

RISE

Retrofit information,
support & expertise

Risk guidance for suppliers in retrofit

Supply chain advice pack

May, 2026

Funded by:



Department for
Energy Security
& Net Zero

www.riseretrofit.org.uk

Introduction

Retrofit delivery involves a wide range of **technical, operational, commercial and resident-related risks**. For suppliers operating across assessment, design, manufacturing, installation and logistics, understanding and managing these risks is essential to delivering **safe, compliant and high-quality outcomes at scale**.¹

This advice pack provides guidance for **retrofit suppliers** on identifying, understanding and mitigating common risks encountered during domestic retrofit programmes. It is designed to support organisations working under **PAS 2035:2023** and grant-funded programmes such as the **Warm Homes: Social Housing Fund and Local Grant**.²

The guidance focuses on **practical risk awareness and mitigation**, rather than contractual or legal matters, and is intended to complement existing PAS processes and organisational risk management systems.

What do we mean by risk in retrofit?

In a retrofit context, risk refers to **any factor that could:**

- Compromise resident and staff health, safety and wellbeing
- Lead to unintended technical consequences (e.g. moisture, overheating)
- Cause non-compliance with PAS 2035, PAS 2030 or funding requirements
- Result in programme delays, cost overruns or rework
- Damage trust between residents, clients and supply chain partners

Risk is not inherently negative. When identified early and managed appropriately, it can be **reduced, controlled or designed out**.

It is also important to recognise that some risks may sit **outside of a supplier's direct control** (for example political, regulatory, market or funding changes). While these cannot be eliminated, they should still be **anticipated, monitored and mitigated through contingency planning, communication and adaptive delivery approaches**.

Why retrofit carries elevated risk

Retrofit differs from new build and traditional maintenance due to several factors:

- Work is undertaken in **occupied homes**
- Existing buildings include **unknown or hidden conditions**
- Retrofit measures **interact with one another**

¹ BSI (2023), [PAS 2035 – Retrofitting dwellings for improved energy efficiency - Specification and guidance](#)

² The IAA (2025), [A guide to PAS 2035/2030:2023 standards](#)

- Outcomes depend on **occupant behaviour as well as installation quality**
- Delivery requires coordination across a **fragmented supply chain**

These factors mean that even well-intentioned interventions can introduce unintended consequences if risks are not properly managed.

Understanding the retrofit supply chain

Retrofit delivery typically involves a diverse and fragmented supply chain, with different types of suppliers carrying different risk profiles. This fragmentation is widely recognised as a key delivery challenge across UK retrofit programmes.³

Key supplier types include:

- Raw material suppliers (e.g. insulation materials, components)
- Product manufacturers (e.g. heat pumps, ventilation systems, windows)
- Installers and contractors
- Professional service providers (retrofit assessors, coordinators, designers)
- Logistics and distribution providers

Understanding how risk varies across these roles is critical to effective risk management.

Common categories of risk for retrofit suppliers

Technical risk (*primarily designers, installers and specifiers*)

Risks arising where measures are poorly suited to the building or installed without sufficient understanding:

- Moisture, condensation or mould growth
- Inadequate ventilation following fabric upgrades
- Thermal bridging or system incompatibility
- Over-reliance on modelled or assumed data

³ UK Green Building Council (UKGBC), [Building the Case for Net Zero: Retrofitting Retail and Logistics Buildings](#) | UKGBC

Poorly designed or installed retrofit measures can disrupt a building's moisture balance, increasing the risk of damp, mould and fabric damage. ⁴

Product and supply chain risk (manufacturers and suppliers)

Risks associated with products, materials and supply chains:

- Inconsistent product quality or manufacturing defects
- Products underperforming in real-world conditions
- Delays or shortages in supply
- Incorrect specification or substitution of products
- Lack of compatibility between different systems

Supply chain disruption and product inconsistency can directly impact programme delivery, quality, and compliance outcomes.

Health and safety risk (primarily installers and site-based roles)

Risks encountered during on-site delivery:

- Asbestos or hazardous materials
- Structural instability or building defects
- Working at height or in confined spaces
- Resident safeguarding concerns

Retrofit work introduces typical construction risks, particularly where existing buildings present unknown hazards. ⁵

Compliance risk (all suppliers)

Risks relating to failure to meet required standards:

- PAS 2035:2023 requirements
- PAS 2030 installation standards
- TrustMark requirements
- Funding and audit requirements

Examples include missing documentation, insufficient evidence, or unauthorised deviations from approved designs.

