

HOUSEHOLD ANALYSIS REVIEW GROUP:

Minutes for the meeting of February 23rd, 2006
Room 1/G/9, Ladywell House, 2-4pm

Present:

Esther Roughsedge (Chair)	General Register Office for Scotland: Household Estimates Branch
Jan Freeke	Glasgow Council
Alistair Harvey	Edinburgh Council
Gordon McAdam	Communities Scotland
Paul McNamara	Stirling Council
Steve Morley	North Ayrshire Council
Tom Snowling	Aberdeen Council
Karen Trouten	Homes for Scotland
Jan Young	Scottish Executive Development Department Analytical Services Division
Cecilia Macintyre	General Register Office for Scotland: Demography Branch
Paula Lopez	General Register Office for Scotland: Household Estimates Branch

Apologies:

Stephen Fraser	North Lanarkshire Council
Margaret Skinner	North Ayrshire Council
Derek Bearhop	Scottish Executive Development Department Housing Division
Helen Wood	Scottish Executive Development Department Planning Services Division

Agenda item 1: Introductions

1. Esther Roughsedge thanked everyone for attending the meeting, noted the apologies received and welcomed two new members to the group: Karen Trouten, from Homes for Scotland, who will replace Blair Melville, and Steve Morley, from North Ayrshire Council, who attended this meeting in Margaret Skinner's place.

Agenda item 3: Population estimates and projections – update from GROS demography branch

2. Cecilia Macintyre provided the group with an update of the work of GROS demography branch, which included:
 - 2.1. the publication of sub-national population projections in December 2005.
 - 2.2. two new members of the branch (Bianca Heggie and Harvey Snowling) have arrived to take over the work on small area population estimates (SAPE).
 - 2.3. the intended review of the population projections system, following the seminar held in November 2005.
 - 2.4. an answer to action point 2.2 of the minutes of the last meeting (whether GROS demography branch usually informs Local Authorities about whether their comments have been incorporated into the assumptions for the population projections). At the moment there is no communication with Local Authorities on their response to the consultation but this will be reviewed as part of the intended review of the population projections system.
3. Tom Snowling said that the projections for Aberdeen, implying a loss of 25% of the population over the next 20 years, seemed overly pessimistic. He would welcome a meeting to discuss the reasons behind this results. He also noted that the population statistics may not be picking up evidence of the recent inflows of Eastern European migrants. Cecilia explained the official sources used to estimate migration and the limitations of these and the top-down approach, and **agreed that some analysis could be done to investigate the particular issues affecting the results for Aberdeen, and a meeting arranged to discuss the results [ACTION: GROS demography branch]** .
4. Paul McNamara stressed that one day's pre-release access was not enough time to prepare a response, if the final figures were very different from the expected ones. Cecilia explained that the time scale available for producing the projections was very short and there was not time for very detailed discussions.
5. The group discussed the problems associated with the current projections system being based on past trends. Cecilia said that one option would be to look at variant projections at Local Authority level and that GROS could help others to develop their own projections.
6. Jan Freeke asked when the Population Projections Methodology group would begin work. Cecilia said that **a meeting of the Population Projections Review Group could be arranged for the end of May [ACTION: GROS demography branch]. GROS**

demography and household estimates branch agreed to ensure that the population and household projections reviews are planned alongside each other. [ACTION: GROS]

7. Cecilia said that the next PAMS meeting would probably be held in May.
8. Regarding the action point in paragraph 5.5 of the minutes of the last meeting (comments from GROS demography branch relating to the use of the data on Communal Establishments (CE)), Cecilia explained that they were investigating the SAPE output by comparing them with administrative sources and this CE data would help in this process. However, CE data are not directly used in the production of the mid year population estimates (they are not treated separately).
9. Finally, Jan Freeke raised a question about the time scale for the next SAPE and about the methodology to be used. Cecilia said that they plan to publish the next SAPE in October 2006, and that they were likely to be produced following the same method as last time. Jan Freeke also noted that the small area household estimates could help in the future, but that they were still at an early stage.

Agenda item 2: Minutes of the last meeting

10. The minutes of the meeting in November were considered an accurate record and Esther gave an update on the completion of the recorded action points. Some of these action points were discussed later in the meeting (especially those relating to the work on CE data).
11. Regarding action point 3.9, Jan Freeke explained that he had met with the Council Finance Department but had not been able to resolve the issues with Glasgow's household estimates. However, this did not affect the publication of household estimates in December.
12. With regards to the small area household estimates project, Esther explained that some progress had been made and it was going ahead, and **undertook to provide the group with more information at the next meeting [ACTION: GROS]**. Paul McNamara confirmed that he had spoken to the Finance representative at Stirling council to check the progress made, and that they were having problems taking this work forward because of a lack of resources. Jan Freeke stressed the importance of continuing with this piece of work and **asked whether GROS expected to receive data from the Councils this year**. Esther confirmed that this is what was planned but that **she would need to check** having heard Paul's update **[ACTION: GROS]**
13. Action point 7.3 was not ready for the meeting. **GROS will pursue this action point further, presenting comparisons between previous household projections' headship rates and 1991 and 2001 Census headship rates, at Local Authority level [ACTION: GROS]**

