

**HOUSEHOLD ANALYSES REVIEW GROUP
PAPER 2001/9**

**MID-YEAR HOUSEHOLD ESTIMATES FOR 1999:
SUMMARY OF LOCAL AUTHORITY CONSULTATION FEEDBACK**

Introduction

1. This paper is for the information of members of the HARG and summarises comments received by Local Authority SCAG members in response to the provisional 1999 mid-year household estimates consultation.

Background

2. During the previous HARG meeting interest was expressed in the various comments received from Local Authorities in response to the Scottish Executive consultation on the 1999 mid-year estimates that were being produced at that time. Since publication of the estimates a completed summary of responses has been produced for information.

Summary of Local Authority feedback

Please see the summary table on the next page

Overall the main response (21 of the 32 Local Authorities) was to agree the figures with no suggested amendments. Of the figures being questioned the New Build data seemed to be the main area where discrepancies were found with 6 Local Authorities querying the figures. Discrepancies were so large in four Local Authorities (Moray, Perth & Kinross, Renfrewshire and West Dunbartonshire) that they agreed to send updated New Build information for the central Scottish Executive databases in order for their figures to be used in the household estimate calculations (see the table for details).

Two Local Authorities felt that the vacancy rates were inaccurate. Glasgow had more recent information from its voluntary population survey. Alistair Harvey at City of Edinburgh Council felt that council tax vacant information would be more robust than the census based figure currently used. Please see the attached extract from Alistair's response on page 3. Orkney noted that the overall household estimate was 500 lower than the council tax figure. Jennifer Boag from Falkirk Council put together an extensive reply and asked if we would consider rounding the figures to the nearest 50 rather than the current 100. Please see Jennifer's comments from page 4.

On advice the conversions figures and demolitions figures were amended for one Local Authority each.

Conclusions

Members are asked to note the information given for general discussion.

DD-EAS
20th June 2001

Summary table of Local Authority Responses to Provisional Household Estimates

Local Authority	Data Comments:	Comments Applied?
Aberdeen City	Fine	N/A
Aberdeenshire	Overall trend fine, HA NB 1999 fig of zero unlikely	Brian at SH reckons ~80 NB for HA 99-00 to get back (12/3/00): for period in question HA NB IS zero
Angus	Supplied two different sets of all 1998/99 figs	Phoned Tom, on reflection felt I should go with my original figures, therefore NO CHANGES
Argyll & Bute	No problems	N/A
Clackmannanshire	Fine	N/A
Dumfries & Galloway	No comments	N/A
Dundee City	No amendments	N/A
East Ayrshire	fine no changes	N/A
East Dunbartonshire	no comments	N/A
East Lothian	Correlate well with own figures, no changes	N/A
East Renfrewshire	Comments: see e-mail	Changed Conversions as asked, NB & Est Dwells left as is 12/3/01)
Edinburgh (City of)	Figures Agreed, pointed out problems with vacancy rate from 1991 census, felt CTax base could be better	N/A
Eilean Siar	Content with figures	N/A
Falkirk	Mostly OK Extensive technical report received, see letter	No Changes required
Fife	Figures appear to be accurate	N/A
Glasgow City	Requested changes to vacancy figures	Recent analysis of vacancy rates, based on a comparison of housing stock data with household estimates from the Voluntary Population Survey. Update on vacants e-mailed 700 removed from Non-LA Vacants as suggested
Highland	Margaret on holiday (Brain MacKenzie happy with figures)	N/A
Inverclyde	Figures correct, No Changes	N/A
Midlothian	Private NB may include HA double counts	NB figures include some HA double counts, some work done to remove these, Stephen Bengie agreed with 290 for Private NB (13/3/01)
Moray	NB problems	Spoke to Martin Wanless of Moray (LA). He is sure that 84 is too low (67 Private NB). I agreed to use 341 and sent him copies of the NB forms for him to look into
North Ayrshire	Agreed all figures in line with their own	N/A
North Lanarkshire	no comments	N/A

