

Measures the SNP must adopt to address Scotland's housing crisis

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A series of measures will be set out tomorrow by the Scottish Conservatives aimed at tackling Scotland's housing crisis.

The party will devote their parliamentary business to the issue, which it says should be among the Scottish Government's very top priorities.

It comes as new housing figures have shown the number of new homes completed every year by the SNP has fallen by 30 per cent since it took power in 2007.

The annual housing statistics also revealed home ownership is down from 62.1 per cent in 2006 to 57.9 per cent in the most recent figures.

Compared to the last quarter, affordable home completions also slumped.

Included in tomorrow's Scottish Conservative proposals will be the creation of a new Housing and Infrastructure Agency to lead the drive for new housing in Scotland.

The promotion of a new generation of Housing Deals which would bid for bespoke packages of support in certain areas, and a New Towns Act to construct new garden towns and villages, will also be floated.

Bringing empty properties back onto the market as a matter of urgency would help more people find a suitable home, MSPs will argue.

And communities spokesman Adam Tomkins will suggest the appointment of a new cabinet secretary for housing and infrastructure, a move supported by housing charity Shelter.

Scottish Conservative communities spokesman Adam Tomkins said:

"A house isn't just four walls and a roof.

"It's where memories are made and families formed. For Scots it's the very essence of aspiration.

"To deliver this we need radical reform of our congested planning laws and a new 'can-do' attitude from Scottish ministers, who are asleep at the wheel.

"The housing shortage isn't a looming crisis or a distant threat.

"We are living in it and we need political leadership to address it.

"I'm delighted to be setting out our ambitious but deliverable plan to tackle one of Scotland's major challenges."