

HOUSEHOLD ANALYSES REVIEW GROUP:

Minutes for the meeting of March 5th 2002
Room 1-F54/55 Victoria Quay, 2-4pm

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
Ruth Dundas	Scottish Homes, Scottish House Condition Survey Team
Stephen Fraser	North Ayrshire Council (also representing SCAG)
Jan Freeke	Glasgow City Council
Alistair Harvey	City of Edinburgh Council
Blair Melville	Homes for Scotland (formerly Scottish House Builders Association)
Cecilia Macintyre	Scottish Executive Development Department Economic Advice & Statistics Division
Derek Neill	North Lanarkshire Council
Deborah Pegg	Scottish Executive Development Department Economic Advice & Statistics Division
Tom Snowling	Aberdeen City Council

Apologies:

Craig McCorriston	West Lothian Council
Caroline Moore	Stirling Council

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

1.1 The Chairman welcomed Blair Melville, representing Homes for Scotland, to the group. Blair explained that the Homes for Scotland represented the house building industry planning and policy advice. The Chairman also welcomed Cecilia Macintyre who, since taking a post within the Scottish Executive concerning housing related Neighbourhood Statistics, would become a member of the HARG.

1.2 No requests for changes to the minutes were requested. **Deborah Pegg noted that a paper regarding post census vacant follow up survey would be made available for the next meeting [Action: Deborah Pegg]**

1.3 Derek Neil informed the group that COSLA had sent in a joint bid for resources from the Modernising Government fund for money to develop the Master Address Database. Derek thought that a decision on this was due in May.

1.4 Duncan Gray informed the group of the SCOTSTAT register. This is a new initiative which allows users and providers of Scottish Statistics to record their interest in specific topics. The register will then be used to target those interested in a particular statistical area. **It was agreed that the group should receive an internet link to the new SCOTSTAT web site to register their interests [Action: Stevan Croasdale].**

**AGENDA ITEM 3: ANALYSES OF RESPONSES RECEIVED TO LA QUESTIONNAIRE ON
ESTIMATES AND PROJECTIONS (HARG 2002/1)**

2.1 Stevan Croasdale summarised the paper. **Duncan Gray suggested putting together a table of medium and long term priorities that could be used in future work plans to ensure that the main points raised are implemented [Action: Jan Freeke, Scottish Executive].** Stephen Fraser asked if full postcode level estimates and projections had been asked for. Stevan Croasdale confirmed a couple of respondents had requested this level of analyses. There was further discussion about the level of detail that would be possible. The group discussed the feasibility of using Scottish Household Survey (SHS) data to estimate some of the breakdowns requested but felt that there would be an accuracy issue. However it was thought possible to use the SHS as a source of information for final Household Projection adjustments.

2.2 The possibility of estimating concealed households was also discussed. It was thought that the 2002 SHS is to ask a question on concealed households and that the 2001 census had been designed to collect some information on concealed households. Blair Melville informed the group that many Local Authorities had local information from work done to estimate housing need but that the feasibility of drawing these together to give an accurate national figure would be doubtful. **The group decided that the calculation of concealed households was not a priority.**

2.3 **It was decided that the group should present conclusions from the questionnaire responses and identify some key questions that can be asked of external users. Jan Freeke and Stephen Fraser kindly offered to draft these [Action: Stephen Fraser and Jan Freeke].**

2.4 In the very short term (i.e. changes that could be incorporated into the 2000 based projections) changes to the consultation and duration of projections were discussed. **Consultation arrangements would be changed (see HARG 2002/3). Extension of the projection period to 16 years was ruled out** on the grounds of the time available to

overhaul the IT systems used and the difficulty of adjusting the figures to agree with adult population projections so far away from the base year. **The request by many Local Authorities to publish estimates and projections rounded to the nearest 10 rather than 100 was discussed and agreed.** Guidance regarding the sensitivity of final projections to the various assumptions should also be written. The next projections are to be calculated using various combinations of census base years for headship rates and that it would be possible for this information to be taken from that work [Action: Scottish Executive].

