

House Sales - What do they tell us about Migration in Highland?

Summary

- A quarter of house sales within Highland are to people moving from outside the area.
- Our larger towns and established commuter villages have high numbers of buyers from within Highland.
- Buyers from outside Highland tend to move to rural areas, particularly on the west coast.
- The proportion of sales to buyers from the rest of the UK (outside Scotland) has almost doubled during the last 15 years.
- Inverness gains people from the rest of Highland.

Using House Sales to Monitor Migration

Details of all land and property sales are available from the Registers of Scotland (RoS) via *i-SPOLIS* - a commercial service which adds value to the raw RoS data. In addition to details of house prices (which will be the focus of a future Briefing Note) data is available on the origin and destination of purchasers, giving a valuable insight into the migration trends of house buyers over the last 15 years.

Limitations of the Data

House buyers are only one sector of society and *i-SPOLIS* data will not help track young people or transitory migrant workers who both often live in rented accommodation. It is also likely the figures below underestimate the number of long distance moves as people often rent locally before buying, and *i-SPOLIS* will record the rented address as the origin. Further error can arise when houses are bought as second/holiday homes, or for renting on a commercial basis.

Table 1: Origin and destination of buyers for all sales in Highland between 1990 and 2004 (as a percentage of the total number of sales)

		WHERE BUYERS MOVED TO								
		B&S	Caith	Inv	Loch	Nairn	R&C	S&L	Suth	All Highland
WHERE BUYERS MOVED FROM	Bad & Strath	49.0	0.1	0.9	0.3	0.7	0.7	0.5	0.2	3.7
	Caithness	0.2	75.0	0.7	0.2	0.5	0.8	0.3	2.4	7.2
	Inverness	2.3	1.2	69.5	1.2	15.0	12.1	2.3	3.7	33.9
	Lochaber	0.7	0.1	1.0	64.5	0.6	0.6	0.9	0.2	5.0
	Nairn	0.6	0.2	1.4	0.2	48.1	0.7	0.1	0.1	3.9
	Ross & Crom	1.0	1.3	7.5	0.7	2.4	55.1	1.7	5.7	14.9
	Skye & Loch	0.2	0.1	0.8	0.2	0.3	0.9	43.3	0.5	2.5
	Sutherland	0.2	1.7	1.0	0.1	0.5	2.6	0.2	36.6	2.7
	Rest of Scotland	27.5	8.4	10.4	15.0	20.8	12.2	17.3	17.2	13.2
	Rest of UK	16.0	10.7	4.9	14.8	9.0	12.7	29.6	28.6	10.7
	Abroad	1.3	0.5	0.7	1.4	0.8	1.0	2.1	3.0	1.0
	Unknown	1.1	0.7	1.1	1.5	1.4	0.7	1.7	1.7	1.1
Number of sales (100%)	3,076	4,283	21,055	3,246	3,174	9,776	2,137	2,110	48,860	

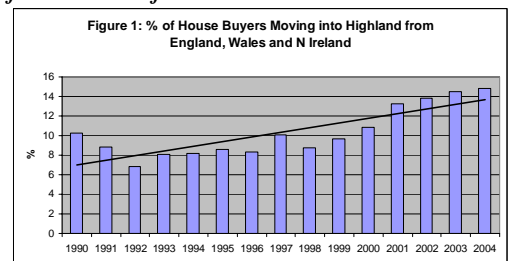
Overview

There were 48,860 open market residential sales between 1990 and 2004. The number of houses sold rose from 2,613 in 1990 to 4,216 in 2004 with a peak of 4,476 in 2000. Table 1 below shows the origin and destination of these buyers as a percentage of total sales:

- 74% of buyers already lived within Highland.
- 13% of buyers came from the rest of Scotland. Over the 15 year period there were 6,465 sales to buyers from the rest of Scotland, an average of 431 per year.
- 11% of buyers came from the rest of the UK. There were 5,232 sales to buyers from the rest of the UK, an average of 348 per year.
- 1% came from overseas. There were 489 sales to buyers from overseas, an average of 33 per year.

During the period there was a steady rise in the number of buyers moving from the rest of the UK (Figure 1) from around 7% to 14%.

