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**CARPENTER FROM BOURNEMOUTH JOINS BUSINESS SECRETARY FOR
LAUNCH OF APPRENTICE GUIDE**

Local carpenter, James Ling from Bournemouth, joined the Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) at a Screwfix store in Brixton on 25 February to launch a new guide created by the retailer to help tradespeople understand how easy it is to hire an apprentice.

The free booklet is available in Screwfix stores across England and entitled '*Your Guide to Hiring an Apprentice*'. It was released by Screwfix in conjunction with BIS in response to recent research* revealing that tradespeople want an increase in the availability of skilled workers through the encouragement of apprenticeships, plus help in understanding how to take apprentices on.

The easy-to-use, free information source is designed to expose many of the myths surrounding apprenticeships. As a pocket-sized guide, it includes everything those in the trade need to know in bite-size chunks – from the benefits of taking on an apprentice, to where to go first and the help available.

Screwfix has released the guide in response to feedback from its trade customers and the findings of its *Tradesman Manifesto**, which highlighted that more than three quarters of UK tradespeople want the Government to raise the number of apprenticeship places from 110,000 to 400,000 and encourage as many school leavers to take up apprenticeships as go to university. Many of the plumbers, electricians, builders, carpenters and other tradespeople questioned by the Screwfix poll have little or no experience of taking on apprentices, with only 14% having employed one in the last year.

Andrew Livingston, CEO of Screwfix, comments: “As a key supplier to the trade, we’re always looking for ways to support UK tradespeople in growing their businesses - from enabling them to get the right products at the right time to finding out and helping to address the issues that matter most. We understand how vital apprentices are as the future lifeblood of the trade, but it’s clear from what our customers are telling us that more needs to be done to simplify the process of hiring one.

“We have developed this guide to help tradespeople who have little or no experience of apprentices. Whether they’re looking to find out a bit more about who to hire an apprentice through, or the financial support available to them to help with taking one on, we encourage interested tradespeople to pick up their free guide from one of our stores in England now.”

Business Secretary Sajid Javid, adds: “Business has always been part of my life, and I know how hard it can be to succeed and find the right people for the job. This guide will be an essential tool to help the trade to plug the skills gap by finding and developing the next generation of skilled tradesmen and women and realising our goal of creating 3 million apprenticeships by 2020.”

James Ling finishes: “It was fantastic to be asked to launch this new guide alongside Screwfix and the Business Secretary. As a recently qualified apprentice, I know how important it is to find the right placement, and having this guide for tradespeople really helps to cut through the red tape associated with hiring an apprentice – hopefully it will make life easier across the trades.”

To download a copy of the guide, visit www.Screwfix.com/apprenticeguide



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*Screwfix *Tradesman Manifesto* is a survey of more than 600 UK tradespeople undertaken to understand what is important to them and how they are reacting to the constantly changing economic and technological landscapes.

About Screwfix:

Screwfix is part of Kingfisher plc, an international home improvement company which operates nearly 1,200 stores in 10 countries in Europe. For further information go to 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 26,000 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 458 stores. A further range of over

15,000 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 2.2 million unique 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 24 hours a day, 7 days a week (including bank holidays) on 03330 112 112.
- All 458 stores are open 7 days a week and from 7am Monday to Friday.
- 9 out of 10 customers would recommend Screwfix to a friend.

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