

HOUSEHOLD ANALYSIS REVIEW GROUP:

Minutes for the meeting of May 24th 2005
Room 1/G/9, Ladywell House, 2-4pm

Present:

Esther Roughsedge (Chair)	General Register Office for Scotland: Household Estimates Branch
Jan Freeke	Glasgow Council
Alistair Harvey	Edinburgh Council
Gordon McAdam	Communities Scotland
Paul McNamara	Stirling Council
Margaret Skinner	North Ayrshire Council
Tom Snowling	Aberdeen Council
Jan Young	Scottish Executive Development Department Analytical Services Division
Esta Clark	General Register Office for Scotland: Demography Branch
Paula Lopez	General Register Office for Scotland: Household Estimates Branch

Apologies:

Stephen Fraser	North Lanarkshire Council
Blair Melville	Homes for Scotland

AGENDA ITEMS 1 AND 2: INTRODUCTIONS AND MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

- 1.1 Esther Roughsedge welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked them to introduce themselves.
- 1.2 The minutes of the meeting in February were considered an accurate record and Esther gave an update on the completion of the recorded action points. Some of those action points were discussed later in the meeting. Jan Young confirmed that Stephen Fraser had contacted the BESAC chairman to become a member of that group.

AGENDA ITEM 3: POPULATION ESTIMATES AND PROJECTIONS – UPDATE FROM GROS DEMOGRAPHY BRANCH

- 2.1 Esta Clark explained to the group the recent work and the future plans on population estimates and projections, which will also be provided at the next PAMS meeting (2nd June) and can be found in paper PAMS (05) 5. This paper will shortly be available on the GROS website (<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/pams/index.html>). It covers: mid-year estimates, small area population estimates, population projections, quarterly population estimates, 90+ estimates, marital status estimates, life tables, international migration review, migration data on GROS website.
- 2.2 Jan Freeke stressed the importance of integration of the work done by the demography and the household estimates branch at GROS.

AGENDA ITEM 4: METHODOLOGY FOR PRODUCING HOUSEHOLD ESTIMATES AT LOCAL AUTHORITY LEVEL

- 3.1 As agreed in the last HARG meeting, GROS contacted each council to propose to publish revised household estimates based on Council Tax figures. Esther Roughsedge presented a paper (HARG 2005(6)) with the responses received from them. While a number of issues were identified that will need to be taken into account, no council suggested that these issues were serious enough to prevent GROS from publishing household estimates based on Council Tax figures. Some councils had specific questions about the figures for their council, which have now been resolved with the exception of Glasgow. The group was asked to consider the responses received and to say whether they were content with the idea of publishing the proposed household estimates.
- 3.2 Jan Freeke confirmed that further investigation is needed to find out why the data that GROS and Glasgow have are different in spite of the fact that they come from the same source. He queried the vacancy levels that GROS figures show but agreed that the overall approach seems sensible.
- 3.3 **The group agreed that GROS continue with this approach and propose to publish revised household estimates based on Council Tax figures assuming that no further**

problems are identified at the next PAMS meeting [Action: GROS]. August was identified as a likely date for the publication. **Local Authorities will be given 2 weeks for comments on draft statistics, ahead of publication [Action: GROS].** It was agreed that if a Local Authority identified an administrative change, for example, that had given rise to figures substantially different to the ones proposed by GROS, and the change in the figures were agreed to be genuine, GROS would accept it. It was also agreed that GROS should not delay the planned publication in August if there was a delay in the resolution of the Glasgow figures.

3.4 Jan Freeke asked about the consistency between the proposed household estimates and the 2004 mid-year population estimates. **It was agreed that GROS examine this consistency [Action: GROS].** It was also noted that when the information at datazone level is available for both figures, it will be easier to identify problems and tie the figures together.

AGENDA ITEM 5: FORMAT FOR REVISED HOUSEHOLD ESTIMATES PUBLICATIONS

4.1 Esther Roughsedge presented a paper showing tables that could potentially be included in the publication of household estimates (HARG 2005(7)) and asked the group to comment on them.

4.2 Jan Freeke raised a point regarding the way in which household estimates are produced for the period up to 2001. He suggested using Council Tax information only from 2001 onwards and using population estimates and headship rates (from 1991 and 2001 Census) for the period 1992-2000. The main advantage would be the consistency with the population figures and the completion of the gap 1992-1996. In addition to this, this method would avoid using the Council Tax information in its first stages, which may be of lower quality. The group agreed to investigate this approach. **GROS will investigate producing figures following this method, with a view to publishing revised household estimates using this approach, unless any problems are identified. HARG members may be consulted on this via email. [Action: GROS].** Jan Young noted that some work had already been done along this line in the Scottish Executive Development Department and Esther commented that the referred work had been used to produce the papers for the last HARG meeting.

