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A STUDY OF RURAL HOUSING IMPROVEMENT IN SCOTLAND

by

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Submitted for the Degree of
Master of Philosophy, in Town
and Regional Planning,
University of Glasgow.

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Summary

This thesis is an attempt to establish how well the rural areas of Scotland have fared in improving their housing stock. In numerical terms the housing problems in rural Scotland do not appear to be very serious, however, as a proportion of the available stock, the problems in many areas are quite acute. Poor housing conditions in rural areas are generally associated with the most densely populated areas and tend to be concentrated in the private sector where it is more difficult for local authorities to intervene. The proportionally worst housing conditions are located in the N.W. mainland and the island areas which are characterised by crofting and are also areas which may suffer from an "income reducing" effect. The state of the housing stock also varies within Districts and this observation highlights the need for very sensitive analysis in rural areas.

The proportional size of the rural housing problem in many areas serves as an indicator of the need to improve the existing stock. However, the response of local authorities to improvement has been very varied. In recent years most rural authorities have approved some local authority rehabilitation schemes, albeit that many of these have been quite small covering only 5-10 houses on average. In view of the very small proportions of subtolerable stock in the local authority sector it is likely that some progress has been made in many rural areas.

Private improvement activity on the other hand has been far more limited despite the fact that rural Scotland has had a proportionally large share of private improvement grant finance. Housing Action Areas offer local authorities a very positive approach to stimulating private improvement. However, by the end of 1978 only 10 rural Districts had declared any H.A.A.s and these were generally

quite small - covering about 15 houses. Of those Districts who failed to declare any H.A.A.s, a few have approved quite high numbers of grants in relation to their subtolerable stock. Nevertheless, generally speaking, there has been very little progress in improving private subtolerable stock in rural Scotland. Even in the areas where quite large numbers of houses are in H.A.A.s there is still a lot more work required before any sizeable impact is made.

There are a number of factors which may explain this lack of real concerted effort. Many rural authorities, rightly or wrongly, feel that H.A.A. procedures are too cumbersome and therefore unsuitable, particularly in areas where substandard stock is widely scattered. Innovation in some areas is all the more difficult because of the very small size of the Environmental Health Departments who are generally responsible for private improvement grants. It is also possible that in remoter and more rural landward areas high building costs coupled with high proportions of elderly householders may act as a barrier to improvement. Within some of the remoter areas local factors such as shortages of builders and skilled draughtsmen may also make it more difficult for some owners to improve.

It is recommended that several changes be made to the existing legislative framework to overcome some of the problems associated with the present grant system. First of all it is recommended that 75% grants be made available for all properties in rural areas. Secondly that grants be made more flexible and be updated at six-monthly intervals to combat inflation. Thirdly that grants be linked to the Housing Cost Indicator to take account of Regional Cost variations. In order to try and encourage authorities to use H.A.A. procedures more widely it is suggested that these procedures be shortened for small rural schemes of 30 houses or less.

In view of the lack of innovation and activity in rural areas it is clearly necessary to both find ways of promoting the existing procedures for improving housing stock more vigorously and to devise new approaches for tackling the outstanding level of inadequate housing. It is therefore recommended that in all rural areas authorities should carry out a housing condition survey to find out the true extent of the problem in their area.

Having done this it is suggested that maximum efforts be made to declare H.A.A.s in the main towns and villages and that in the landward areas careful consideration be given to the serving of improvement orders on some of the more widely scattered houses. In areas where the numbers of subtolerable houses are quite small, there may be less need to use such a positive approach in which case it may be possible to set up some form of promotional campaign to inform local people of the available grants and to apply for them.

Before any active campaigns can be adopted it is essential that sufficient Government finance be made available to ensure that any enthusiasm generated is not lost because of lack of funds. In view of the persistent public expenditure cuts it will be very difficult to claim additional funds. However local authorities should put forward their case as strongly as possible in their housing plan reminding central Government of a) their commitment to improving existing stock, and b) the obligation they have imposed on local authorities under Section 13 of the 1974 Housing (Scotland) Act.

The importance for planning of improvement work derives from the land use implications of maintenance instead of clearance or dereliction and the effects this has on the local plan process and on Regional Structure Plan Objectives.