Figure 1: % of Highland house sales to buyers from the rest of the UK



Area Summaries

Pen pictures of our 8 areas are given in Map 1 on the next page (see also Tables 1 and 2):

Map 1: Area Pen Pictures

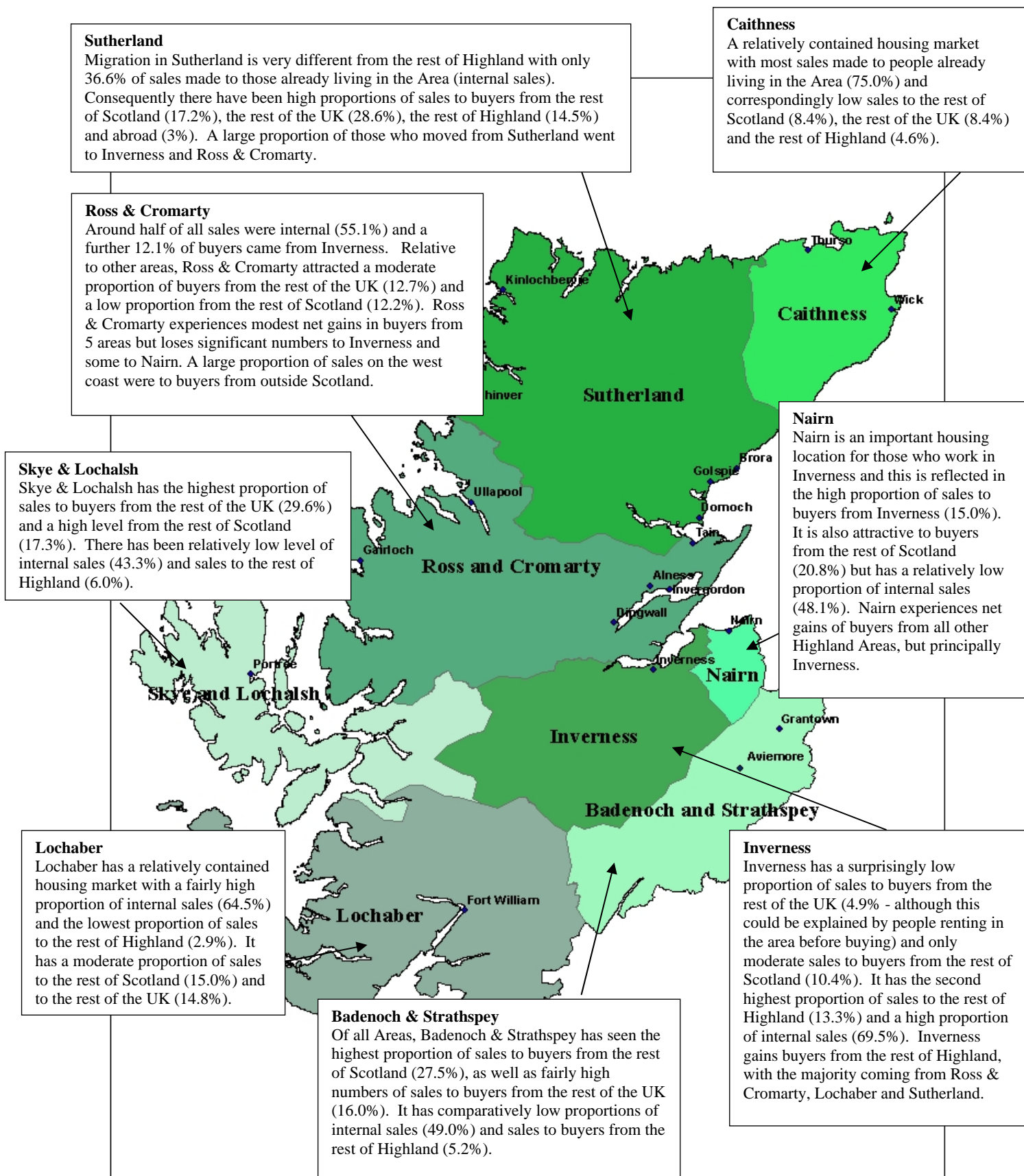


Table 2: Net flows of buyers between Highland Areas between 1990 and 2004

		WHERE BUYERS MOVED TO							
		<i>Hint: look down the column: a positive figure is a gain by the Area at the head of the column, a negative figure is a loss</i>							
		B&S	Caith	Inv	Loch	Nairn	R&C	S&L	Suth
WHERE BUYERS MOVED FROM	Badenoch & Strathspey		-2	124	-11	6	41	3	-2
	Caithness	2		103	0	8	19	2	-22
	Inverness	-124	-103		-168	180	-389	-114	-135
	Lochaber	11	0	168		13	33	13	1
	Nairn	-6	-8	-180	-13		-10	-6	-12
	Ross & Cromarty	-41	-19	389	-33	10		-52	-132
	Skye & Lochalsh	-3	-2	114	-13	6	52		6
	Sutherland	2	22	135	-1	12	132	-6	
	15 Year Destination Total	-159	-112	853	-239	235	-122	-160	-296
	Annual Average	-11	-7	57	-16	16	-8	-11	-20

Origin of Buyers in our Main Towns

Table 3 gives the origin of buyers moving to ten of our main settlements:

- Thurso (70.6%) and Fort William (69.7%) have the highest proportion of buyers already living within the settlement. Dingwall (38.3%) and Aviemore & Grantown-on-Spey (both 43.4%) share the lowest.
- Dingwall (47.6%) and Alness (39.6%) have the highest proportion of buyers from the rest of Highland. Fort William (11.8%) and Aviemore (14.8) & Grantown-on-Spey (14.5%) have the lowest.
- Aviemore (27.1%) and Grantown-on-Spey (22.9%) have the highest proportion of buyers from the rest of Scotland. Thurso (5.6%), Wick (7.6%) & Alness (7.8%) have the lowest.
- Grantown-on-Spey (16.8%) and Aviemore (12.6%) have the highest proportion of buyers from the rest of the UK. Inverness (2.8%) and Dingwall (4.0%) have the lowest.
- There are only small numbers of buyers from overseas, with Grantown-on-Spey and Portree being be the most popular, with Thurso and Dingwall the least.