4.3 Regarding the proposed tables, there was some discussion of specific figures, but it was finally agreed that:

- Table 4 (household estimates) would be the first table (Tom Snowling raised a question regarding the difference between occupied dwellings and households in Aberdeen and Esther explained that there were reasons to consider that difference reasonable enough).
- Tables 1 (dwellings), 2 (empty dwellings), 3 (occupied dwellings) and 7 (trends in household formation, from the Scottish Household Survey) will be published in an Annex together with a clear explanation of the calculations and the limitations. **Table 7 needs further work to make**

the figures consistent with the ones in Table 4. Additionally, experts on the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) should be contacted to check the reliability of household composition information at Local Authority level [Action: GROS].

- Tables 5 (dwellings entitled to a single discount) and 6 (occupied exemptions) will not be published this year, as it is not clear that there would be much benefit from publishing the figures, and they are not easy to interpret. However, this could be reconsidered in the future, after the response to the publication has been assessed.
- Table 8 (people looking to move to a separate home/household, as recorded in the Scottish Household Survey) will be dropped. The figures are too small to be meaningful, particularly as it would only be possible to include figures for Scotland as a whole.

AGENDA ITEM 6: SMALL AREA HOUSEHOLD ESTIMATES

5.1 Esther Roughsedge explained to the group that GROS had contacted Allan Traynor from the IRRV (Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation) to discuss proposals to develop small area household estimates from Council Tax Systems (HARG 2005(8)). A letter has been prepared to be sent to the Financial Departments in each Local Authority and it will shortly be circulated by Allan Traynor. The group was asked to comment on the content of the letter and on their preference for the time at which the data collection should be carried out.

5.2 Paul McNamara expressed his concern about the workload that this request could imply for the councils and Margaret Skinner raised a point regarding split postcodes that cross datazones, **which will be investigated further by GROS. Margaret also would like to have the look up table that links each postcode with the corresponding datazone. [Action: GROS].** No problems were raised regarding the circulation of the letter to all Local Authorities.

5.3 Regarding the preferred time for the data collection, it was agreed that the first year these figures are going to be collected, it would be helpful to have figures that will be consistent with the local authority figures which are collected in September.

AGENDA ITEM 7: COMMUNAL ESTABLISHMENTS

6.1 Paula Lopez gave an update of the progress done in finding alternative sources for data on Communal Establishments (HARG 2005 (9)) and the results of some preliminary comparisons that had been done between the 2001 Census data and the data coming from the alternative sources. The group was invited to comment on the gaps or problems identified so far in the alternative sources and on the results of the comparisons.

6.2 Alternative sources have been found for the majority of the categories in the 2001 Census. The main gap remains in Education Establishments and Hotels. **GROS will meet the Scottish Funding Council to discuss alternative sources for Education**

Establishments and is considering setting up a new data collection on students living in Halls of Residence and to contact Higher Education Establishments directly [Action: GROS, Demography]

- 6.3 Paula stressed that some relevant differences had been found between Census data and alternative data. GROS informed the group that more work had to be done on this field: **GROS will continue to investigate the whole set of data provided by alternative sources and will complete the comparisons with the 2001 Census data. [Action: GROS]**

AGENDA ITEM 8: HOUSEHOLD PROJECTIONS

- 7.1 As a first step in the revision of the methodology to produce household projections, Esther Roughsedge presented the results of comparisons between the previous household projections and the 2001 Census data and asked the group to comment on them (HARG 2005 (10)).

- 7.2 Jan Freeke suggested comparing the 2001 projected headship rates to the headship rates from the 2001 Census. This would remove the impact of the population projections on the household projections. Alternatively, GROS could compare 2001 Census household estimates with household projections for 2001, based on the 2001 Census population estimates. This would help to eliminate the population effect in the comparison of projected and estimated households for 2001. **[Action: GROS]**

AGENDA ITEM 10: DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 8.1 It was agreed that the next HARG meeting would be held in September or October. The group accepted the offer from Paul McNamara to hold the next meeting in Stirling. **GROS will contact the group members to agree an exact date [Action: GROS].** GROS will also contact the group members prior to the publication of the household estimates (planned for August).

GROS: Household estimates
May 2005