficult to ask in the main CIBSE events!



I SAW CIBSE MEMBERSHIP AS THE NEXT STEP FORWARD IN MY CAREER AND IT HELPED ME AFFIRM MY POSITION AS AN ENGINEER. IF YOU HAVE THE "BACKING" OF AN INSTITUTE IT MEANS YOU HAVE THE APPROVAL FROM A GROUP OF INDUSTRY RECOGNISED PROFESSIONALS.



BUILDING SERVICES IS GREAT BECAUSE....

There is so much advancement to be made in this industry. The single biggest problem we face at the moment is our depleting energy reserves. To put it in perspective, roughly 40% of all the energy used in the UK at the moment is used in buildings. This is the largest "end-use sector", closely followed by transport (32%), industry (24%), and agriculture (2%). We as a nation have an obligation to reduce our carbon emissions by 80% by 2050. As the biggest end user of energy, buildings and building designers have a lot of work to do! ■

*please note that Licentiate applications can be accepted 6 times per year, please contact membership@cibse.org for guidance.