Local Authority	Data Comments:	Comments Applied?
Orkney	No NB2 figures for 97-98 & 98-99, figures supplied in response to consultation	1887-98 & 1998-99 NB figs entered, figure still 500 lower then CTax base figure. Roddy has no other NB figures so said go with ours
Perth & Kinross	Our NB figures too high	Discrepancy of 205 total NB, Sandra said go with our figure, copies of NB2 sent to her to look into
Renfrewshire	Many changes see extensive posted letter	LA thinks HA NB=116 (ours is 36) Brian @ SH says our figure out of date go with 116. Sharing Allowance changed for 1999 estimates due to inclusion of NT into LA vacants mistake, Sheena asked if this could be phased in over 2 years, I agreed:(883(old)-711(new)=172(diff)/2=86+711=797) . Sheena does a yearly audit of new build and knows that the building people do not pick up all new builds when filling in the NB2s. The NB updates in 93,94 & 95 all agree with her figures but have not been updated on the NB2 system. She feels the 99 figure should have an extra 60 private new builds. I agreed to add these on, Sheena will send an update for the NB2
Scottish Borders	No comments	N/A
Shetland	no comments	N/A
South Ayrshire	Happy with figures	N/A
South Lanarkshire	Agree Closely with own figures	N/A
Stirling	Caroline phoned to say figures look fine	N/A
West Dunbartonshire	Updated see e-mail and letter	Our NB figs from NB2 (sent to us in December 2000) was 81 Private + 189 HA. Rhone knows her figures are more accurate. I have gone with hers but she is to send in updates for HA figs (Q2 96 to Q2 99) and look into updating NB2s. Demolitions: our fig is 210 demols + 263 out of use. She sent in 264 demols. We agreed to add her 264 to my OOU 263=527 Vacant Stock: I am happy to use her figure of 396
West Lothian	fine	N/A

City of Edinburgh Council Feedback:

Stevan,

We are happy with the draft 1999 household estimates for the City of Edinburgh Council area. The only comment I have is perhaps more something to be dealt with by the HARG.

The non-local authority vacancy rate is still taken from the 1991 Census. I would suggest that the vacancy rate in Edinburgh is much lower now than it was at the time of the census, due to pressures on the housing market in the city. Would it be possible to get vacancy information from the local authorities on vacant dwellings from the valuation boards or the council tax register?

Alistair Harvey
City of Edinburgh Council

Falkirk Council Feedback:

Enquiries to: Miss Boag
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Date: 23rd February 2001.

Stevan Croasdale
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Scottish Executive
Victoria Quay
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Dear Stevan,

1999 Household Estimates for Scotland and Local Authority Areas

Thank you for sending the provisional household estimates for 1999. I have had a look at the Falkirk figures and made my own calculations as a check. I enclose a copy of the Technical Note I have written describing what I did.

You will see that the only real differences between my estimates and yours are due to a slight difference in the vacancy rate applied to non-local authority housing and a small difference in the base housing stock. Since there is no way of telling which vacancy rate is the more accurate, I am suggesting that we accept your household estimates this year.

However, you will note that with rounding to the nearest 100, the difference between my estimate and yours becomes 300. I would therefore ask that there should be no reduction in your estimate for Falkirk, if reductions are required in some authorities as a result of your accepting evidence of increased numbers of households elsewhere. If, however, you require to make consequent increases in the number of households in any authority, I would be quite happy to see an increase in our estimate. This could be done easily by reducing the vacancy rate in the non-local authority housing stock.

I would also like to suggest that you reconsider your policy of rounding the estimates to the nearest 100. The provisional 1999 estimate for Falkirk is 61,346 which would be rounded down to 61,300 using your current rounding procedure. This is quite a considerable difference. Even rounding to the nearest 50 would be an improvement in this case. I have made a similar argument in previous years.

Yours sincerely

Jennifer Boag
Research Officer
Our ref.: JB/7.13.4

Falkirk Council

Corporate & Commercial Services

Research & Information Unit

Technical Note

1999 Household Estimates

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Housing Statistics Unit of the Scottish Executive publish annual estimates of the number of households in each local authority area. These are usually published as provisional estimates and authorities are asked to comment before final estimates are produced.

