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NATIONAL SELF BUILD & RENOVATION CENTRE CELEBRATES ITS FIRST BIRTHDAY

Self build and renovation has never been so popular with around 20,000 people in the UK building their own homes every year; more than the largest housebuilder, and many thousands more renovating property, whether for profit or to improve their own homes. To capture this growing market, pioneering self build experts, BuildStore, opened the National Self Build & Renovation Centre in 2007, the first centre of its kind, and this week (29th January 2008) the Centre celebrates its 1st Birthday!

The 67,000 sq ft National Self Build & Renovation Centre, sponsored by EDF Energy, has helped thousands of people to design and build their dream home in the last year. It continues to educate and inspire people from all over the UK interested in self build and renovation, and ensures those actively building have access to all the services and materials they need to build their dream home. With a host of educational exhibits, the latest products and services, and friendly expert advice, the Centre in Swindon remains the UK's *only* permanent centre dedicated to self build and renovation, welcoming nearly 20,000 visitors since opening its doors one year ago.

For those seeking to build, improve their existing home with an extension, or undertake a major renovation or conversion project, the unique National Self Build & Renovation Centre has everything under one roof. Visitors can take an audio-guided self build and renovation journey, compare the latest products and services from leading suppliers, find recommended tradesmen and professionals, arrange finance, find a plot or renovation project, take advantage of exclusive discounts and promotions from leading merchants and suppliers, and talk to experts about their project.

Raymond Connor, Chief Executive of BuildStore, the company behind the National Self Build & Renovation Centre, comments: "The Centre is a vital part of the BuildStore offering. We've been able to meet our customers face-to-face and talk to them about their projects, educate them about different aspects of self build and renovation, offer advice and recommendations, and introduce them to a range of services and products that they simply won't find anywhere else. We've had very positive feedback from visitors, praising our staff for their professional approach, customer service, knowledge and enthusiasm! Before we opened the Centre there was a severe lack of information and advice for self builders and renovators. Similarly, there was a host of product manufacturers and suppliers, who had little exposure to or understanding of the self build and renovation market. We have filled that gap with our Centre. As the appeal of self build and renovation grows, we will continue to help and support more people to design build their dream homes, with a comprehensive end-to-end service, that include finding land, securing finance and buying materials, as

well as providing the building trade with direct access to the thousands of people building and renovating their homes each year.”

Mr & Mrs Williams, who recently completed their dream home in Berkshire, found the Centre provided them with the right advice, information and ideas to help them build their house, and visited a number of times throughout their build. Mr Williams commented: “It was great to be able to see all the different elements of self build, from the foundations and drainage, through to the roof and chimneys. We were able to select specific information that was relevant to our project and we got the right answers to help us make the right decisions. Without this level of detail and insight, our project might not have gone so smoothly.”

Cynthia Tulip, who is undertaking a major renovation project also benefitted from her visit to the Centre: “BuildStore’s attention to detail below regarding my renovation project was most impressive and I was quite taken back with the customer service and follow up structure of the company. My visit to the Centre made my project an easier process than if I had tried to do it myself.”

In 2007, the National Self Build & Renovation Centre has also hosted two major shows, the Self Build & Renovation Show in October 2007, and the Big Green Home Show in November 2007. Both four-day events were such a big hit with visitors that they feature on the Centre’s calendar in 2008. Each show attracted around 2,000 visitors, a significant achievement for the Centre’s first year, with more shows and events planned in 2008.

“Our first year has been very successful and we believe that the Centre’s presence and national status has put self build and renovation firmly on the map. By bringing together all the products, professional services, ideas and advice under one roof, the Centre provides focal point for the self build and renovation market and platform from which the market can grow,” Raymond concludes.

The National Self Build & Renovation Centre is located just off Junction 16 of the M4, near Swindon and is open from 10am to 5:30pm, Thursday to Monday. Entry is £8 per adult, or £12 per couple. For more information, log on to www.mykindofhome.co.uk or call 01506 409 616.

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Notes to Editors:

BuildStore, the company behind the National Self Build & Renovation Centre, offers an end-to-end service to the self builder and people wanting to renovate or convert an existing property. To capture this rapidly growing market, the National Self Build and Renovation Centre was opened in January 2007.

The 67,000 sq ft Centre is on a different scale to anything seen before in the UK self build and renovation sector. It has a dual role of helping to educate people interested in self building and renovating and ensuring those actively building can find all the services and materials they need.

Visitors can learn about the different stages of the self build and renovation process from the “Education Zone”, which features six life-sized exhibits including, plant, groundworks, walls and roof structures. They can also find

inspiration inside the Potton show home, and in the “Renovation Zone”, discover techniques for renovating, with a full-sized house transformed from an ‘old wreck’ to a fully renovated home.

For visitors just starting their self build or renovation journey, the National Self Build & Renovation Centre can help them find a plot of land, renovation or conversion opportunities, with PlotSearch, consider finance options for their project with the in-house financial advisors, or simply get advice from the team of experts. Those actively involved in the process can take advantage of TradeCard, a unique card which offers discounted prices building materials and tool hire from leading merchants and suppliers. Plus, over 240 industry suppliers showcase their products and services in a dedicated “Trade Village”, complete with a bar code system, allowing visitors to easily order brochures and further information, which will be sent to them at home.

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