



PRESS RELEASE

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FEWER NEW HOMES BUILT BUT DO MINISTERS CARE?

The leaders of Scotland's house building industry have expressed their frustration at the latest Scottish Executive housing statistics which show a fall in the last year in both completions and starts of new homes.

Bruce Black, Executive Director of Homes for Scotland, which represents companies building 95% of new homes built for sale in Scotland, said:

"New starts and completions may have fallen but demand certainly hasn't. It is just another pointer to the failing planning system we have and the problems of infrastructure that have been so well publicised. Restrictions on land availability, and resultant high land costs, mean that we are being forced away from the starter market where demand is not being met. And the balance between houses and flats, particularly in city areas, has been seriously distorted by local planning policies."

He continued:

"It is frustrating to see these figures when we could build more of the new homes that Scotland needs. And puzzling, to say the least, that no Minister, or indeed anyone from the Scottish Executive, has been in touch to discuss the figures and their implications. Are they not as concerned as we are?"

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Notes to editors:

1. The latest Scottish Executive Housing Trends in Scotland statistics for the quarter ending 31 December 2005 show a fall in the number of new homes both started and completed in 2005 compared with 2004 as follows:

New dwellings completed: 2004 / 2005

	Total	Private Sector
2004	24,846	21,363
2005	24,295	20,023
% change	-2.2	-6.3

New dwellings started: 2004 / 2005

	Total	Private Sector
2004	27,425	23,046
2005	25,783	20,435
% change	-5.98	-11.3

The full statistics can be accessed at:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2006/05/22160031/0>

2. 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 95% of all new homes in Scotland. The largest user of the planning system in Scotland, the industry is also the largest source of private investment in the Scottish economy contributing around £5 billion and employing more than 110,000 people.