

Household Analysis Review Group (HARG)

Minutes of HARG meeting: 25 April 2013

Present:

Esther Roughsedge (Chair)	National Records of Scotland (NRS): Household Estimates and Projections
Maciej Alexander	Clackmannanshire Council
Jan Freeke	Glasgow Council
Alistair Harvey	Edinburgh Council
Blair Melville	Homes for Scotland
Steve Morley	North Ayrshire Council
Tom Snowling	Aberdeen Council
Kirsty MacLachlan	NRS: Demography
Esta Clark	NRS: Population and Migration Statistics
Kylie Hill	NRS: Population and Migration Statistics
Valerie Hale	NRS: Household Estimates and Projections
Hugh Mackenzie	NRS: Household Estimates and Projections
Kim Reimann	NRS: Household Estimates and Projections

Apologies:

Allison Craig	South Ayrshire Council
Anne Grove	Scottish Government (SG): Planning
Stephen Hall	SG: Planning
Adam Krawczyk	SG: Communities Analytical Services
Andrew Macartney	SG: Local Government Finance Statistics
Paul McNamara	Stirling Council
Gordon Stenhouse	Scottish Water

1. Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1 Esther welcomed everyone and introductions were made.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

- 2.1 The actions of the previous meeting were checked and the following outcomes noted.
- 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. Jan Freeke asked if this item of work could continue on the NRS work programme. **Ongoing.**

- 2.3 **Action 2:** Debbie Amabile to ask Jan Freeke for a tenure breakdown of Glasgow City Council's long-term empty properties. Jan confirmed that he had provided this information and that Debbie had had a query that he had not answered yet. Kim Reimann has replaced Debbie while she is on maternity leave. **Closed.**
- 2.4 **Action 3:** Debbie Amabile to investigate alternative sources of information on empty properties including the Scottish Household Survey (SHS) and the Annual Performance and Statistical Return (APSR). SHS has information on empty properties and these match the household estimates and projections (HEP) branch's figures closely. This can provide an alternative source of information that can be used for comparison. **Closed.**
- 2.5 **Action 4:** Household Estimates and Projections (HEP) branch to continue to liaise with SG policy, housing statistics and local government finance statistics teams on progress of the legislation regarding council tax charges for unoccupied properties. HEP will continue to liaise with the relevant people regarding this. **Ongoing.**
- 2.6 **Action 5:** HEP branch to use NHS Information Services Division (ISD) definition of long-term care in 2010-based communal establishment estimates. **Complete.**
- 2.7 **Action 6:** HEP branch to monitor the quality of Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) data on students' term-time addresses and compare with the 2011 Census data when it becomes available. HEP branch does not have access to HESA data currently. The alternative sources branch in the National Records of Scotland (NRS) are pursuing data access. Valerie commented that it was likely that the alternative sources branch would also monitor the quality of the data. **Closed.**
- 2.8 **Action 7:** HEP branch to make it clearer on their website that there is information on Communal Establishments (CEs) which is more up-to-date than the 2001 Census and give links to where it can be found. **Complete.**
- 2.9 **Action 8:** HEP branch to look into the feasibility of publishing low and high migration variant household projections using the alternative headship rate and to report their conclusions back to HARG members. **Complete.**
- 2.10 **Action 9:** Valerie Hale to send Tom Snowling the results of the zero migration household projection for Aberdeen City after household projections have been published in June 2012. **Complete.**
- 2.11 **Action 10:** HEP branch to include a paragraph in the 2010-based household projections publication explaining that they have investigated incorporating survey data in the projections and why they decided not to include them in the publication. **Complete.**
- 2.12 **Action 11:** HEP branch to inform HARG members, Population and Migration Statistics Committee (PAMS) members, POPGROUP members and any other interested parties of the date and time for micro-simulation model seminar well in advance. The micro-simulation model was discussed in agenda item 7. **Closed.**
- 2.13 **Action 12:** HARG members to let HEP branch know what their thoughts are on post-2011 census options for the household projections. This item was discussed in agenda item 6. **Closed.**

2.14 **Action 13:** Debbie Amabile to include information on how the estimates data is used, emphasising importance of the data, when sending out quality assurance information to local authorities. **Complete.**

2.15 **Action 14:** HEP branch to continue to liaise with SG housing statistics and CHMA colleagues on tenure estimates.

