

MEET Screwfix's Britain's Top Tradesperson 2019 - third generation roofer Darren McGhee.

Darren, 38, beat nine other worthy finalists in the competition, which is supported by the Daily Star, and waltzed off with the most coveted title in trade.

Plus he's bagged a £20,000 trade bundle prize - £10,000 of tools, £5,000 of tech and £5,000 to go towards future training.

Darren, from Coatbridge, North Lanarkshire, says: "I am over the moon. I can't express how happy I am and what a massive help this will be to take my business forward."

The roofer impressed our judges on many counts - most notably the care initiative he set up to protect homeowners and combat negative impressions of the industry.

After being horrified by shoddy work and hearing heart-breaking stories of customers being ripped off by cowboys in the trade, he thought long and hard about what he could do to prevent this.

The result was his MyRoofCare scheme - a plan which allows users to pay a monthly fee of £12.99 and in return, receive a twice-yearly inspection and gutter clean and £500 towards any necessary repairs.

His DMG Roofing & Building company already has 169 customers signed up to the plan and after being crowned Britain's Top Tradesperson 2019, Darren is expecting a flood of new business. He explains: "I took a year to come up with the idea and get it going but I hope it's really going to change the market.

"If you can pay £12.99 a month, get any problems fixed by a professional roof tiler and not have to worry about forking out thousands for repairs, what's not to love?

"The customer is happy and they will stay with me forever, so we are both winners."

Darren's passion for his trade was also a key factor in his win. And he has roofing in his blood - his father and grandfather were both in the trade.

"I used to go out with my father on a Saturday as a kid," he laughs. "I was only paid £5 a shift but I loved it.

“When we found out I had won, my dad text me and said: ‘I can’t believe what you have done for us and your family - I can’t stop crying.’

“Of course that set me off crying as well. All I ever wanted was to be the best roofer I could be.

“I think I won because everyone saw how passionate I was about my job and how I want to make changes for the better.

“I’ve put everything in and worked tirelessly to make myself the best - and now it’s paid off. It’s nice to have the reassurance I’m doing something right.”

Darren is also prepared to go the extra mile to help others - even when they’re not his customers.

After his wife spotted a Facebook post which had been put out by a woman who had been left with her roof in a bad way after work by other tradesmen, he stepped in to help.

“She was sceptical about accepting help because she felt tradesmen couldn’t be trusted,” says Darren. “But after three weeks I persuaded her to let me help.

“She lived an hour and 10 minutes from me and it took my squad and I three full days of work, but we ripped everything off the roof and replaced it all free of charge.

“When she saw it she, she started crying and couldn’t believe what we had done for her. For me it’s not always about money - I just wanted to instil a bit of faith into the trade.”

Darren was joined at the final by wife Kerry, 40, who was thrilled by his win. The pair have a two-year-old son Sonny and Darren is also stepdad to 16-year-old Cody.

So what next for Britain’s Top Tradesperson 2019? “I want to take on some apprentices and help youngsters who maybe don’t know what they want to do with their lives,” says Darren.

“I want to give them the best life I can like my father did for me. And I want to create a successful company, something I can pass on to my son in 20 years time. I want to give him something to be proud of.”

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