Agenda item 4: Communal Establishments – figures to use in the 2004-based household projections

14. Paula Lopez presented the paper HARG 2006(1), summarising the concerns about the approach that had been agreed at the last HARG meeting regarding the CE figures to be used for the 2004-based household projections. This approach consisted of using alternatives to the Census where possible, supplemented by Census data where an alternative source had not been found yet. Paula described the other two alternative options that GROS was suggesting for use in the next set of projections and welcomed the group's views on the option that should be used.
15. Following some discussion, the group felt that the alternative sources did not seem to be ready for the 2004-based projections and it was agreed that Option 2 in the paper should be used, that is: 2001 Census proportions applied to 2004 mid-year population estimates (by sex and age group). **GROS undertook to send the figures to each Council's PAMS representative as soon as possible for consultation [ACTION: GROS]**
16. Gordon McAdam raised a question about how large-scale accommodation for Eastern European migrants may be captured, either through CE data or Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), and some discussion followed about this. It was noted that if people were included in the population projections, this would be reflected in the household projections. It was also noted that they may have different household structures to other groups. **Esther said that this was something that had not been considered separately for the household projections and that GROS would think about it. [ACTION: GROS]**
17. Jan Freeke raised a question about the figures used in the HARG paper 2004(8). He explained that if the proportions in that paper were applied to the population figures, the resulting numbers were different from the 2001 Census ones. **Esther undertook to look into this and double check the figures [ACTION: GROS].** She also confirmed that for the draft 2004-based household projections, she had gone back to the original Census data to produce the CE proportions, so the current projections would not be affected.

Agenda item 5: Communal Establishments – method to project the base figures forward

18. Esther presented the paper HARG 2006(2), aimed at discussing how CE figures should be subtracted from the population projections. In the past, it had been assumed that the same proportion of people would be living in CE for each of the projections years. Although recognising that these proportions were likely to change in the future, GROS was proposing to continue using this approach for the 2004-based projections given the difficulty of predicting these changes with the available information.
19. The group felt that keeping the proportions constant seemed to be the best option, as there is not enough information available to predict how CE populations may change over the next 20 years. However, later in the meeting this agreement was revisited – the decision on how to project CE figures will depend on the outcome of the investigations described in paragraphs 22 and 23.

Agenda item 6: Household projections publication

20. Esther presented the paper HARG 2006(3), which described the methodology used to produce household projections, an analysis of the initial findings of the preliminary 2004-based household projections and potential ways in which the methodology could be changed. She said that GROS planned to publish these projections in May, and welcomed the members' views on the initial findings.
21. Jan Freeke expressed some concern about the comparisons between the household estimates and "projections" for 2004 and 2005 shown in Table 1. Overall, the figures are very similar, but there are some discrepancies for individual councils, which may suggest that the average household size is not changing as predicted, in those areas.
22. Table 2 shows the provisional household projections for 2004, 2014 and 2024. Jan Freeke noted that there seemed to be a significant difference between the change in the number of households in the period 2004-2014 and the change in 2014-2024. Possible reasons for this were discussed and **Esther agreed to investigate possible causes, such as using constant CE proportions, or the population projections or headship rates, and to circulate the results [ACTION:GROS].**
23. HARG members suggested some further investigations that GROS could carry out: comparing the results using constant *proportions* of people living in communal establishments vs constant *numbers* of residents. GROS had compared the minimum number of adults required to fill the households with the population aged 16+; it was suggested that the same validation checks could be carried out for numbers of children **[ACTION:GROS].**
24. Tom Snowling asked whether a health warning could be added in the publication about the figures for Aberdeen – large changes in the population projections will be reflected in the household projections. **Esther confirmed that the publication will emphasise that the projections are based on the population projections and past trends in household formation, and that they do not incorporate local knowledge [ACTION:GROS].** Esther also added that the publication will contain figures on average household size, although this had not been included in the draft analysis shown in paper HARG 2006(3).
25. The Group decided that another HARG meeting before the publication of the projections was not necessary. However, **the results of the investigation described in paragraphs 22 and 23 will be circulated and if GROS finds any other issue that require HARG members' views, members will be contacted by e-mail. Additionally, HARG members will be sent a draft publication for comment and one day's pre-release access to the projections will be given to Councils. [ACTION: GROS]**

Agenda item 10: Date of next meeting

26. It was agreed that the next HARG meeting would be held in late summer. **GROS will contact the group members to agree an exact date [Action: GROS].**

GROS: Household estimates
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