

Projects developing 'homes of the future' announced

Launched in February, the Innovative Housing Programme aims to create demonstrator schemes to help inform the Welsh Government, Housing Associations and Local Authorities about about the type of homes it should support in the future to help address supply and environmental demands.

Initially funded by £10m per year over the next two years, the fund has been increased to nearly £19 million for this year because of the quality schemes that have come forward. This will not affect the amount of money available in later years.

The projects include:

- homes that double up as power stations, that save residents money and have the potential to create income by producing power
- a development in mid Wales where locally grown timber is used to provide quality, low energy homes
- homes made from recycled shipping containers as short term or 'meanwhile' living solutions for people in the most urgent housing need; and
- a new 40 bed Extra Care project for older people in the Valleys, built using modular techniques which offer major opportunities to increase both the speed of construction and the quality of homes.

The projects will also contribute to the 20,000 affordable homes target the Welsh Government aims to provide over this term of government.

The Cabinet Secretary made the announcement while visiting Wernick Buildings Ltd. The company will join forces with Valleys to Coast Housing association to create a development of modular homes in Sarn and Tondu The homes will be built at Wernick's factory on Kenfig Industrial Estate and delivered to the site on lorries, meaning the high quality structures can be produced and delivered very quickly.

Mr Sargeant said:

"The housing sector in Wales is facing many challenges. Increasing the number of homes available, the rate at which they're delivered and their affordability, while reducing their impact on the environment are the most obvious.

"The projects funded by the Innovative Housing Programme will help us learn what works best and why, both in terms of what we build and how we build them.

"Building homes delivers important benefits beyond simply putting a roof over people's heads. Alongside the well-documented health and

education benefits that good quality housing provides for children and families, building homes of all tenures has a significant positive impact on the Welsh economy and on our communities. These projects will also demonstrate how we can use the Welsh supply chain to unlock massive opportunities for growth and innovation in housing.”