Introduction

Definitions

In any study of rural areas it is essential, at the outset, to define the term rural. Any definition attempting to separate rural areas, particularly at District level, has to be arbitrary both in terms of the selected criteria and cut off points chosen. Since there is no clear distinction between urban and rural it has been decided to concentrate interest on the "rural" areas outside the influence of the Central Belt and the other major cities. A fairly rough definition has been used and it follows the one adopted in the S.D.D./S.E.P.D. "Rural Indicators Study". For the purpose of this study the rural Districts of Scotland are defined as those where at least 10% of the economically active population is employed in agriculture and where there are no settlements above 100,000 and where less than 50% of the population lives in settlements between 10,000 and 999,999. (S.D.D. 1978). So defined the following areas of Scotland are classified as rural: Highland Region, the Island Authority Areas, Grampian Region excluding Aberdeen, Tayside Region excluding Dundee, Borders Region, Dumfries & Galloway, N.E. Fife District, Argyll & Bute District and Lanark District.

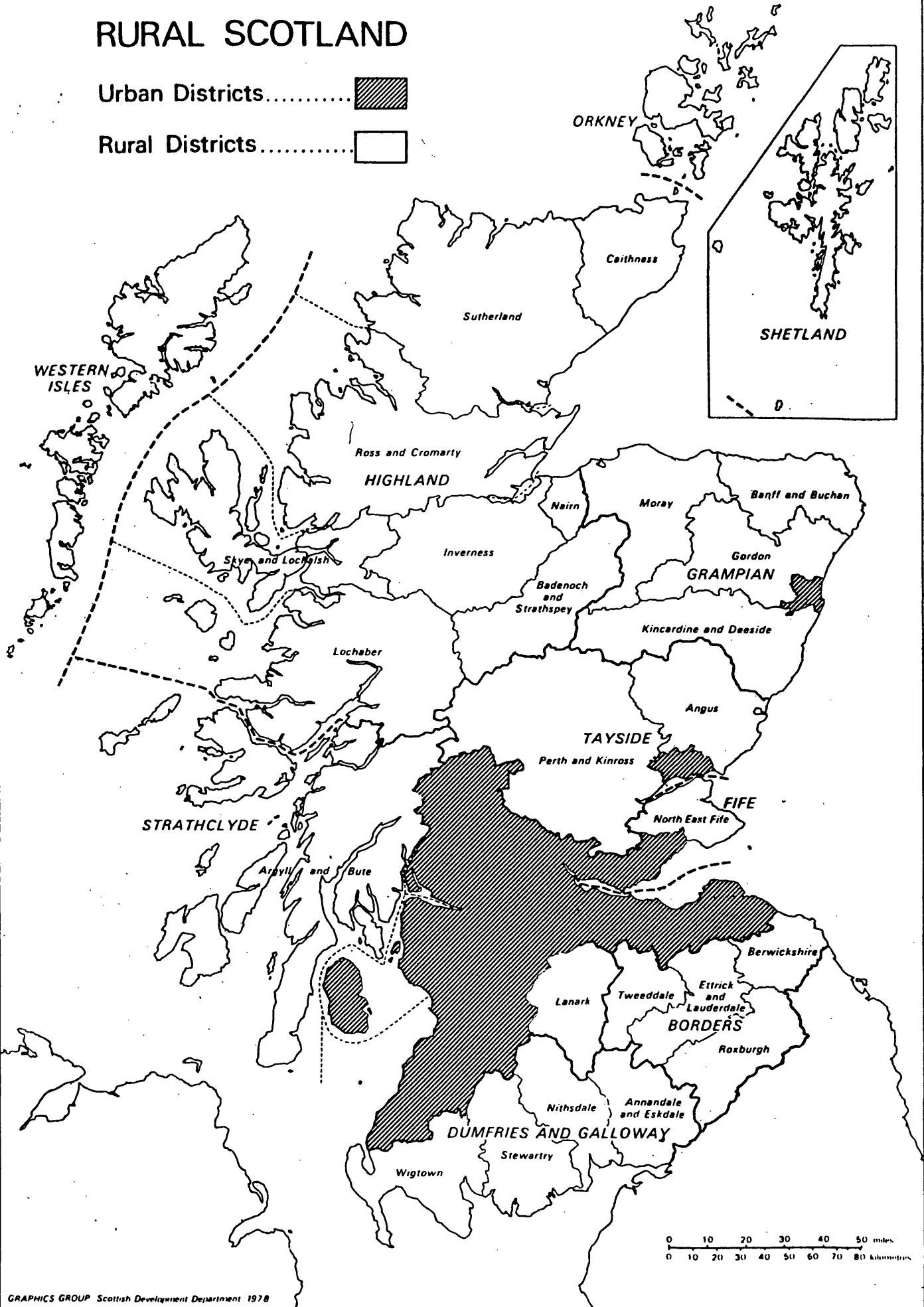
Although this classification of rural areas includes some major settlements like Inverness, it is suggested that these form an integral part of the rural regions' economy. A map depicting rural Scotland is shown overleaf and a complete list of all rural Districts is set out in Appendix A.