Compliance with PAS 2035 and PAS 2030 is mandatory for many funded programmes and forms the basis of quality assurance across the retrofit sector. ⁶

⁴ UK Government, [Resistance to moisture in buildings - GOV.UK](#)

⁵ Health and Safety Executive (HSE), [Construction - HSE](#)

⁶ TrustMark, [PAS 2030 certification checklist • TrustMark](#)

Commercial and programme risk (all suppliers)

Risks affecting delivery performance:

- Programme delays due to unforeseen conditions
- Late design changes or variations
- Cashflow pressures where agreed payment terms or timings do not align with delivery costs or programme realities
- Capacity mismatches across the supply chain

Resident-related risk (all customer-facing roles)

Risks arising from resident interaction:

- Access refusals or aborted visits
- Anxiety or disruption caused by works
- Misunderstanding of measures or outcomes
- Poor communication leading to complaints

Risk and the PAS 2035 process

PAS 2035 is fundamentally a **risk management framework**. It requires:

- Assessment to be proportionate to risk
- Professional judgement to be applied throughout
- Consideration of measure interactions
- Retention of evidence to demonstrate compliance

For suppliers, this means working within agreed scopes, avoiding assumptions, and escalating issues appropriately.

The role of suppliers in managing risk

Risk management is a **shared responsibility across the supply chain**. Suppliers play a critical role by:

- **Identifying and flagging risks early** where site conditions differ from expectations
- **Avoiding unauthorised design changes** or informal workarounds
- Providing **accurate and timely evidence** of works completed
- Working within **defined competence boundaries**
- **Collaborating effectively** with PAS roles and other suppliers

Raising risks early is a sign of good practice and supports better outcomes.

Practical risk mitigation measures by supplier type

Manufacturers and product suppliers

- Ensure products are **tested, certified and compliant** with relevant standards
- Provide **clear technical specifications and performance data**
- Issue **installation guidance and training**
- Clearly define **system compatibility requirements**
- Communicate **limitations, risks and appropriate use cases**

Installers and contractors

- Verify site conditions align with design assumptions before installation
- Follow approved designs and manufacturer guidance
- Stop work where required to maintain safety or compliance
- Ensure operatives are competent and accredited
- Maintain clear site records and photographic evidence

Professional service providers (assessors, coordinators, designers)

- Ensure assessments are proportionate and evidence-based
- Avoid over-reliance on assumptions or incomplete data
- Clearly communicate design intent, constraints and risks
- Review and approve any deviations from design
- Maintain robust documentation and audit trails

Logistics and supply chain providers

- Deliver the correct products on time and in suitable condition
- Maintain traceability of materials and components where required
- Communicate early where delays or substitutions may occur
- Prevent damage or degradation in storage and transport

Effective risk mitigation depends on coordination between all roles, rather than isolated action.

Common escalation triggers

Suppliers should escalate issues where encountered, including:

- Unexpected damp, mould or building defects
- Unclear or insufficient ventilation provision
- Suspected hazardous materials
- Resident distress or safeguarding concerns
- Design solutions that appear impractical on site

Risk sharing and collaboration

No single organisation can manage retrofit risk in isolation. Effective risk management depends on:

- Clear communication between all parties
- Defined roles and responsibilities
- Agreed escalation routes
- Mutual respect for professional judgement
- Continuous learning across programmes

Collaborative delivery reduces risk and improves outcomes.

Key success factors

Successful retrofit suppliers typically:

- Understand PAS 2035 as a **risk-based process**
- Invest in **training and competence development**
- Communicate openly with delivery partners
- Prioritise **resident experience alongside technical quality**
- Maintain clear **documentation and audit trails**
- Continuously improve through **feedback and learning**

Summary

Retrofit delivery involves inherent technical, operational and human risks. For suppliers, understanding these risks - and their role in managing them - is essential to delivering **compliant, high-quality retrofit at scale**.

By working collaboratively, following PAS processes, and managing risks proactively, suppliers can help ensure **safe, effective and trusted retrofit outcomes for residents and clients**.

Resources



Podcast: All RISE podcasts are available [here](#).

EDI podcast: “The importance of coaching” available [here](#).



Masterclass: All RISE masterclasses are available [here](#).

EDI masterclass “EDI – what does it mean in retrofit programmes” available [here](#).



Advice pack: All RISE advice packs available [here](#).

EDI Advice pack: “Internal Wall Insulation – Assessing and Design” available [here](#)).



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