



CASE STUDY

**ALL INSURANCE  
IS THE SAME...  
UNTIL YOU CLAIM!**



Jo Pond has been selling Paymentsshield products for over 20 years now, but it's only after making a claim herself that she appreciated the full extent of the service.

**In December 2015, Jo returned to her family home in Plymouth to find her ensuite flooded. It was only a few days before Christmas and a problem with the mains pipe at the top of the road had caused a surge in water to come through the tap and force in the touch plug in the sink and flow onto the floor.**

"The tap hadn't been closed properly so the force of the water when it came back on shot the push activated plug down and allowed the water to gush past the over flow and flow on to the floor", she explains. "We were out at the time, but when we came back two hours later, the water was everywhere. It had gone from the ensuite into the bedroom, through the ceiling and into the lounge and dining room. Even the carpet on the landing was damp!"

Jo didn't realise the full extent of the damage at first. She managed to get a lot of water up using a carpet cleaner and thought it might not be too bad. But she was being overly optimistic. On closer inspection, it became clear that the water had seeped into the walls, ceiling and floorboards throughout the house. So she had very little option other than to contact her insurers.

### **ASSESSING THE DAMAGE**

As a financial adviser, Jo understands how home insurance works better than most. But she is quick to point out that it's very different when you're going through it yourself.

"I'd had a Paymentsshield policy for about 10 years", she reflects, "And I knew it was a good product because it's the one I recommend to my clients. But it was the first time I'd put in a claim myself and part of me was still a little apprehensive. Fortunately, everyone was amazing. Paula, the risk assessor from RSA, was wonderful, and to be honest, she noticed a lot of things we didn't... such as the damage to the fitted units in our bedroom. They didn't look too bad at first, but Paula pointed out that they would start to warp once the water dried out and sure enough a couple of days later, they did."

After a full assessment, it was clear that the house was going to need a considerable amount of work. Besides wrecking the carpets and units in the bedroom, water had got into the walls, ceilings and furniture throughout the lounge and dining room. Jo remembers that even the light fittings downstairs were damaged. "Funnily enough", she says, "the ensuite was the one room that wasn't really affected, because it was sealed by the floor covering. But there was damage everywhere else. It was horrific".

## PICKING UP THE PIECES

Jo was reassured that the repairs would be fully covered under her insurance policy and Paula took care of every last detail. She arranged for de-humidifiers for the house and approved a team to begin making the repairs as soon as it was dry. They started in early January and Jo was delighted with how quickly things moved along.

“There were two firms approved to carry out the work”, she recalls, “Rainbow and Renew. They were both brilliant. And we also got a quote from our own builders to do the bedroom, which was approved without a second thought. Paula managed everything on our behalf. She was so personable and understanding, and would even ring me at the weekends to make sure it was all going OK. RSA must have been dealing with all kinds of claims at the time, because it was when there were all those bad floods and storm damage. But she always made me feel like I was the main priority.”

In the end, it took just over 6 weeks for the majority of the work to be finished and by mid-February the house was almost as good as new. Jo tells us there wasn't a single hitch along the way. “I honestly couldn't have asked for a better service” she concedes. “There was no quibbling over details and they couldn't have been more accommodating. For example, the dining room chairs were damaged, but the table was fine, so they gave me the choice of replacing the chairs or having some money towards buying a complete new set. RSA even paid for the electricity that was used during the repairs – I wouldn't have dreamt of asking for that and I'm in the trade.”

## A NEW SENSE OF PERSPECTIVE

Despite hearing many good reports from her clients, Jo admits that she is still amazed at how smoothly the whole process panned out. “I think it's important to speak out when there is such a good service”, she asserts. “People are very quick to criticise insurance



companies when things go wrong, but having a Paymentsshield policy made it so easy.”

Since her claim, Jo has had plenty of time to reflect on her experience and it has given her more conviction than ever when it comes to recommending Paymentsshield products. She has always used real life examples to help sell home

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insurance in the past, but believes there's nothing quite as strong as telling clients that she's been through it herself.

“I mention it time and time again”, she confirms, “especially when they say they're looking to stay with their existing provider. The problem is, a lot of clients are cost led and take out cheaper cover that falls short in terms of benefits. Unfortunately, they only respect the claims process when they've been through it. But that's too late – you need

to think about it up-front. I talk to so many people who have had issues with the supermarkets and cheap insurance policies they find online. I tell them hand on heart that Paymentsshield aren't like that; that they surpass your expectations. And I think it makes a difference. I also point out that my premiums didn't go up the year after my claim (in this instance), which to be honest, was a pleasant surprise even to me.”

It's fair to say that Jo's claim has made her think long and hard about how important advice can be in the home insurance market. She's always been an advocate of giving clients a complete service, but now she's more convinced than ever. “I think advisers owe it to their clients to offer the whole bundle”, she reveals. “I understand that not everyone wants support with their home insurance, but advisers should at least offer. It's about looking after every aspect of a client's needs and becoming a one-stop-shop for their financial products. Plus the commission all adds up and it's a great way to build relationships – especially if you have a provider you can truly rely on... which I do!”

*Jo Pond is the owner of PIM Financial Services in Plymouth, which specialises in mortgages, mortgage protection and business protection products.*

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