2.5 **Jan Freeke is to go through the questionnaire responses and send comments which will be used to edit paper 2002/1 which will then become the final summary of the Local Authority Consultation** [Action: Jan Freeke].

AGENDA ITEM 4: INITIAL RESULTS FROM THE INTERNAL SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE CONSULTATION ON ESTIMATES AND PROJECTIONS (HARG 2002/2)

3.1 Duncan Gray summarised the paper. He felt that there was no strong demand for new breakdowns for either estimates or projections but noted that the stock based methodology for estimates may limit their value in assessing supply and demand. It was noted that this link between stock and household estimates would still be there if Council Tax information were to be used in future.

AGENDA ITEM 5: TIMETABLE FOR PRODUCTION OF 2000 ESTIMATES AND 2000 BASED HOUSEHOLD PROJECTIONS AND PROPOSED CONSULTATIONS (HARG 2002/3)

4.1 Deborah Pegg summarised the paper. Since the estimates were almost complete and due to be published at the end of the month discussions were about the 2000 based projections only. **The timetable was agreed. This included consulting Local Authorities on communal establishment populations by the end of March / early April then to calculate various unadjusted household projections using different census base years and projection methods for discussion and decision on the preferred method at the next HARG meeting towards the end of May** [Action: Scottish Executive]. It was felt that the final projections option could be based on the method that minimises the disparity between the base year projection and the household estimate for that year (2000).

AGENDA ITEM 6: NEIGHBOURHOOD STATISTICS (HARG 2002/4)

5.1 Cecilia Macintyre summarised the paper. The purpose of the paper was to inform the group of the Neighbourhood Statistics project, and the various data collections that are to be included. **Jan Freeke requested regular feedback on developments regarding National Statistics. Celia also agreed that the research brief on housing data flows would be sent to HARG members for information when drafted** [Action: Scottish Executive]

AGENDA ITEM 7: USE OF COUNCIL TAX BASE (HARG 2002/5)

6.1 Duncan Gray summarised the paper. In general the comparisons of occupied dwellings from the council tax information show that the two sources track reasonably well with a couple of notable exceptions. **Duncan agreed to provide similar charts for all**

dwellings and vacant dwellings (incorporating 2000 household estimates) for the next meeting [Action: Scottish Executive].

6.2 Discussion focused on the limitations that the Local Government Finance Act may place on the use of information collected by councils for council tax purposes. **The required information from the solicitors was not available at the meeting but Duncan felt that it should be through within the next few weeks and would be made available for the next meeting [Action: Scottish Executive].** The group felt that certain Local Authorities would require a change in the legislation before releasing the information, however it should still be possible to run pilots with other Local Authorities whilst solutions to the legal problems are found. It was felt that any change in legislation should go along data protection act lines where councils would be given the right to use the information for research and analyses purposes. On a cautionary note, the group agreed that any new legislation should be carefully thought through to ensure that any current uses of the information do not become unlawful.

AGENDA ITEM 8: AVAILABILITY OF CENSUS DATA, INCLUDING VACANT FOLLOW UP SURVEY (VFUS) RESULTS (HARG 2002/6)

7.1 Deborah Pegg summarised the paper and asked the group if they felt there was a requirement for further information. **Deborah also noted that a separate papers dealing with changes to the way censuses have dealt with students, availability of 2001 census data needed for housing statistics and further information on the VFUS will be issued for the next meeting [Action: Scottish Executive]. After discussion the group agreed that the requirements looked sound, Jan Freeke wished to send further comments in writing (by Easter) [Action: Jan Freeke].**

7.2 The issue of comparisons between censuses was discussed because of the need for consistency of definitions (particularly with regard to students) when calculating headship rates for household projections. **It was decided that GROS should be approached for advice on comparing censuses [Action: Scottish Executive].**

The Chairman drew the meeting to a close.