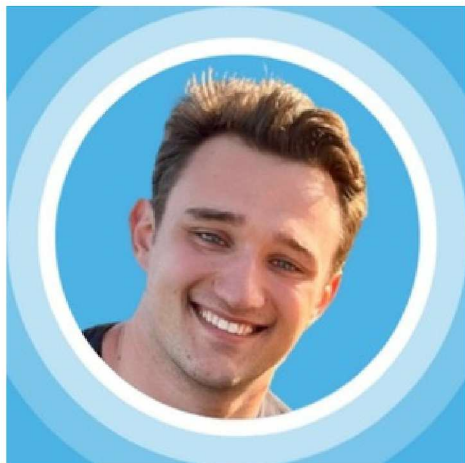


# From stocks and shares to a career in residential surveying

## Daniel Knight AssocRICS

Sava graduate, residential building surveyor and owner of HomeScan Surveyors.



### What was your background before moving into residential building surveying?

I was what's known as a Day Trader from the age of 17 to 23 – a fast-moving role selling stocks and shares. On paper it sounds great, but I found it quite unfulfilling as a day-to-day job and decided I wanted a real career where I interacted more with people. I'd always had an interest in property, so I made the move into estate agency and sold houses for a short time.

### What made you consider surveying as your next career move?

I stumbled across residential surveying while working as an estate agent and it made me realise that I was much more interested in the buildings themselves as opposed to just the selling. I knew I didn't want drop my life and spend years at university, and after a bit of Googling to find out what my options were, I came across Sava. I attended an open day to find out more about the qualification and the rest is history.

### Why did you choose Sava as your training route into the profession?

The Sava route into surveying was shorter than university, I could still work part time while I studied, and it promised Associate membership with the Royal Institution of Chartered

Surveyors (RICS) once I qualified, which was very exciting. I was specifically interested in residential property, so the Sava diploma was perfect for me – I didn't have to waste time studying other areas of surveying that didn't interest me, which I would have had to do at university. All in all, the Sava diploma ticked all my boxes by providing a more focused and streamlined training experience than I could get at university.

### How did you find the learning experience with Sava?

The pace of the first year was great. I loved the in-person training days and can say that I really enjoyed it. Year two, the assessment phase of the qualification, was more of a challenge, but I was highly motivated and consequently managed to complete assessment in just five months. I really had to push myself and was lucky enough to find work with another surveyor during my first year to get some experience, which I think really helped my progress.

It can feel quite scary going from your scheduled training days to suddenly being in control of your own assessment portfolio. I felt lucky to have only been working part time while completing this part of the qualification – it definitely helped me progress quicker than expected.

### What was the highlight of the course for you and why?

Absolutely the in-person days. The lecturers were great fun and made everything interesting. They were the days where I really learned the most. The reading and theory was great for understanding the basics, but the practical experience is what you need to contextualise it all. I'm self-employed now and would love to go back and pick the brains of the experts having now had some time to really get stuck into the industry.

### How well do you feel the course prepared you for life as a surveyor?

The course made a conscious effort to include every aspect of surveying

– not just the technical side, but the also the people side of things. It's not all about the surveys, it's about the client experience, how to send client letters, all of the admin behind working as a surveyor. This prepared me well for going it alone as an independent surveyor. My role now is all about the people, providing good communication, and building excellent client relationships. I was also working part time for a surveyor who had also set up by himself, so I had a good role model.

### What have you been up to since qualifying?

After a short time supporting another surveyor, I decided it was time to go it alone and successfully set up my own business at the beginning of January 2024.

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HomeScan, based in Bedford, may still be in its infancy, but my diary is full and I spend most of my days conducting Level 2 and Level 3 surveys. Things did start out slow, but it worked out in my favour because it gave me a chance to get all my systems and processes set up properly and to work on lead generation. I'm now swamped!

### What has been the proudest moment of your surveying career so far?

Graduating from the Sava programme is definitely up there as it has opened so many doors and I now have this amazing new career. It's also a proud moment starting your own practice and I'm excited to see where this leads. I've recently started studying for a Master's in Business which I intend to use to help me grow HomeScan in the future, so I'm working towards more great moments ahead.

# From stocks and shares to a career in residential surveying (CONT'D)

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## What advice would you give to the next generation of Sava learners?

It's a marathon not a sprint – your first in-person days can feel very overwhelming with talk of building regulations and other technical subjects, but it all comes together with time. Things are repeated a lot during the course so there's opportunity for it to sink in.

Before you enrol, just be certain that the residential pathway is the one for you, because that's the focus.

A big part of the satisfaction as a surveyor comes from helping people to move house – or indeed saving someone from buying a house with lots of expensive flaws. If you enjoy helping others, you'll enjoy the role.

## Would you recommend the Sava diploma to others?

Yes, and I would particularly recommend it to anyone who doesn't want to be sitting at a desk all day. It's a profession that provides the perfect balance of being at home/in the office and being out and about visiting properties.

## Do you feel like the course has provided value for money?

It's definitely good value for money – I truly learned a lot. You're not just paying for a qualification; you're paying to become part of a profession and there's huge value in that. It's great to be a member of an industry where you have

a set of skills that people are willing to pay you for – something you're specifically qualified to do that the average person can't. There's the potential to make really good money, so it's a worthwhile investment in my eyes.

## What does the future look like for you?

My ultimate goal is to grow my firm, but I want to do it in a way that empowers surveyors. I see a lot of surveyors working very hard and completing multiple surveys every day, whereas I truly think you can reap the rewards without pushing yourself so hard. I want to build a supportive firm that offers a decent work/life balance. For now, though, it's about building a good reputation for my business so that I have a great foundation to build upon in the future.

Discover  
Sava's  
surveying  
diploma