The main reason for adopting this definition of "rural" is for statistical convenience. The majority of data collected for this study is taken from Scottish Development Department Records and these are broken down to District level. As will be shown in Chapter One

RURAL SCOTLAND

Urban Districts..... 

Rural Districts..... 



it is very important to study rural areas at as local a scale as possible.

Three other terms need defining, namely rehabilitation, improvement and modernisation. In the past the term rehabilitation was generally used to describe private sector improvements. However the term has since been used to describe a wide range of work designed to not only raise the physical standard of the building but also to revitalise the areas in which such buildings are situated. However, the terms rehabilitation and improvement in this study will be used to describe the works required to raise one or more dwellings above the minimum level of fitness known as the tolerable standard (See Appendix C). It is likely that much of this work will be eligible for grant aid. Modernisation will refer to work on properties that are generally in a better condition and probably already meet the tolerable standard. This work is designed to raise the level of comfort and amenity of a dwelling, e.g. putting in more up-to-date fittings - central heating, more modern bathroom suites, and so on.

General

There is an extensive and wideranging literature on the subject of urban housing improvement. Sadly this is not matched by comparable literature on rural areas. To-date most writers and researchers have concentrated on the large English Cities where the main problems are seen to lie. Unfortunately, Scottish housing traditions and policies are often different, e.g. there is a marked contrast in the legislative provision for improvement. In England early area based approaches to improvement were initiated through the declaration of General Improvement Areas whereas in Scotland Housing Treatment Areas were used.

Within Scotland the major focus of attention of both researcher

and Central Government has been the cities, particularly Glasgow. The only recent major study in rural areas has been the report by the Social Research & Building Directorate Staff of the Scottish Office - "Housing in Rural Scotland" which appeared in draft form in 1979. There are no plans to publish the study possibly because of the major expenditure implications of many of its recommendations. Prior to this the H.I.D.B. had published two small studies "Rural Housing in the Highlands and Islands" (1974) and "Housing Improvement Surveys: Barra 1972". The S.D.D. study in 1979 only looked very briefly at private improvement in 6 case study areas and did not consider local authority improvement schemes at all nor H.A.A.s. There therefore exists a great dearth in the information available on rural housing improvement and the first aim of this study is to bridge that gap.

There is some doubt about the true extent and nature of the housing problem in rural areas and in the first chapter the distinctiveness of a rural context will be examined and the rural housing problem will be identified. Although planners do not actually have to use the Housing Acts it is important that they know how to handle them and understand how they operate. For instance the demolition of new houses, and the building of new ones all have direct landuse implications and these are now the concern of local plans. Therefore in Chapter Two the legislative framework for improvement will be considered. In Chapter Three the actual pattern of improvement activity will be analysed and in Chapter Four a closer look will be taken at three case study areas. It is hoped that on the basis of these two chapters it will be possible to explain why improvement activity takes the form it does in rural areas and also to recommend some sort of organisational strategy for improvement in

different types of rural area

The major aims of this dissertation, therefore, are:

- i) Fill a gap in the existing research.
- ii) Establish the size and nature of the housing problem in rural areas.
- iii) To find out what response there has been in rural Scotland to try and improve the housing stock.
- iv) To see what approaches three particular authorities have adopted & to establish any difficulties they have encountered.
- v) To recommend a set of alternative improvement strategies for different areas.

