



The Green Deal needs to involve more small, local builders to work, as red-tape and negative publicity threaten to scupper the Government's flagship energy-efficiency policy before it gets off the ground, says the Federation of Master Builders (FMB).

Just over a quarter (27%) of small to medium-sized (SME) construction firms are planning to get involved in the Green Deal according to a recent survey by the FMB, but many said the application and accreditation process was overly complicated, while householders were unaware of the potential benefits because of a lack of positive publicity about the scheme.

Brian Berry, Chief Executive of the FMB, said: "Trusted local trades are ready and willing to help homeowners fit energy-saving measures such as double-glazing and insulation. However, many have expressed frustration that it is not easy for smaller firms to get involved in Green Deal work, and that there hasn't been a marketing campaign to explain to householders what the Green Deal is all about."

Berry continued: "People want to use their local builder to have energy-efficient improvement work carried out, because they know them and have used them before. But the scheme has been designed so large numbers of small firms are excluded because of the significant costs involved in offering Green Deal finance directly to homeowners. Instead local firms will have to find a large finance provider to work with, rather than getting started on work which would boost the economy and help home-owners save money on their fuel bills."

Berry added: "We welcome the Green Deal launch today, because in principle it is good for the environment and great for the economy, but without more support, training and publicity the Government risks this policy becoming a damp squib."

Berry concluded: “The FMB is committed to helping builders become certified Green Deal installers, and we offer advice and pathways to training and certification to ensure people can use a builder they know and trust to future-proof their homes.”