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**Get in early for home improvements:
Booming business and bulging diaries for UK tradesmen**

- **Nearly half (42%) of UK tradesmen are busier than expected and nearly one in five (17%) face more work than they can handle**

UK tradesmen's diaries are getting full up, with many expecting to get even busier over the next 12 months according to new research recently released by leading multi-channel retailer, Screwfix.

Nearly half (42%) of all plumbers, electricians, builders, carpenters and other tradesmen questioned in Screwfix's *Trade Pulse* report were surprised by how busy they were. With nearly one in five (17%) saying they already have more work than they can handle and even more (58%) expecting their business activity to increase over the next 12 months.

It seems this expectation is well-founded, with more than one in three (38%) tradesmen providing more quotes than this time last year. The vast majority (82%) are currently working on projects with more work scheduled – this compares to 73% who were in the same position in 2013 and 68% who said they were being kept busy two years ago.

Not only does the research reveal that tradesmen are increasingly optimistic about their own workload, but it also demonstrates how they feel about the general economy, with more than half (58%) confident that it will continue to improve over the next 12 months.

Andrew Livingston, CEO of Screwfix, commented: "We have seen increasing optimism among our trade customers for some time now, so these latest findings support what we've been experiencing. The fact that nearly one in five tradesmen are saying they have more work than they can handle represents potential growth across the industry, as well as increasing employment opportunities in all sectors, which is great news for the UK economy.

It also means that the industry as a whole needs to consider how it can better support tradesmen in helping them to grow their businesses at this time of opportunity.

“We know our customers are busy and time is money, that’s why we’re working hard to make things easy for them so they’ve got more time on the job; like our mobile site, which provides tradesmen with the opportunity to take advantage of our five minute Click & Collect service whether they are on site or in their van.”

Business is also booming for Screwfix, with the retailer recently announcing that its sales are up 23.5% so far this year; another sign that UK tradesmen are getting busier.

Screwfix *Trade Pulse* is a monthly index which surveys more than 500 UK tradesmen and tracks work levels and optimism among the trade.

For more information on Screwfix, visit www.screwfix.com, call 0500 41 41 41 or mobile-friendly on 03330 112 113.

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Note to editors

About Screwfix:

Screwfix is part of Kingfisher plc, Europe’s leading home improvement retail group and the third largest in the world www.kingfisher.com. Screwfix is recognised as being “where the trade buys” offering a straightforward and transparently-priced retail experience that enables busy tradesmen to shop 23,000 products over the phone, online, via their mobile or from their local store.

- From power tools and workwear to cables and pipe fittings, more than 11,000 products are available to pick up from the national network of over 344 stores. A further range of over 10,000 products can be ordered over the phone, online or from a local store for next day delivery, with orders taken up until 7pm to home or site.
- Screwfix.com attracts 1.5 million visitors per week and the Screwfix Click & Collect service means customers can conveniently purchase supplies online (or over the phone) and then collect from store just five minutes later.
- Customers can call the UK-based Screwfix Contact Centre 7 days a week (including bank holidays) from 7am – 9pm Monday – Friday and 8am – 6pm Saturday-Sunday on 0500 41 41 41, or on the mobile-friendly 03330 112 112.

- All of our 340+ stores are open 7 days a week and from 7am Monday to Friday, making sure we are ready when our customers are.
- 94 per cent of customers would recommend a friend to Screwfix.

PRESS information:

For more information, please contact:

Laura Westcott, McCann Public Relations, Tel: 0121 713 3768

Laura.westcott@mccann.com

Rachel Tillman, McCann Public Relations, Tel: 0121 713 3593

rachel.tillman@mccann.com