1.2 The 1999 provisional estimates were made available to authorities in mid February 2001.

1.3 Central Regional Council produced a series of papers on the household estimates for 1991 to 1995. These figures were reviewed for Falkirk Council for the new local authority area for these years and updated for 1996. For 1997 and 1998 technical notes were prepared comparing the provisional estimates from the Scottish Executive with information held by the Council. Following the Council's comments on the 1996 and 1997 estimates, the Scottish Executive made changes to their estimates. No changes were suggested for 1998.

1.4 This paper looks at the 1999 provisional estimates in a similar way to the previous papers.

2.0 1999 Household estimates

2.1 For 1999, the same basic methodology was used as in the calculation of the estimates for previous years. The change in the method of calculating vacancies introduced last year has been continued with.

2.2 In the technical report produced for the 1997 household estimates, it was suggested that we look again at the vacancy rates which were being used. These simply took the 1991 Census estimates, as corrected for the Post Census Vacancy Survey (PCVS), and assumed a constant vacancy rate since then. The Scottish Executive have made use of information on local authority stock vacancies in their calculations and in 1997 these showed a considerable fall in Falkirk due to improved vacancy management by the Council. This reduced the overall number of vacancies in their calculations and accounted for much of the difference in the household estimates between the Council and the Executive.

2.3 The Census does not provide information on vacancies by tenure, however, an attempt was made using small area statistics, as described in the 1998 Technical Note, to estimate figures for local authority vacancies and non-local authority vacancies. The calculation of the household estimates was then modified to include separate estimates of local authority and non local authority vacancies.

- 2.4** The figure for the number of houses on the Council Tax Register at September 1999 was used for 1999 as the total housing stock. This was taken from the Housing Statistical Bulletin HSG/2000/7 Table 3. This is assumed to include all houses completed up till June 1999. The number of local authority houses was also taken to be the stock as at September 1999 from the same source. This figure was subtracted from the total stock on the Council Tax Register to give an estimate of the non-local authority stock.
- 2.5** The Census non-effective rate was applied to the total stock and the resulting number of non-effective houses subtracted.
- 2.6** The local authority vacancies were taken from the information supplied by the Scottish Executive as representing the total vacancies recorded by the Council in its housing return at March 1999. The number of non-local authority vacancies was calculated by applying the vacancy rate of 3.03%, calculated last year, to the non local authority stock calculated above. The total number of vacancies was then subtracted from the housing stock.
- 2.7** The number of shared households from the Census was then added to give a final estimate of the number of households for 1998. The results are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1: 1999 HOUSEHOLD ESTIMATES

	No	Rate
Housing Stock		
- local authority	21,703	
- non local authority	41,610	
- total	63,313	
Non-effective stock	- 192	0.30%
Vacant stock		
- local authority	- 274	1.26%
- non local authority	- 1,262	3.03%
- total	- 1,536	2.43%
Shared households	+11	
1998 households	61,596	

- 2.3** There are several criticisms that could be made of the above method. Firstly, the continued use of Census non-effective and vacancy rates for non local authority housing and number of shared households could be criticised since they are likely to be out of date. However there is no better information available. All these figures are fairly low. The non-effective stock is unlikely to have changed much as the Falkirk area does not have many second or holiday homes or student accommodation. The number of shared households is impossible to estimate. Adjustments have been made to the vacancy calculations to take account of up to date information on local authority vacancies, leaving only non-local authority vacancies still using Census information.
- 3.0 Comparison with Scottish Office provisional estimates**
- 3.1** One of the purposes of this paper is to provide a background for comments requested by the Scottish Executive on the 1999 provisional estimates. These provisional estimates are lower than the Falkirk Council estimate for 1999.
- 3.2** The differences between the two estimates are set out in Table 2.