Table 3: The origin of buyers moving to ten of our major settlements (by percentage of house sales within the settlement)

	Number of Sales During 1990-2004 (100%)	Already living within the settlement	From the rest of Highland	From the rest of Scotland	From the rest of the UK	From overseas
Inverness (excl. Culloden)	13,437	64.1	22.3	9.0	2.8	0.6
Fort William	1,772	69.7	11.8	10.9	6.0	0.6
Nairn	2,760	47.1	21.5	20.6	8.5	0.8
Thurso	1,569	70.6	18.0	5.6	4.7	0.4
Wick	1,298	68.9	18.0	7.6	4.9	0.5
Alness	616	44.5	39.6	7.8	7.1	0.5
Dingwall	1,184	38.3	47.6	9.0	4.0	0.3
Aviemore	955	43.4	14.8	27.1	12.6	0.8
Grantown-on-Spey	738	43.4	14.5	22.9	16.8	0.9
Portree	433	49.9	21.9	15.0	10.4	0.9

The Local Picture

The picture at settlement zone level is very revealing and tells us a lot about migration patterns, as well as giving some clues about the economic and lifestyle drivers which influence the choice of where to live in Highland (see Map 2 and Table 3).

- The City of Inverness, our larger towns and some of the most popular commuting villages tend to have the highest proportion of buyers from within Highland.
- The most attractive destinations for buyers from the rest of Scotland are rural settlements, including in particular the small towns of Badenoch & Strathspey, and the west coast and islands.
- The highest proportion of sales to buyers from the rest of the UK are found in remote, rural and predominantly west coast settlements. 15 out of the 20 settlement zones with the highest proportion of sales to this group are on Skye or the nearby Lochalsh & Wester Ross mainland.
- The number of buyers coming from overseas is small but the most popular destinations seem to be smaller rural settlements, often around the coast. Note, however, that most transient migrant workers live in rented accommodation and are not reflected in these figures.

