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**December 2017**

**Screwfix invests in the future of trade with new course and purpose-built construction centre at Yeovil College**

Leading trade retailer, Screwfix, has partnered with Yeovil College to launch a pilot course covering core construction skills for year 10 and 11 pupils. The course aims to educate young people about a successful future in the trade before leaving school.

The Screwfix Construction Trade Academy course has launched at a time when there is a widely reported construction skills gap and is believed to be the first of its kind in the UK. The 16 students studying the course will learn the foundations of bricklaying, plumbing, carpentry and electrical contracting.

The Screwfix Construction Trade Academy course is City & Guilds qualified and will see the students gain valuable skills, as well as adding to their GCSEs and help towards gaining an apprenticeship after leaving school.

As part of Screwfix’s commitment to support the future of construction, the retailer has also invested in a new purpose-built site at the College. Work has started on the new ‘Screwfix Trade Skills Centre’ which will see the students benefit from a dedicated space, specifically designed to meet the needs of the future tradespeople training there. The centre will open in December and features two state-of-the-art work training areas, which have been designed to enable Yeovil College to meet the needs of its local and regional industries. With each training area having the capacity to train up to 20 students/apprentices at any one time, the students will attend the college for half day weekly sessions to give them a taster of life in the trades.

Graham Smith, Marketing Director at Screwfix, comments: “Our trade customers tell us how busy they are but that they also struggle to recruit skilled labourers and don’t always find it easy to hire apprentices. The skills shortage facing the construction trades is widely talked about, therefore the partnership with Yeovil College is one of the ways we’re supporting tradespeople and playing a small part in protecting the future skills supply in construction, while demonstrating how interesting and rewarding a career in the trade can be.

“We’re looking forward to the opening of the site and seeing how the students progress on the course. We wish them all the best!”

John Evans, Principal at Yeovil College, adds: “It’s great to have the support of Screwfix for our new construction skills course and purpose-built skills centre. It is important we train young people in the area to ensure there is no local skills gap, and this centre will go some way towards this. We believe the new students will learn the foundations for a career in the construction trade and we hope they find the opportunity rewarding.”

In addition to its work with Yeovil College, Screwfix also offers support to the future of the trade through its annual Trade Apprentice competition, a nationwide search for the brightest apprentices. The campaign will return early in 2018. Screwfix also helps tradespeople overcome some of the perceived barriers associated with taking on an apprentice by offering ‘Your Guide to Hiring an Apprentice’; a bitesize booklet available for free online at Screwfix.com.

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**Note to editors**

**About Screwfix:**

Screwfix is part of Kingfisher plc, the international home improvement company, with nearly 1,200 stores in 10 countries in Europe, Russia and Turkey. For further information go to [www.kingfisher.com](http://www.kingfisher.com).

Screwfix is convenient, straightforward and affordably-priced, helping its trade customers get the job done quickly, affordably and right first time. Tradespeople can shop 29,000 products over the phone, online, via their mobile or in-person from their local store.

* From power tools and work wear to cables and pipe fittings, Screwfix offers over 11,000 products available for pick up from over 530 stores nationwide. Our full range of over 29,000 products can be ordered over the phone, online or from a local store, with orders taken up until 8pm (weekdays) for next day delivery to home or site.
* Screwfix.com attracts 2.6 million unique visitors per week.
* The Screwfix Click & Collect service means customers can conveniently purchase supplies online or over the phone and then collect from the store in as little as one minute.
* 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, from 7am – 8pm Weekdays, 7am – 6pm Saturdays and 9am – 4pm Sundays. Excludes selected stores. See [www.screwfix.com/stores](http://www.screwfix.com/stores) for details.
* 9 out of 10 customers would recommend Screwfix to a friend.
* Screwfix was voted the 5th highest rated UK company for work-life balance by Glassdoor Employees' Choice Awards in 2016.
* Screwfix was awarded Glassdoor’s Best Places to Work in 2017.
* Screwfix was awarded Retail Week’s Multichannel Retailer of the Year in 2017.
* In 2016, Screwfix sales surpassed £1bn for the first time.
* Screwfix was awarded 2nd place in Retail Week’s Best Employer Rankings in 2017.
* Screwfix was awarded South West Contact Centre Forum’s Large Contact Centre of the Year Award in 2017.
* For more information about Screwfix please visit our media centre: [www.screwfixmedia.co.uk](http://www.screwfixmedia.co.uk)

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