



Erol Tonguc installing triple glazed windows at a house in east Manchester

EROL TONGUC: JOINER

Why did you get into retrofit?

Quite by chance! I was a general joiner and hurt my back, so my employer put me on light duties. One of those duties involved checking for air tightness on a Passivhaus project.

I didn't know that type of work existed before, there was always a 'specialist' doing it. But I enjoyed the challenge of using tape and membrane to improve air tightness and now, as a self-employed subcontractor, I do a range of retrofit jobs. One week I might upgrade insulation in an attic renovation and the next I'll fit triple glazed windows.

Retrofit appeals to me because it's standards-based. I'm renowned for my attention to detail, I don't rush jobs, I'm methodical; it fits with my skill set.

What are the benefits of working in retrofit?

For builders and joiners, it's going to be more important to have the skills to do retrofit in the future. I genuinely think that it will become a standard thing, particularly with climate change and the push for renewable energy. There's going to be lots of demand for contractors with retrofit knowledge.

In our new contractor case study series, we ask builders, installers and trades how they got into retrofit. Find out about the benefits of working in eco-renovations and how you, too, could make the move.

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PEOPLE POWERED RETROFIT

MY ROUTE TO RETROFIT



I'm a general joiner and I dipped my toe into retrofit and built a business up, but lots of contractors still see it as a weird science. There's an air of elitism that needs to be broken down. We need to normalise retrofit. A lot of contractors would be interested if it was explained in a physical sense.

I know People Powered Retrofit are doing good work in this area - opening up retrofit, offering training and advice to contractors and connecting them with householders who want work done.

How do you find customers?

I get all my recommendations on sites, talking to other builders. The younger generation, who are more tech savvy, they're getting work through social media. That's a good way to find the householders who are most interested.

There is a lot of retrofit work out there and I think there are contractors who are interested in moving to this industry. We need to fish them out of the general building trade and give them the right training and insight.

I truly believe that in years to come, retrofit will become another mainstream branch of building with its own section in the Screwfix catalogue!

Want to work in retrofit? People Powered Retrofit can help. We support contractors to grow their skills and find customers.

Find out more:
retrofit.coop/network or
call 0161 820 1273

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