

NEWS RELEASE

SMALL CONTRACTORS KEY TO CARBON REDUCTION

Carbon reduction in Wales will not come about unless more is done to support small to medium sized building contractors.

The warning from the head of the National Federation of Builders (NFB) in Wales was made directly to the Welsh Assembly's Sustainability Committee today (25 October).

According to Simon Lovell-Jones, director at NFB Cymru, efforts to improve sustainability in the building trade are largely being placed on major projects at the expense of helping micro businesses.

Simon said: "Small to medium-sized contractors make up 90 per cent of the construction industry, but as things stand not enough has been done to encourage them with regards to carbon reduction.

"We need far more carrots and far fewer sticks. Micro-businesses are still recovering from the removal of Corporation Tax Relief. They now face a 25 per cent increase in the costs of lawfully disposing their waste. What should be happening is that the infrastructure to support recycling and waste utilisation is developed across Wales. Also, assistance can be given to companies handling and supplying recycled goods.

"There are many excellent examples of projects and incentives – such as favourable taxation terms for recycled aggregates – and we would rather see more of these than more taxes.



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“The Federation welcomes the Assembly’s interest in driving forward a CO2 reduction in the industry. We are keen to work in partnership with them such that companies benefit from efforts to improve sustainability – and of course that Wales benefits as a result.”

The Welsh Assembly's Sustainability Committee was established to carry out a detailed enquiry into carbon reduction across Wales. As part of its consultation process, which ends on 12 November 2008, the organisation has invited comments from the NFB.

In addition to greater involvement for small to medium-sized contractors, the NFB is also calling for a number of other initiatives which it believes will help lower carbon emissions.

These proposals include the appointment of a Welsh Assembly Minister with a specific remit for sustainability and the establishment of a Welsh Major Contractors Sustainability Forum.

Simon commented: "The NFB has welcomed the opportunity to represent the interests of small to medium-sized contractors. The construction industry has a great deal to offer to the sustainability debate in Wales and we hope that our concerns and recommendations are taken on board and acted upon where possible."

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For further information, please contact David Shirt, Citypress T. 0161 606 0252

