

HOUSEHOLD ANALYSES REVIEW GROUP:

Minutes for the meeting of June 20th 2001
Conference Room 6 Victoria Quay, 10:30 - 12:30pm

Present:

Duncan Gray (Chairman)	Scottish Executive Development Department Economic Advice & Statistics Division
Stevan Croasdale	Scottish Executive Development Department Economic Advice & Statistics Division
Helen Curry	Scottish Executive Development Department Planning Services Division
Stephen Fraser	North Ayrshire Council (also representing SCAG)
Jan Freeke	Glasgow City Council
Alistair Harvey	City of Edinburgh Council
Derek Neill	North Lanarkshire Council
Deborah Pegg	Scottish Executive Development Department Economic Advice & Statistics Division
Tom Snowling	Aberdeen City Council

Apologies:

Ruth Dundas	Scottish Homes, Scottish House Condition Survey Team
Craig McCorrison	West Lothian Council
Caroline Moore	Stirling Council

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

1.1 Duncan Gray welcomed members of the group to the meeting and went through the list of apologies. Small edits to the minutes from the meeting of March 9th were discussed and agreed.

1.2 A discussion about the widening of the membership of the group took place. It was decided that Stephen Fraser could represent the Ayrshire Structure Plan Area and that David McAllister was willing to represent the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Structure Plan Area but was waiting for clearance to do so. David Essery of the House Builders was suggested for invitation and Helen Curry felt the Scottish House Builders Association would be keen to nominate a representative for membership of the group. **It was agreed that the people suggested should be formally invited and papers sent [Action: Scottish Executive].**

AGENDA ITEM 3, 4 & 5: RESPONSES SO FAR RECEIVED TO LA QUESTIONNAIRE ON ESTIMATES. PROGRESS ON NON-LOCAL AUTHORITY QUESTIONNAIRE AND LOCAL AUTHORITY PROJECTIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

2.1 The group discussed the preliminary results from the Local Authority Questionnaire on household estimates. It seemed that most Local Authorities did use the official estimates and that they are used as the control figure when calculating figures at the sub-Local Authority level. It was decided that a full summary and conclusions should be delayed until all responses had been received, to be discussed at the next meeting.

2.2 It was decided that a draft of the questionnaire for Local Authorities covering household projections would be drafted in consultation with Stephen Fraser and Jan Freeke as before. **Also, as before, Stephen Fraser would issue the form for completion to Local Authorities by the end of June / early July [Action Scottish Executive and Stephen Fraser].**

2.3 It was agreed that the non-Local Authority questionnaire would be issued after the projections questionnaire and would combine estimates and projections questions. **A date of issue for the non-Local Authority questionnaire of end July with responses by end September was agreed [Action Scottish Executive]. After discussion it was also agreed that the non-Local Authority questionnaire (including invitations to become members of the group where appropriate) should be sent to representatives from Communities Scotland, Housing Associations, Health Board Chairmen, Scottish Federation of Housing Associations and Scottish Builders (Scottish House Builders Federation? Scottish Federation of Builders? Scottish House Builders Association?). It was also decided that a memo to seek the views of Internal Scottish Executive customers should also be sent out by mid July [Action Scottish Executive].**

AGENDA ITEM 6: USE OF COUNCIL TAX BASE (PAPER 2001/6)

3.3 Duncan Gary summarised paper HARG 2001/6. In summary the source of discrepancies between council tax data and current estimates are unclear. The numbers of dwellings calculated during the production of the household estimates tend to be higher than the figures calculated from council tax records. Whereas the numbers of households estimated each year tend to be lower than those suggested when calculated using council tax occupied dwellings information. The group agreed there was no 'Gold Standard', other than the census, that could be used to evaluate the various options for estimating. **However both**

Glasgow and North Ayrshire Councils use council tax information in the production of dwellings estimates. Jan Freeke and Stephen Fraser both agreed to send copies of the details to the Scottish Executive[Action: Jan Freeke & Stephen Fraser].

