



Press Release *Friday 12th June 2008*

House Builders Warn Task Force 'Action is Needed Now'

Homes for Scotland, the voice of the home building industry, is encouraged that the reasons for the lack of supply of new homes have been recognised by the Scottish Government, but says that the Housing Supply Task Force must now move its focus from 'examining' the issues that are constraining supply of new homes, to implementing swift and effective actions to help solve them. In addition the organisation's Chief Executive, Jonathan Fair, has highlighted the severe impact the 'credit crunch' is having on the industry and on its ability to fund and resource the Government's ambitious house building targets.

Homes for Scotland is represented on the Government's Task Force which has been charged with finding ways to ensure improving delivery of at least 35,000 new homes a year across Scotland by 2015.

Jonathan Fair said: "We have known for some time that the lack of effective local land allocations for development, consent and regulatory delays, together with a pervasive anti-development culture, are at the root of Scotland's acute housing shortage. Although such recognition by the Government's Task Force is welcome, I am afraid that it comes as no surprise to our members.

"Whilst it is very good news that large-scale priority development areas have been identified across the central belt, all those represented on the Task Force now have a real opportunity to take responsibility for their part in ensuring that the tens of thousands of planned new homes are built in these areas without significant further delays. In so doing they will be making a huge and positive contribution to reducing Scotland's acute housing shortage.

“Over and above all of these considerations, developments are stalling all over Scotland due to difficult financial market conditions, combined with a severe lack in consumer confidence. This is resulting in an extreme housing shortage countrywide. Our hope is that lessons will be learned from previous market cycles, and Scottish Government does all that it can to reduce these impacts, so that smart, sustainable, high quality homes, where the people of Scotland need them most, can become a reality.

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Note to Editors:

1. Homes for Scotland (www.homesforscotland.com) represents the country's home building industry which:
 - is the largest source of private investment in Scotland
 - contributes £6bn to the economy annually
 - builds 20,000 new homes per annum
 - directly impacts the employment of 100,000 people
 - is the largest user of the planning system in Scotland