



Steve Tanswell
outside an external
wall insulation
project in Sandbach,
Cheshire

STEVE TANSWELL: INSUREND

Why did you get into retrofit?

I used to be a building site manager and one day, we were doing a barn conversion and some guys drove up in Range Rovers and announced they were the plasterers for the job. I thought, 'I'm missing a trick here' and ended up starting a plastering company with a friend.

We noticed builders saying to us, 'you've won the plastering job, but you need to do the rendering too.' They came hand in hand. On one rendering job we were using sand and cement, but we found a silicone render and it was so easy to put on.

Then we started to do insulated render where you add insulated panels to the front of a house and then render on top. This warms a home up and transforms how it looks.

I realised we'd found a gap in the market and set up Insurend. Being niche really helped us.

How do you find customers?

At first, I worked with other contractors, but things kicked off for us with householders a few years ago. I posted some before and after photos from a recent job on Facebook and ended up with 500 likes and 30 new business enquiries.

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.

"I posted before and after photos... and ended up with 500 likes."

PEOPLE POWERED RETROFIT

MY ROUTE TO RETROFIT



One of Steve's team applies external wall insulation

I decided that's where my marketing should be. Instagram is also good for us – people share and like and give us quotes. Now I post two to three jobs on social media every week and pay for some ads too.

I also do a lot of networking at BNI groups and in construction networks. They're a good way of making contacts and finding new business leads.

Not all customers are motivated by the ecological benefits. Some people want to save money on fuel bills, have warmer homes or just make their house look better. Retrofit ticks all those boxes.

What are the benefits of working in retrofit?

Every five or six years there's a new government policy around green homes. If you talk to a client about render and then mention a grant for external wall insulation they're often interested. I do believe the planet is facing a climate emergency and I want more people to get insulated render. Government funding helps with that.

But profit is also a big motivator. No builder will ever turn down money! We started off as a rendering company and then insulated render took off. Retrofit has helped me grow my business.

Find out more about Steve Tanswell and Insurend at: renderersmanchester.co.uk

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**“Retrofit has
helped me grow
my business.”**