Map 2: The 20 Settlement Zones with the highest proportion of sales to buyers from the rest of Scotland and the rest of the UK

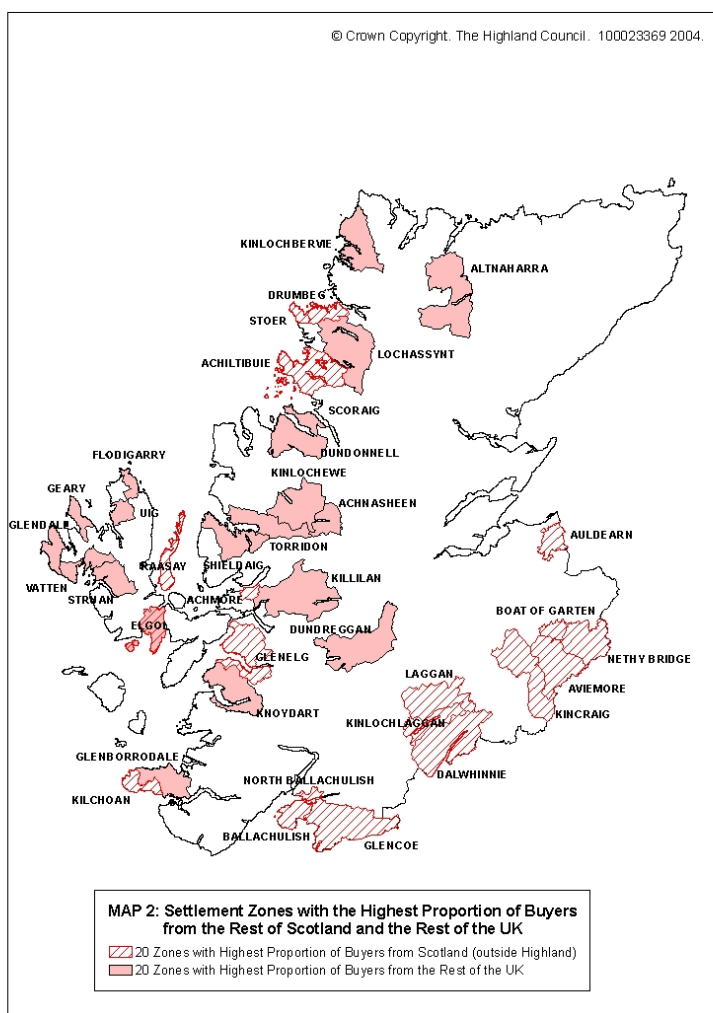


Table 4: The 20 settlement zones with the highest proportion of sales to buyers from the rest of Scotland and the rest of the UK

Sales to buyers from the rest of Scotland			Sales to buyers from the rest of the UK		
Settlement	% of Sales	Total No. of Sales	Settlement	% of Sales	Total No. of Sales
Laggan	45.0	20	Achnasheen	66.7	9
Kinlochlaggan	44.4	9	Dundonnell	65.4	26
Boat Of Garten	39.3	219	Glenborrodale	62.5	24
Achmore	38.9	18	Killilan	61.9	21
Nethy Bridge	37.2	180	Lochassynt	61.1	18
Kincraig	35.4	65	Kinlochewe	60.0	30
Dalwhinnie	35.0	20	Knoydart	58.3	24
Glencoe	33.3	69	Glendale	55.4	83
Glenelg	33.3	42	Struan	54.5	33
Kilchoan	32.6	43	Uig	53.0	66
Elgol	31.4	35	Flodigarry	52.4	21
North Ballachulish	31.3	67	Torridon	52.3	44
Achiltibuie	30.6	49	Altnaharra	50.0	2
Raasay	30.0	30	Scoraig	50.0	4
Stoer	28.9	38	Kinlochbervie	50.0	60
Newtonmore	28.2	309	Dundreggan	48.1	27
Drumbeg	27.6	29	Vatten	47.0	66
Ballachulish	27.2	202	Elgol	45.7	35
Aviemore	27.1	955	Geary	45.5	55
Auldearn	26.4	216	Shieldaig	41.7	36