3.4 After discussion it was still not clear as to how armed forces barracks, communal establishments and time-share dwellings (amongst others) currently fit into the council tax figures. **It was decided that when census information became available extensive comparisons with the council tax data should be made to understand and document the differences, at which point the feasibility of council tax information as a base for estimates should be made.** In the mean time it was felt that it would be useful to gather as much information as possible from Local Authorities that use council tax information for their own estimates. **It was agreed that the group as a whole should find out about local experiences with council tax data and report back [Action: Group].**

AGENDA ITEM 7: NEIGHBOURHOOD STATISTICS: HOUSEHOLDS AND DWELLINGS (PAPER 2001/7)

4.1 Duncan Gray summarised paper HARG 2001/7. He told the group that resources for neighbourhood statistics development were likely and that it was felt that it would be necessary to take forward a study to assess the feasibility of using Council Tax billing systems as a source of local (neighbourhood) information. Duncan felt that there would be data protection issues to address but felt sure it would be possible and invited comments and volunteers to for the pilot study (around 2-3 Local Authorities).

4.2 Stephen Fraser felt that North Ayrshire Council would be interested in putting a bid together. Duncan Gray asked that outline specifications for the work be put together. These should assume the data protection issues have been resolved and should estimate the cost of running the pilot and will include the data extraction costs as well as specialist IT software and hardware requirements.

4.3 Derek Neill pointed out that the work sounded as if it may overlap with the National Master Address Database project that covers domestic and non-domestic properties. This work is being taken forward by COSLA and Graphical Information System staff. **Both Stephen Fraser and Derek Neill agreed to find out the people involved [Action: Stephen Fraser / Derek Neill].**

AGENDA ITEM 8: WORK PLAN FOR REST OF 2001/02 (PAPER 2001/8)

5.1 Deborah Pegg summarised paper HARG 2001/8. Duncan Gray felt that the proposed September meeting ought to be delayed until the Projections Questionnaire responses could be analysed. **It was agreed that the position of neighbourhood statistics work should be discussed at the next meeting and a paper should be available covering the plan of action and research specification [Action: Scottish Executive]. Also for the next meeting a paper summarising all responses from all the questionnaires should be written [Action: Stevan Croasdale / Stephen Fraser] as well as a paper specifying the proposed outputs from the census that would be required to assess the feasibility of using council tax information at the core of the household estimates [Action: Deborah Pegg]. It was also agreed that a meeting in December should agree the final methodology to be used in the production of 2000 household estimates and 2000 based projections.[Action: Group].**

AGENDA ITEM 9: HOUSEHOLD ESTIMATES FOR MID 1999; SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK FROM COUNCILS IN CONSULTATION ROUND (PAPER 2001/9)

6.1 Stevan Croasdale summarised paper HARG 2001/9, in summary 21 of 32 Local Authorities agreed the estimates with no suggested amendments. In Jenny Boag's extensive reply she had asked if the estimates could be rounded to the nearest 50 rather than the 100 used currently. **It was agreed to find out if there were any standards across Scottish Executive estimates and a decision on this would be made at the next meeting [Action: Deborah Pegg].**

AGENDA ITEM 10: ANY OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 Stephen Fraser asked which Local Authorities (if any) had decided to go ahead with the post census vacant follow up survey. **Deborah Pegg thought that around 12 had opted for the boost and promised to write a paper for the following meeting for information [Action: Deborah Pegg].**

7.2 Derek Neill asked where the position of HARG lay in relation to the new consultation Scottish Statistics Advisory Groups (SCOTSTAT). Duncan Gray explained that the proposed SCOTSTAT arrangements would comprise of the overarching SCOTSTAT board and a series of National Statistics theme SCOTSTAT committees. Amongst their proposed main functions are to advise on priorities for data collection and analyses and comment on the Scottish Executive Statistical Plan. These would have the ability to set up and oversee working groups in order to take forward the work plans agreed. As far as HARG is concerned it would report to the Built Environment committee (Built Environment Statistics Advisory Committee (BESAC)), it is also conceivable that the groups remit may also require input into the Population and Migration Committee. More information about the new arrangements would be available towards the end of the year.

Duncan Gray invited the group to nominate an independent representative from the current group to sit on the proposed Built Environment committee. **Jan Freeke nominated Stephen Fraser, the group agreed.**

The Chairman drew the meeting to a close