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SCREWFIX PARTNERS WITH SCOTTISH MINISTER FOR EMPLOYABILITY AND TRAINING TO HELP TRADESPEOPLE HIRE APPRENTICES

A new guide has been launched by Screwfix to help tradespeople understand how easy it is to hire an apprentice.

The Minister for Employability and Training, Jamie Hepburn, visited a Screwfix store in Edinburgh on 6 July to launch the guide.

The free booklet is available in Screwfix stores across Scotland and is entitled '*Your Guide to Hiring an Apprentice*'.

The booklet was developed with national skills body – Skills Development Scotland – who pay a contribution towards the cost of training apprentices.

It was released by Screwfix in conjunction with the Minister for Employability and Training in response to 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 released the guide in response to feedback from its trade customers. 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.

Graham Bell, Operations Director of Screwfix comments: “As a key supplier to the trade, we’re always looking for ways to support 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 31 stores in Scotland now.”

Minister for Employability and Training Jamie Hepburn said:

“Modern Apprentices make a real contribution to the Scottish economy, apprenticeships offer our young people better career prospects and have a positive impact on the businesses and industry, bringing value to both employers and the economy. The Scottish Government has supported nearly 200,000 MAs since 2007 and we surpassed our target to deliver 25,500 modern apprenticeships in 2015/16. We are determined to keep growing the number of opportunities for people to secure a Modern Apprenticeship and by 2020 will be delivering 30,000 places.”

Chris Brodie, SDS, Lead Head of Key Sector Development from Skills Development Scotland said: “This guide sets out the simple steps you can take to hire an apprentice with the support of Skills Development Scotland (SDS).

“Three quarters of employers said that providing apprenticeships improved productivity, while nine out of ten employers would recommend apprenticeships to their industry.

“If you and your company are thinking about taking on an apprentice then the help is there.”

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

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Note to editors

About Screwfix:

Screwfix is part of Kingfisher plc, a home improvement company with over 1,100 stores in 10 countries in Europe, Russia and Turkey. 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 work wear to cables and pipe fittings, more than 11,000 products are available to pick up from the national network of over 465 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.
- UK 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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