

THIS WILL BE RELEASED ON 25th SEPTEMBER 2006

New Centre to Boost Britain's Multi-billion Self Build and Renovation Market

A new centre dedicated to helping people build their own dream homes or undertake major renovations projects is set to open in Swindon in January 2007.

The National Self Build and Renovation Centre will bring together all the products, services and advice required for self build or renovation under one roof for the first time. The Centre is the brainchild of **BuildStore**, the pioneering self build and renovation experts.

With an estimated 20,000 people building their own new homes in Britain each year¹, self builders are now the country's leading developer, outstripping even the biggest commercial house builders and creating an estimated £6.6bn worth of new homes². Renovation projects are also on the rise too with 42% of homeowners looking to renovate or extend their properties³. Last year alone over 300,000 applications for residential planning permission were submitted⁴.

The 67,000 sqft National Centre will help visitors through every step of the self build or renovation journey, from finding a plot right through to completing their project and moving into their dream home. Key features will include:

- An Educational Zone allowing visitors to see for themselves how a house is built - key features will include life sized exhibits such as plant, groundworks, walls and roof structures
- The Design Centre, featuring the UK's biggest range of designs and house styles, including how to design a kitchen and bathroom.
- Renovation Zone showing how a wreck can be turned into a new home
- A full-size the Potton Show House.
- A "trade village" with products from over 250 suppliers, a bar code system allowing visitors to easily order brochures and further information
- Interactive demonstrations offering the opportunity to learn key skills such as bricklaying, tiling and laying floors.

- A massive array of fixtures, finishes and materials choices allowing visitors to make informed choices for their home interiors
- Face-to-face advice from a specialist Finance Centre dedicated to self build and renovation finance.
- Plotsearch Theatre, showing what to look out for when searching for land and property via a specialist UK database giving access to over 6,000 plots and properties.
- Details of how to save thousands on building materials with BuildStore's Trade Card.

The Centre will also include a 200 seat lecture theatre which will host seminars, themed events on a wide range of topics from finding land to designing a home and decorating and a dedicated area for product demonstrations such as installing guttering or laying different types of flooring.

Raymond Connor, chief executive of Buildstore said: "Self build and renovation is a booming market at the moment but there is a chronic lack of information or advice for people. Our new National Centre will fill that gap. Many thousands of people dream of renovating their property or creating a new dream house from scratch. But we know many are put off because they don't know where to start or think it is too difficult a project to take on. Our new Centre will encourage and inspire people to get started and give them access to the help, advice and support they need every step of the way."

The National Centre will be open all year round from 10am to 6pm. Admission will cost £10 at weekends and £8 during the week if booked advance on-line, or £2 extra if arriving at the door. Its location puts it within convenient travelling distance for over a quarter of the UK's population. Those interested in pre-registering for tickets should visit www.buildstore.co.uk.

- Ends -

**For further information please contact
Adrian Chitty/Philip Brady 0207 861 3190/3132**

Notes to Editors:-

BuildStore offers an end-to-end service to the self-builder and people wanting to renovate or convert an existing property. Visit the website at www.buildstore.co.uk to see how much it would cost to build a home and how many plots are for sale. BuildStore's core services include:

- Land finding via its PlotSearch Online database, the largest in the UK with unique aerial photographs to view the plots prior to visiting the site.
- Fully trained mortgage advisors who understand what financial support self builders and renovators require.
- Expert and professional services to support self builders with the design, co-ordination and construction of their build.
- A Trade Account for self build, renovation and home improvement which guarantees low prices and expert service on materials to consumers.
- The National Self Build and Renovation Centre, Swindon and the Scottish Self Build and Renovation Centre, Livingston.

References

1. Buildstore
2. Buildstore
3. MoneySupermarket
4. Office of National Statistics