

Household Analysis Review Group (HARG)

Minutes of HARG meeting:

4 December 2013, 10:30am – 12:30pm, Rm 1/G/8, Ladywell House, Edinburgh

Present:

Esther Roughsedge (Chair)

National Records of Scotland (NRS):

Household Estimates and Projections

South Ayrshire Council

Edinburgh Council

Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic

Development Planning Authority

Homes for Scotland

Glasgow Council

North Lanarkshire Council

Stirling Council

North Ayrshire Council

NRS: Demography

NRS: Population and Migration Statistics

NRS: Household Estimates and Projections

NRS: Household Estimates and Projections

NRS: Household Estimates and Projections

Allison Craig

Alistair Harvey

Angela Adams

Blair Melville

Jan Freeke

Lesley Mann

Paul McNamara

Steve Morley

Kirsty MacLachlan

Mike Hunter

Valerie Hale

Hugh Mackenzie

Kim Reimann (minutes)

Apologies:

Andrew Macartney

Scottish Government (SG): Local

Governance and Reform Analytical Division

Clackmannanshire Council

SG: Communities Analytical Services

SG: Planning

SG: Centre for Housing Market Analysis

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1. Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1 Esther welcomed everyone and introductions were made, and minutes of the previous meeting agreed.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

- 2.1 Ongoing actions from the 4 April 2012 meeting (the meeting before the last one).
- 2.2 **Action 1:** Esther Roughsedge to check with the Centre for Housing Market Analysis (CHMA) about when her work on newly formed households will be needed. CHMA have produced an Excel-based system for updating Housing Need and Demands Assessments (HNDAs). They have said that Esther's work on newly formed households will not be needed for it, so due to other work that has a higher priority this will not be completed by the end of 2013, and will only be completed when there is enough time to get around to this. Although

Jan Freeke had previously asked if this item of work could continue on the National Records of Scotland (NRS) work programme, he said that there are no plans to use it for current HNDA work in the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley area. **Closed.**

- 2.3 **Action 4:** Household Estimates and Projections (HEP) branch to continue to liaise with Scottish Government (SG) policy, housing statistics and local government finance statistics teams on progress of the legislation regarding council tax charges for unoccupied properties. Kim presented a paper summarising the initial effects from changes in four councils to their policy, but noted that more time will be needed to assess the full impact of upcoming changes. **Closed.**
- 2.4 **Action 14:** Esther suggested that council members contact Adam Krawczyk from SG Communities Analytical Services Division directly regarding publishing council-level tenure estimates, as his division has the data. Adam has said that his team will investigate whether it is possible to do this, and if so, tenure estimates at council level will be published in August as part of another publication from SG housing statistics. **Closed.**
- 2.5 Actions from the last meeting, at 25 April 2013:
- 2.6 **Action 1:** NRS will continue to look at the possibility of publishing Communal Establishment (CE) data at data zone level. Jan mentioned in previous HARG meetings that he had enquired about whether it would be possible to receive CE data at data zone level, but this had not been possible due to the Armed Forces not wanting this data to be published. Recently, 2011 Census output area level data was published on CEs, and this should be a source to draw from. **Closed.**
- 2.7 **Action 2:** HEP branch to note in the reconciliation report that as the census figures are also estimates some difference would be expected. **Closed.**
- 2.8 **Action 3:** HEP branch to include discussion of change between 2001 and 2011 in the reconciliation report. **Closed.**
- 2.9 **Action 4:** HEP branch to compare how updating the CE figures performed compared to keeping them at 2001 Census levels and include this in the reconciliation report. **Closed.**
- 2.10 **Action 5:** HEP branch investigated whether Education Scotland could be an alternative source of residential schools data, and found that it was unsuitable. **Closed.**
- 2.11 **Action 6:** HEP branch to consider changes in headship rates by age and changes in average household size by tenure when looking at trends in how household types are changing. The 2011 Census has not yet released tenure by age group, so it's not possible to see this impact yet. However, Jan suggested that household size is available from the 2011 Census, and so it should be possible to investigate changes in average household size by tenure. **Ongoing.**
- 2.12 **Action 7:** HEP branch to incorporate the 2011 Census data into the household estimates using the preferred method outlined in Paper 3 HARG 2013(3). **Closed.**

- 2.13 **Action 8:** HEP to prioritise projection options based on three data points. The paper, HARG 2013(6), was written and presented at this meeting, and addresses this. **Closed.**
- 2.14 **Action 9:** HEP to monitor the differences between headship rates and household representative person rates for the 2011 Census. A paper was written and presented at this meeting. **Closed.**
- 2.15 **Action 10:** HEP to consider improving the commentary in the household projections publication on the differences between '1 adult with children' and single-parent families. **Closed.**
- 2.16 **Action 11:** HEP branch to continue to monitor whether any changes to Council Tax will impact on their statistics. **Closed.**
- 2.17 **Action 12:** HEP branch to inform HARG members and any other relevant parties of the date and time of the micro-simulation model seminar. However, there has been no more news from the PhD model, and HEP branch have not received this yet. **Closed.**