Update

HEP branch have liaised with the relevant people, however there has not been any progress with this. Esther suggested that council members contact Adam Krawczyk directly, as his division has the data. **Ongoing.**

2.16 Jan mentioned that he had enquired about whether it would be possible to receive CE data at data zone level in previous HARG meetings and that this had not been possible due to the armed forces not wanting this data published. He asked if there had been any changes in this situation. The situation has not changed. Esta and Valerie both commented that NRS was continuing to look at alternative sources of data that would allow CE data to be published at data zone level.

Action 1: HEP branch to continue exploring the possibility of publishing CE data at data zone level.

3. Comparing household estimates to 2011 Census figures

3.1 This item refers to the paper HARG 2013(1) 'The Census and Household Estimates and Projections'. Valerie gave a presentation summarising this paper and asked for any comments from HARG members.

3.2 Jan commented that he thought it may be worth pointing out that the household figures from the census and the HEP branch's household figures are both estimates, meaning that some differences would be expected between the figures, due to different methods of estimation.

Action 2: HEP branch to note in the reconciliation report that as the census figures are also estimates some difference would be expected.

3.3 Jan also mentioned that it would be useful if HEP branch produced a comparison between the change in their household estimates from 2001 to 2011 and the change in the number of households from the 2001 Census to the 2011 Census.

Action 3: HEP branch to include discussion of change between 2001 and 2011 in the reconciliation report.

3.4 Alistair mentioned that it was interesting that the percentage of the population in CEs in the cities is higher than in the other local authorities. Tom commented that this could be due to students largely being based in the cities.

3.5 Alistair then asked whether census enumerators had clear instructions on what student accommodation was counted as a CE, as otherwise this could cause a difference between HEP CE figures and the census CE figures. Valerie and Esta both confirmed that there had been clear instructions for the enumerators. Valerie added that HEP branch used the census enumeration list of student halls of residence so there should not be too large a difference in the student accommodation that is counted as a CE in the census and by HEP branch.

- 3.6 Jan commented that he thought it would be useful to have a comparison of the difference between the 2001 Census CE figures and the CE figures produced by HEP branch using various data sources. He felt that this would be useful in showing the value in the CE figures being updated where possible, rather than using the 2001 Census levels. Valerie commented that the comparison will be updated once the 2011 CE collection had been completed. However, there have been problems with data for independent residential schools and it may not be possible to obtain this information. Esta suggested that Education Scotland may have data that would be suitable for HEP branch to use.

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.

Action 5: HEP branch to investigate whether Education Scotland could be an alternative source of residential schools data.

- 3.7 Blair enquired as to whether there had been any work done by the Scottish Government investigating what underlying factors drive the long-term trend of the average household size becoming smaller. Valerie said that she was not aware of any work that had been done in this area.
- 3.8 Alistair commented that he was concerned that relying on trends for the household projections will mean that the projections will suggest that there is a continued need for more small houses when the number of people living in smaller households will actually taper off rather than continuing to increase. The tapering off seen in the census data started many years before the recession. Jan suggested that it would be important to look at changes in headship rates of people in their 20s in order to see whether the projected trends are appropriate. Tom agreed that it would be important to look closely at the headship rates. The trend towards smaller households is influenced by the ageing population as well as younger people, and older people living in one- or two-person households often remain in large houses and would not choose to move to small houses.
- 3.9 Jan also suggested that it would be useful for HEP branch to look at changes in average household size by tenure when attempting to identify any changes in trends in the household types people are living in.

Action 6: HEP branch to consider headship rates and changes in average household size by tenure when looking at trends in how household types are changing.

4. Incorporating 2011 Census data into the household estimates

- 4.1 This item refers to the paper HARG 2013(2) 'Incorporating the 2011 Census into the household estimates'. Valerie gave a presentation summarising this paper and asked for any comments from HARG members.
- 4.2 Esther asked HARG members to note that this paper contained information that was restricted and should not be shared or discussed with anyone else until the results are published.
- 4.3 Jan commented that it is important that the preferred method of incorporating 2011 Census data into the household estimates does not change the shape of the trends observed before 2011. Jan also suggested that it would be important

that the method used does not cause any discontinuities in average household size over time and that we might consider smoothing if this is the case.

