



**To the Editor  
Edinburgh Evening News**

Dear Sir

Your report “Slump? What Slump?” (2 February), showing people queuing to buy homes in the freezing cold, highlights the chronic undersupply of housing in Edinburgh.

Councillor Edie says this reinforces the need for more social housing – a view he has reiterated many times previously. The house building industry would not disagree; but rather than this myopic view of housing tenure what we desperately need is a common understanding that good quality housing, right across the market spectrum, is absolutely vital for the well-being of Edinburgh’s communities and for economic growth.

At a time when research, such as that produced by Shelter, shows 90% of young people aspiring to be homeowners, it is imbalanced for local authorities to only focus on the need for social housing for rent. Our industry is capable of delivering affordable, low-cost starter homes for sale yet we are often restricted by politicians reluctant to employ the mix of affordable housing options already at their disposal. We therefore urge Councillor Edie to recognise the significant role that low-cost homes for private sale, together with private shared equity schemes, could have in addressing the shortage of affordable housing in Edinburgh.

It is essential that the Council releases additional land for housing and implements informed master planning incorporating a mix of housing as part of its solution to the affordable homes shortage. For too long the home building industry has been standing ready to meet pent-up demand but has been hampered by an under-resourced system which frustrates rather than encourages development.

We would welcome a joined-up approach involving Scotland’s home building industry, Edinburgh City Council and the social housing sector to achieve the Council’s target of significantly increasing new homes. Such an approach can create the mixed dynamic communities that the city’s growing population and expanding economy so badly need.

**Jonathan Fair  
Chief Executive, Homes for Scotland**

**cc: Councillor Paul Edie, Edinburgh City Council**