3. Review of the Household Projections Methodology

- 3.1 Hugh presented the methodology proposed by HEP branch for future Household Projections, as outlined in Paper 6 HARG 2013(6). HARG members welcomed this work. It was agreed that a weighted method using three censuses (1991, 2001 and 2011) would be preferred to using a two-point method, as it would provide a more robust fit of existing data for projections, and also of trends over time. Elements to consider when refining the method were discussed, and included having to consider whether some projections would be more reliable in the short-term, while others could be more suitable over a longer time period, and how well the model fits the results of the SHS survey. Also, consideration must be given to the model's ability to be compared over time.
- 3.2 Weighting was also discussed. HARG members agreed in principle with the proposal in the paper. This involved combining headship rates projected from the 1991 and 2001 Censuses with headship rates projected from the 2001 and 2011 Censuses. The weights were chosen to minimise the difference between the projected distribution of household types and distribution of household types in the 2012 SHS data. The reason for this is that in previous projections, the total number of households was adjusted using the household estimates but there were no adjustments made to household types; doing so should improve the accuracy of the results between censuses. The final weightings used in the paper were 74 per cent towards the headship rates projected from the 2001 and 2011 Censuses and 26 per cent towards the headship rates projected from the 1991 and 2001 Censuses. NRS will continue to investigate the feasibility of using this method for the 2012-based household projections, and refine it further.
- 3.3 It was highlighted that it will be important to note for users a justification of how the weights were devised and applied. Their addition into the model could be seen to introduce an element of subjectivity, and users will require reassurance that methods are justified. Also, it was mentioned that the SHS survey (or another household survey) should not necessarily be the sole consideration when choosing the weights to be used. For example, it may be possible to use the household estimates in the weighting too, and/or to try to minimise any discrepancies at local authority level.

- 3.4 There was some discussion about which variant projections should be produced. In the 2010-based projections, the variants that were presented were high/low migration estimates, an alternative headship rate and a constrained housing variant (as well as some combinations of these). As only a small period of time has passed since the 2011 Census it was agreed that an alternative headship variant would not be necessary in the next publication, however the high/migration estimates would be useful. It was also noted that many HARG members would like to use the 2012-based projections in work that has quite tight deadlines, and that they would prefer that any delays to publication were reduced rather than having any variants in addition to the high/low migration variants.
- 3.5 Hugh also described how the minimum adult and child adjustments in the projections have been changed in order to minimise these adjustments. While these changes don't have a large impact on the projections this is a small improvement. HARG members agreed to these changes.
- 3.6 **Action 1:** HEP branch to work on producing the 2012-based household projections using the weighted method using three censuses, and to also plan to produce high/low migration variant projections. They will also aim to include analysis of household change between 2001 and 2011 in the household projections publication.

4. Impact of Council Tax changes on empty properties for household statistics

- 4.1 Kim presented Paper 7 HARG paper 2013(7) on the effects from Council Tax changes for long-term empty properties. In this paper, the September 2013 Council Tax data was examined for four councils (Moray, Aberdeen City, Highland and Argyll & Bute) that are increasing the level of Council Tax payable on long-term empty properties.
- 4.2 It was suggested that the increase in Council Tax may act as a disincentive for people from stating that their property is empty. However, it is believed that the initial Council Tax exemption for empty properties will provide enough of an incentive for people to register their property as vacant, and councils can follow up on properties that have been recorded as being vacant.
- 4.3 It was also noted that other secondary effects of the policy change might be seen and should be monitored if possible. For example, it was speculated that there might be an increase in the number of houses for sale, due to these changes.
- 4.4 It was suggested that the Electoral Roll and the census address register list of occupied dwellings could be considered when looking at changes to the number of properties listed as long-term empty or second homes.
- 4.5 However, HEP branch investigated the Electoral Roll a few years ago, and found that because not everyone registers to vote, it is not possible to tell the difference between dwellings which are empty, and those where no-one has registered to vote. Census information would not be useful for monitoring changes over the next few years.

- 4.6 **Action 2:** The HEP branch will continue look into possible effects from the change in Council Tax on long-term empty properties, and also liaise with their SG contacts on anything that might affect the household estimates data, or help to explain any change over time.
- 4.7 **Action 3:** HARG members are invited to comment and give suggestions on any effects of the changes to Council Tax on long-term empty properties. These will be fed through to the quality assurance of the household estimates.
5. **Comparing 2011 communal establishment estimates to those from the 2011 Census**
- 5.1 Hugh presented Paper 8 HARG 2013 (8) on comparing communal establishment estimates to the 2011 Census (for use in the household projections).
- 5.2 It was noted that Argyll & Bute's figures were difficult to estimate in 2011 as a result of the large Armed Forces base at Helensburgh, and difficulty getting accurate data on this base.
- 5.3 It was also noted that Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data on students was received recently, for the first time in several years, and so this will hopefully serve to improve the quality of the student estimates produced by the HEP branch in future.
- 5.4 It was suggested that it could be useful to compare estimates of individual student halls of residence in the 2011 Census and in the HEP branch's estimates to attempt to identify reasons for the differences between HEP branch's and the Census. Valerie explained that this could partly be due to the HEP branch assuming 100 per cent occupancy of student halls, but agreed that this comparison would be worth doing. It was also mentioned that the HEP branch will consider whether it will adjust its communal establishment estimates to those of the census.
- 5.5 **Action 4:** HEP Branch to compare their estimates of individual student halls of residence with the 2011 Census estimates to try to identify reasons differences.
6. **Any other business**
- 6.1 No other business was discussed, and HARG members were thanked for their contributions to improving the HEP statistics.
7. **Date of Next Meeting**
- 7.1 The next meeting will be held after the HEP branch have produced provisional projections, which should be around April/May, as the publication date is aimed for the end of July (though this depends on the timing of the sub-national population projections).