Action 7: HEP branch to incorporate 2011 Census into the household estimates using the preferred method outlined in the paper. The effect of this method on average household size should be considered.

- 4.4 Jan enquired about when the next set of mid-year population estimates would be released. Esta stated that the mid-year population estimates were expected to be released in mid-August.

5. Household Projections Methodology Review

- 5.1 This item refers to the paper HARG 2013(3) 'Household projections methodology review'. Hugh gave a presentation summarising this paper and asked for any comments from HARG members.

- 5.2 Tom commented that using a three-point methodology using the 1991, 2001 and 2011 Censuses seemed best. Omitting the 2001 data does not make sense as it suggests there's something wrong with this data point.

Action 8: HEP to prioritise projection options based on three data points.

- 5.3 Kylie asked about the use of Household Representative Person rather than head of household. Esther commented that there was not much difference found in the results when it was investigated after the 2001 Census. The advantages of using it are outweighed by the disadvantages of only having two data points. HEP will monitor the difference in 2011.

Action 9: HEP to monitor the differences between headship rates and household representative person rates for the 2011 Census.

- 5.4 HARG members asked how HEP branch will make its choice between the different methods proposed, as they all seemed reasonable. Esther replied that the choice will depend on how much variation there is between the projections using the different methodologies. Valerie added that HEP branch will compare projections to external data sources, such as the Scottish Household Survey, where possible. If the comparison is done prior to the final adjustment to the household estimates, it would also be possible to use the household estimates as an external data source.
- 5.5 Steve Morley commented that it was important that the methodology was flexible over the next 4-5 years. Blair Melville suggested incorporating the household estimates trends. This was done in the 'constrained housing variant' in 2010, although the trend was only projected forward for three years.
- 5.6 Household membership rates were discussed. Jan indicated that there are some advantages, but could see that this might be outweighed by the disadvantages of the time it would take to introduce a new system. Valerie pointed out that a large disadvantage was that more household types would have to be introduced to obtain reliable results and this meant projecting more small groups, whose projections might not be as reliable.
- 5.7 The current categorisation of household types was also discussed. It was felt that the current types were fine for local authority and planning purposes. However, Jan mentioned that there are difficulties around the interpretation of '1 adult with

children' households. He stated that these can be interpreted as being single parent families, although this is not necessarily the case. Alistair noted that while it is important to know the number of single parent houses now, projecting single parent families is not particularly useful anyway.

Action 10: HEP to consider improving the commentary on the differences between '1 adult with children' and single-parent families.

6. How changes to Council Tax for empty properties will impact our statistics

- 6.1 This item refers to the paper HARG 2013(4) 'Impact of Council Tax changes on empty properties, for household statistics'. Esther summarised this paper. HEP branch do not believe that the changes to the Council Tax will have a significant impact on their statistics.
- 6.2 Blair commented that while a property could have no one living in it, it may not be classified as empty unless it has been stripped of all furnishings. Valerie said that the classification of an empty property can vary slightly between local authorities.

Action 11: HEP branch to continue to monitor whether any changes to Council Tax will impact on their statistics.

7. Micro-simulation project update

- 7.1 Valerie provided the group with an update on progress with the micro-simulation project. It had been hoped that the model would have been handed over to the HEP branch by now, however Paul Williamson has had problems with getting suitable migration data from the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS). It is now hoped that the model will be handed over to HEP branch in June.
- 7.2 Alistair asked what benefits this model would provide. Valerie commented that the micro-simulation model would provide an alternative set of projections using a different methodology from the current projections meaning that it would provide a useful comparison. Esther added that it would be easier to produce projections under different scenarios by changing the inputs to the model. It was highlighted that this model would produce projections at Scotland level only, not at local authority level.
- 7.3 Esther mentioned that Paul Williamson still plans to give a seminar on the model once it has been handed over to HEP branch and that HARG members would be invited to this.

Action 12: HEP branch to inform HARG members and any other relevant parties of the date and time of the micro-simulation model seminar.

8. Any other business

- 8.1 No other business was discussed.

9. Date of Next Meeting

- 9.1 The next meeting will be held once draft figures have been produced comparing different methodologies for the household projections. A date will be discussed with HARG members closer to the time.