

Summary

- The number of households in Highland grew by 7.5% between 2001 and 2006.
- The greatest proportional increase was in single male and one adult plus one child families.
- The number of dwellings in Highland grew by 6.6% in the same period.
- We have the third highest proportion of vacant properties and second / holiday homes in Scotland (8.7%).
- The number of vacant properties and second / holiday homes in Highland fell by 5.5% between 2004 and 2006.

Introduction

In March 2007 GROS published their Household Estimates for Scotland, 2006. The figures produced by GROS are based on information from Council Tax billing systems and therefore provide a useful update on the number of dwellings in both Highland and Scotland, and the proportion which are either occupied or vacant / used as a second or holiday homes. This note summarises the main findings for Highland, and Scotland overall.

Long Term Trends

Figure 1 Shows that the number of households grew from 79,707 in 1991 to 94,941 in 2005, an increase of 19% at a time when the population of Highland increased by 4.7% from 204,100 to 213,590. Year on year population growth was more volatile than population growth, although this may be due to the way the population figures are calculated. The GROS report confirms that the trend of households becoming smaller continued into 2006 with the greatest proportional increase over the seven years to 2006 being in single male and one adult plus one child households.

Recent Trends

Figure 2 shows that in 2006 the number of households in Highland increased by 1,386 (1.5%), the fifth year in a row with an increase of well over 1,000 households giving a total growth of 6,691 (7.5%) over the five year period to 2006. The percentage increase in Scotland overall was lower with 0.9% in 2006 and 4.4% over the five years to 2006.

Figure 2: Growth in Numbers of Household by Year

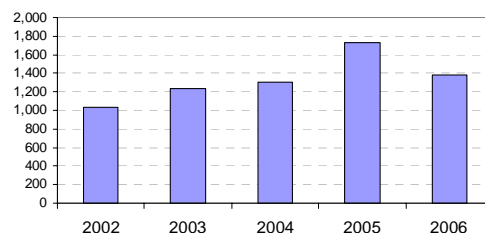
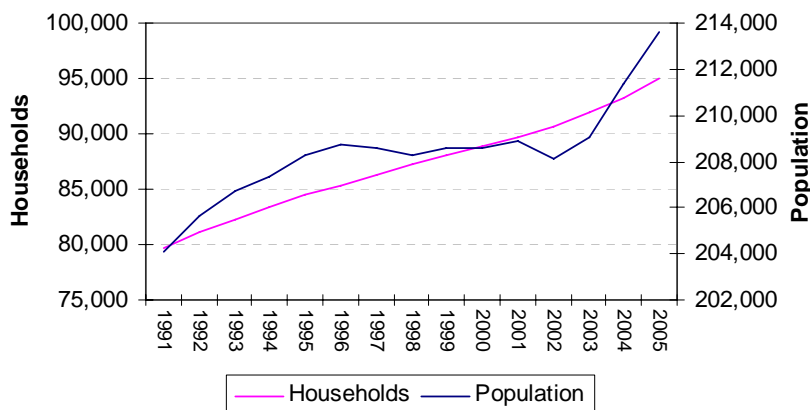


Table 1 gives a summary for the last five years. Highland had the third highest increase in the number of households over the last five years: the highest were in Aberdeenshire (8.7%), West Lothian (8.0%), Highland (7.5%) and Perth & Kinross (7.3%).

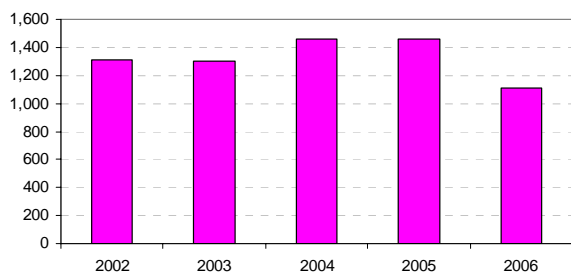
Figure 1: Population and Household Growth in Highland 1991 to 2005



Dwellings

Figure 3 shows that the number of dwellings in Highland increased by 1,109 (1.0%) in 2006, the lowest annual figure over the last five years, with a five year increase of 6,651 dwellings (6.6%). The percentage increase in Scotland was 0.8% in 2006 and 4.1% over the five years to 2006.

Figure 3: New Dwellings by Year from Council Tax Records



The increase in the number of dwellings in Highland corresponds well with the number of new houses in our Housing Land Audit (we would not expect the figures to be identical as the HLA and Council Tax databases are independent with different procedural timelags).

The number of vacant properties and second / holiday homes rose by 400 between 2001 and 2004 but then fell for two successive years, by 375 in 2005 and by 165 in 2006, giving an overall reduction of 140 (-1.5%) over the five years to 2006. The percentage in Scotland fell by 2.5% over the five year period.

Highland continues to have one of the highest percentages of vacant properties and second / holiday homes: the highest are Eilean Siar (13.4%), Argyll & Bute (11.1%), Highland (8.7%) and Orkney (8.3%).

Table 1: Numbers of Households, Dwellings and Occupied Dwellings plus New Dwellings from Housing Land Audit

		Year (September#)			Change 2005 - 2006		Change 2001 - 2006	
		2001	2005	2006	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Households	Highland	89,637	94,941	96,327	1,386	1.5%	6,691	7.5%
	Scotland	2,195,033	2,271,353	2,291,575	20,223	0.9%	96,542	4.4%
Dwellings	Highland	100,086	105,628	106,737	1,109	1.0%	6,651	6.6%
	Scotland	2,322,844	2,398,470	2,417,759	19,289	0.8%	94,915	4.1%
Vacant Dwellings, Second / Holiday Homes	Highland	9,419	9,444	9,279	-165	-1.7%	-140	-1.5%
	Scotland	104,003	101,734	101,445	-289	-0.3%	-2,558	-2.5%
Occupied Dwellings	Highland	90,667	96,184	97,458	1,274	1.3%	6,791	7.5%
	Scotland	2,218,841	2,296,736	2,316,314	19,578	0.8%	97,473	4.4%
Housing Land Audit (Completions)	Highland				1,460	1.4%	6,340	6.3%

All figures are based on CTAXBASE returns in September of each year and the years for changes run from September to August