



PRESS RELEASE

31 August 2004

MINISTER URGED TO LOOK AGAIN AT WATER FUNDING

Environment Minister Ross Finnie has been urged to keep water charges at acceptable levels by funding much of Scottish Water's long-term investment programme through Scottish Executive funding rather than through increased water charges. Homes for Scotland, the body representing the house building industry in Scotland, argues that this is the only realistic option.

Speaking after the Minister addressed a conference in Edinburgh on the "Paying for Water Services" consultation paper, Homes for Scotland Executive Director Bruce Black said:

"The Executive has identified a need for investment by Scottish Water of over £1bn per annum, more than double the present level of expenditure. We want to ensure that this work is carried out, but it will be quite unacceptable for water charges to more than double to pay for it.

Much of the problems stem from poor political decisions and underinvestment in the past, which current customers of Scottish Water should not have to pay for. Direct funding from the Scottish Executive of much of this work, not impacting on water charges, is essential if we are to get the infrastructure provision and environmental safeguards that Scotland needs."

###

For further information, please contact:
Jennifer Kennedy – Homes for Scotland
Tel: 0131 243 2595
Email: j.kennedy@homesforscotland.com

improving living in scotland



Notes to editors:

Homes for Scotland (www.homesforscotland.com) is the representative membership body for the home building and residential development industry in Scotland. Its member companies provide over 90% all new homes in Scotland. The largest user of the planning system in Scotland, the industry also contributes more than £3.5 billion to the economy and employs more than 110,000 people.

Homes for Scotland Forsyth House 93 George Street Edinburgh EH2 3ES

TEL 0131 243 2595 FAX 0131 243 2596 EMAIL info@homesforscotland.com WEB www.homesforscotland.com

Homes for Scotland Ltd Registered No. 213820 Registered Office: 15 Atholl Crescent Edinburgh EH3 8HA Vat No. 761 8239 15