

## Household Analysis Review Group (HARG)

### 2014-Based Household Projections: Projections for Strategic Development Plan areas and National Parks, and publication format

#### 1. Projections for Strategic Development Plan areas and National Parks

As well as publishing projections for Scotland and council areas, National Records of Scotland (NRS) also publishes projections for Strategic Development Plan (SDP) areas and National Parks. In the past, projections for these areas were based on best-fit aggregations of data zones. In the latest population projections, the method was changed to base these areas on aggregations of postcodes. Therefore, we are planning to base the household projections for these areas on aggregations of postcodes as well. This has meant adjusting all the input data (headship rates from the 1991, 2001 and 2011 Censuses, households estimates and communal establishment figures).

We had hoped to be able to publish household projections for SDP areas and National Parks at the same time as the figures for Scotland and council areas, at the end of January. However, it is taking longer than anticipated to make these changes, so we will have to publish the figures for SDP areas and National Parks a few months later than the main household projections. This also means that we don't have draft figures for these geographies to include in this paper.

#### 2. Publication format

At the recent meeting of the Population and Migration Statistics (PAMS) group, we discussed our publications and the way that we present data.

A lot of NRS' statistics publications are very long. Our [last \(2012-based\) household projections publication](#) was 76 pages long. It contained a short summary at the beginning, some background information, detailed analysis (including differences at council level), detailed descriptions of the methodology, tables, charts and maps. Most of our statistical publications are made available in Adobe Acrobat Portable Document (PDF) format, with charts and tables available in Excel and Comma Separated Value (CSV) format as well.

One reason our publications are so long is to try to meet the needs of a range of users. There is a short summary at the start for those who just want a quick overview, and more details are there for people who need them. However, we are aware that such long publications can be off-putting. Some other statistical organisations are looking at ways of simplifying their publications.

For example, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) have developed a new format for their publications which is HTML-based, and a lot shorter. An example is the [ONS sub-national population projections for England](#), which is just 10 pages long. One difference is that many NRS publications contain a lot of commentary on charts and tables, including geographic variation, whereas ONS have replaced much of this commentary with shorter descriptions and interactive visualisations within the publication. NRS publications also contain all the tables at the back of the PDF report, though most people probably look at the Excel version of the tables, which is easier to work with.

At the PAMS meeting, PAMS members said that they were happy with our current publication format, and in particular, they like the commentary on the variation at council level, rather than just an overview of what is happening at Scotland level.

We would welcome any views that HARG members have on our publication format.

### **3. Statistics.gov.scot**

[Statistics.gov.scot](http://statistics.gov.scot) was launched in August 2016 and provides access to a range of official statistics about Scotland. NRS have not yet decided how to publish the household projections on statistics.gov.scot. An issue is that some of the combinations of household type, age group and geography are extremely small. For example, the number of households in a council area containing one adult and one child, with the adult aged 80-84, is tiny. In the household projections publication we get around this by publishing more limited age groups for some household types than for others. NRS could try to replicate this on statistics.gov.scot, or we could publish the full age breakdowns. It is not a problem in terms of confidentiality or disclosure; the main problem with publishing such small numbers is just that it could be misleading or confusing for some users who may incorrectly assume the projections are reliable for such small figures.

At the PAMS meeting, PAMS members said they would like us to publish the full breakdown of age groups and household types, so that users could aggregate the figures to the groupings they need. We would welcome HARG members' views on this as well.

### **4. Sub-council area population and household projections**

We published Experimental Statistics on [sub-council area population and household projections](#) in March. This was the first time we had done this, and it was a one-off project. We would particularly welcome feedback on how useful you have found this. We don't have funding in place to repeat the project, but it would be very useful to know if you think we should repeat it if we could find the resources.

NRS: Household Estimates and Projections Branch

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