Table 2: Comparison of Falkirk Council and Scottish Executive provisional household estimates 1999

	Falkirk Council estimates	Scottish Office provisional estimates	Difference
Housing stock	63,313	63,243	- 70
Non-effective stock	192	186	- 6
Vacant			
- Local authority	274	274	0
- Private	1,262	1,447	+ 185
Shared households	11	11	0
Total households	61,596	61,346	- 250

- 3.3** In 1999, the base housing stock estimates are slightly different, with the Scottish Executive figure being slightly lower. Falkirk Council's figure is taken from the Council Tax Register at September 1999 while the Scottish Executive figure is calculated by taking the 1998 estimate of the number of dwellings and adding new build and conversions and subtracting demolitions. The Scottish Executive have had to estimate the number of conversions and demolitions due to the non return by Falkirk Council of the appropriate housing forms. The figures involved are however very small and this should make very little difference to the estimates.
- 3.4** The Falkirk Council figures also relate to September while the Scottish Executive figures are as at June 1999. Since some houses will have been completed between June and September, the fact that the Falkirk figures are higher than those of the Scottish Executive might be expected. Given that different data sets have been used, the difference between the two figures for base housing stock is not significant.
- 3.5** The difference between the two estimates of non-effective housing stock (i.e. second and holiday homes and student accommodation) is also very small. Both estimates use the same figure for the number of local authority vacant properties.
- 3.6** The largest difference between the two estimates is due to the different vacancy rates used for non-local authority stock. As a result of comments made on the 1996 provisional estimates, Scottish Office reduced the vacancy rate in the non-local authority housing stock from 4.1% to 3.5% and this rate of 3.5% appears to have been used again this year. The estimate shown above in Table 1 which has been used by the Council is 3.03%. There may also be a slight difference due to slightly different figures of total non-local authority housing stock.
- 3.7** A lower vacancy rate results in a lower number of vacancies in the Falkirk Council estimates and this in turn leads to a higher estimate of the number of households.
- 3.8** There is no difference in the 1999 estimates in the number of shared dwellings. Both estimates take the figure from the 1991 Census of 11, which is admitted to be a very low figure. In previous years, the Scottish Executive have used their own estimates of shared households, but following representations from the Council that there was no evidence for their figure, the Scottish Executive used the Census figure in the revised 1997 estimates and have used it since.
- 3.9** The number of new houses built in any year is a basic guide to the likely total change in the number of households. The Scottish Office estimate of 483 new houses compares with the Falkirk Council estimate of 554 (which may include a few conversions). The change in the number of households calculated by Falkirk Council is 597 while the Scottish Office show an increase of 566 comparing the unrounded figures for 1998 and 1999. The difference between the two sets of figures is also due to the change in the number of vacancies in the local authority housing stock.

- 3.10** The main reasons for the difference between the Falkirk Council and Scottish Executive households estimates are the higher estimate of the total number of houses used by the Council and the lower vacancy rate in the non-local authority houses. Taken together, these show a difference in the estimates of 250, with the Council's estimate being 250 higher.
- 4.0 Conclusion**
- 4.1** The paper sets out some basic calculations of household estimates. The methodology used by the Council is described and some comments made.
- 4.2** Comparisons have been made with Scottish Office provisional estimates. The differences are due to the slightly different figures used.
- 4.3** Given that the main differences between the estimates is due to a different vacancy rate in the non local authority housing stock, and there is no good evidence for one estimated vacancy rate compared to any other, it is difficult to argue for the Falkirk Council estimate of the number of households compared to the Scottish Executive one. However, the difference in actual figures is now 250, and if the two estimates are rounded to the nearest 100, this becomes 300. This is getting toward the limits of acceptability.
- 4.4** It is therefore suggested that, while the Council has no evidence to argue for a higher estimated number of households, any revisions made to other council's estimates as a result of this consultation should not lead to a consequent reduction in the estimate for Falkirk. If a consequent increase in the number of households in any area is required, then a small increase in the estimate for Falkirk would be acceptable. This could be calculated by reducing the vacancy rate in the non-local authority stock.
- 4.5** As a result of the above conclusions, the following estimates of the number of households in the Council area should be used where these figures are required (see Table 3). The 1999 figure will be updated as soon as the final estimates for 1999 are received from the Scottish Executive.

Table 3: Household Estimates - Falkirk Council Area

Year	No of households
1991	56,900
1992	57,400
1993	58,000
1994	58,300
1995	58,700
1996	59,100
1997	60,100
1998	60,800
1999*	61,300

*provisional estimate

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