

**October 2017**

**SCREWFIX PARTNERS WITH THE WELSH GOVERNMENT TO HELP TRADESPEOPLE HIRE APPRENTICES**

A new guide has been launched by Screwfix to help tradespeople in Wales learn more about how easy it is to hire an apprentice.

The Minister for Skills and Science, Julie James, visited the Screwfix store in Newport, Gwent on 12 October to launch the guide.

The free booklet is available in Screwfix stores across Wales and is entitled ‘*Your Guide to Hiring an Apprentice’.*

The booklet was developed with Welsh Government who are supporting Screwfix in the venture.

The guide was released by Screwfix in conjunction with the Minister for Skills and Science in response to research revealing that tradespeople want an increase in the availability of skilled workers through the encouragement of apprenticeships, plus more information about how to take on apprentices.

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 34% saying they have ever employed an apprentice.

Graham Smith, Marketing Director of Screwfix, comments: “As a key supplier to the trade, we’re always looking for ways to support tradespeople in growing their businesses. We know how busy our customers are and from their feedback, we also know that they struggle to recruit skilled tradesmen and women. It was very clear that something needed to be done to help, which is why we have developed this guide and we’re excited to launch it in Wales.

“The guide will help tradespeople who have little or no experience of apprentices, whether they’re looking to find out about the best available route, or the financial support available to them, it’s all covered in the booklet. We encourage interested tradespeople to pick up their free guide from one of our stores in Wales now.”

Minister for Skills and Science, Julie James, said: “Developing skilled tradespeople is vital for our economy. Apprenticeships offer our young people better career prospects, as well as having a positive impact on the industry. Apprentices bring value to both employers and the economy.

“With more and more employers across Wales recognising the value of successful apprenticeship programs, it’s a really great time to launch the guide to help tradespeople understand just how simple it can be to hire an apprentice.”

**PRESS** information:

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**Ends -**

**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)