

# Up to £160m to unlock stalled sites for SME house builders

Housing and Regeneration Minister Rebecca Evans announced the fund at the SME Builder Breakfast Roadshow at Parc Y Scarlets, Llanelli, an event showcasing the support on offer to small and medium sized building firms in Wales.

The £40m loan fund has a four year repayment term, and is projected to be recycled four times over seventeen years, underlining the Welsh Government's long term commitment to supporting small and medium-sized builders to deliver homes and skilled jobs across the country.

Research in 2015 suggested there were potentially 7,600 homes on nearly 400 sites across Wales, where progression has been halted for a wide range of reasons, from pre development works and economic viability, to challenges in securing affordable funding. These are known as stalled sites, most of which are suitable for the SME sector to develop. Stalled sites could be unlocked through investment and support at an early stage, such as groundwork, infrastructure improvement or simply assisting with cash flow.

Housing and Regeneration Minister Rebecca Evans said:

“The Stalled Sites Fund provides £40m of funding to address this gap in the market and through recycling of this investment will make up to £160m available to SMEs over 17 years to help them build more homes in Wales.

“We know that supporting small and medium-sized builders has a knock-on effect on the local economy, as they in turn use local suppliers to source materials and skills.

“That's why we are targeting smaller builders at this roadshow in Llanelli. Working with the Federation of Master Builders and local builder's merchants LBS, we are setting out exactly what help is available to SMEs to grow and develop.

“We are committed to delivering 20,000 affordable homes in Wales during this term of government, and SME builders are key to helping us achieve this. By supporting them to develop more sites, we won't just be supporting them to increase the supply of housing, but to grow their businesses, support more skilled jobs and contribute to the local economy.

“We know that many SMEs moved away from house building following the recession ten years ago and have not returned to development. I believe this fund can help them to do this, ensuring a diverse housing sector and more homes being built.”