

210,000 builders chasing 300 jobs

By GRAEME WILSON, Deputy Political Editor

Published: 03 Feb
2010



Add a comment (3)

MORE than 200,000 out-of-work builders are chasing just 300 jobs, shock new figures reveal.

The desperate scramble for work exposes the scale of the crisis in Britain's battered construction industry.

Official figures show there are currently 210,260 people on the dole and looking for construction jobs.

But the official JobcentrePlus website lists just 302 construction vacancies across the **WHOLE** of Britain.

The huge gulf between the number of jobseekers and posts available is exposed today by the Liberal Democrats.

They said the problem has been fuelled by the collapse of hundreds of building firms.

A total of 2,702 companies went bust in 2008, according to the most recent figures.

This was up from 1,944 in 2007 - a 40 per cent rise in a single year.

Lib Dem communities spokeswoman Julia Goldsworthy said: "This Government has done little to help the construction industry in recent years.

"Gordon Brown bailed out the banks but seems to have forgotten about the small businesses that have been hard hit in this sector.

"We don't yet know the situation for last year and 2010 could paint an even bleaker picture."

She said the Lib Dems wanted to spend £1.4 billion refurbishing thousands of empty houses across Britain - plans that would create jobs and new homes.

Recent forecasts have warned up to 400,000 jobs will be lost in the construction industry by next year.

Work and Pensioners minister Jonathan Shaw defended the Government's record, saying: "Let's look at the facts - latest figures show there are over 7,000 construction vacancies across the country.

Affordable

"As well as investing £5 billion to help jobseekers we are also investing £1.5 billion over the next two years to deliver 20,000 new affordable homes, creating 45,000 jobs.

"We are also bringing forward spending on building hospitals, schools and roads which will create more jobs for those looking to work in this key sector."

Read more: <http://www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/money/2836468/210000-builders-are-chasing-just-300-jobs.html#ixzz0eZ53whfF>