

Why Rob's a really handy man to know

By NEIL HODGSON

ROB Millington's aim is to create an army of Handy Andys across the north west.

He realised the potential for reliable maintenance services when he was continually let down by tradesmen on the portfolio of 20 houses he had amassed over six years, renovated and rented.

"Three years ago I could not get a tradesman because they were all so busy," he says. "I was getting let down all the time and people weren't turning up."

"I was struggling to find handymen to work on my houses and that gave me the idea to start Dial a Handyman."

Three years ago, the property market was much rosier than today so he remortgaged his properties and he and his wife invested in a home maintenance venture, which Rob initially ran from his garden shed.

He revealed: "I put an advert in the ECHO and the phone never stopped ringing, so I realised I had to have a proper base."

Two years ago, he opened his Longmoor Lane premises opposite Kirkdale cemetery and now employs six handymen and two office staff, having branched out from his own properties into general repairs, which he has recently extended to commercial property maintenance after clinching a contract at the city centre's Silkhouse Court offices.

Rob was also mindful of offering opportunities to local tradespeople after claims that the influx of skilled Polish building workers

Small Firm of the Week

had hit the local labour pool.

All his staff are local, skilled and Criminal Records Bureau-vetted, which he says is an important reassurance for clients who range from pensioners to professionals at work all day.

He says: "We do everything from fixing a shelf to replacing a roof or installing a full kitchen or bathroom."

Rob says he feels it is essential to provide a professional service in order to distance themselves from 'cowboy' builders.

"All our work is guaranteed, unlike the one-man band who operates on a mobile phone which is thrown in the bin if there's a problem," he says.

"You get what you pay for and I want 'Job done right first time' to be our slogan."

He feels Dial a Handyman is the perfect format for franchising, adding: "My plan is that if we outgrow where we are to move to an industrial unit and franchise over the North West."



Biography

NAME: Rob Millington

AGE: 45

BUSINESS NAME: Dial a Handyman

QUALIFICATIONS: GCSEs, management diplomas

EXPERIENCE: Transport and courier network manager, property developer

FINANCE: Personal funding

HOW LONG IN BUSINESS: Three years

HANDY: Rob Millington of Dial a Handyman in Fazakerley

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