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## BRITAIN SHEDS THE TRADITIONAL HOUSE EXTENSION IN FAVOUR OF OUTBUILDINGS

- Screwfix estimates that the number of back garden sheds and log cabins now outstrips the number of households in the UK

Lower construction costs, fewer planning restrictions and the growth of homeworking are creating a buoyant market for outbuildings, sheds, log cabins and garden offices according to tradesmen polled by Screwfix.

Analysis of Google Earth images of suburban streets throughout the UK carried out by Screwfix suggests that there may be as many as 30 million outbuildings in Britain, eclipsing the total number of UK households.

Sales of sheds are booming as economy-minded households have met their living space expansion needs via lower-cost outbuildings.

Screwfix has sold thousands of high quality sheds and log cabins in the last four months, on some days at the rate of one every two minutes. Screwfix sales in the last four months alone have created around 90,000 square metres of additional garden living and working space. In May, Screwfix sold four times the number of sheds it had sold in March, reflecting the accelerating trend.

Alex Johnson, shed expert and author of the newly-published book 'Shedworking', said: "Sheds feed into the pioneering instincts in all of us. There is something about having a log cabin in the wild. Whilst most British gardens can't really compete with the Wild West nor our pets with Wilderbeast, there is a lot to be said for getting away from the bricks and mortar – and in my view that's why sheds are so popular."

"Our tradesmen are telling us that their customers are investing in sheds, log cabins and other outbuildings as a way of increasing the size of the domestic living space," said John Mewett from Screwfix. "Our study of Google Earth images across the UK confirms just how many



outbuildings there are in the UK these days of all shapes and sizes. We estimate that there are more sheds than homes, possibly for the first time ever."

Neither Planning Permission nor Building Regulation approval is required provided that:

- Sheds and greenhouses do not cover more than half of the area of the garden; not including the area occupied by the house.
- It contains no sleeping accommodation and the floor area does not exceed 15 square metres.
- No point is less than one metre from a boundary.
- It is not more than 3m high for a flat roof, or 4m with a ridged roof.
- No part projects beyond any wall of the house that faces a road.
- The outbuilding is for use only by those who occupy the house.

Building Regulations do state that structures built of combustible material (i.e. a wooden shed) must be at least 2 metres from the main house.

**ENDS**

#### **About Screwfix**

Recognised as being "where the trade buys" and promising a fast, reliable service, Screwfix is the UK's leading multi-channel supplier of thousands of high quality screws, fixings, hand tools, power tools, plumbing and electrical supplies. Combining trade prices and a massive range of leading brand name items, Screwfix offers over 18,000 products and is fully committed to customer care and support. Each item is supplied with a 30-day money-back guarantee and can be accessed 7-days a week via a call to Freephone 0500 414141, a click onto [screwfix.com](http://screwfix.com), or a visit to one of the growing UK network of Trade Counters (full address details can be found at [www.screwfix.com/tradecounters](http://www.screwfix.com/tradecounters)).