CHAPTER ONE

HOUSING - THE DISTINCTIVENESS OF A RURAL CONTEXT

AND REASONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Housing - the Distinctiveness of a Rural Context and Reasons for Improvement.

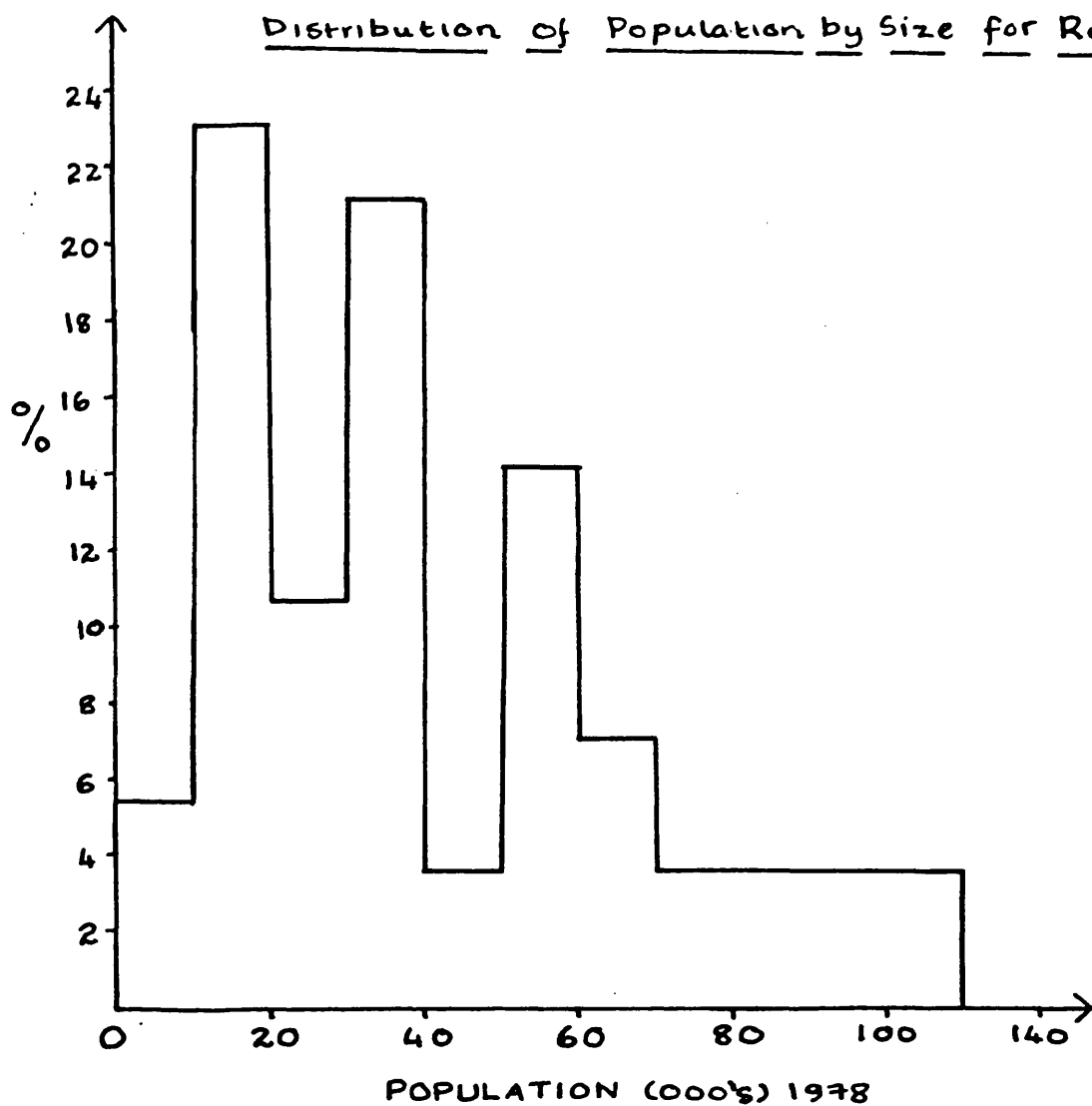
There are many features in rural areas which individually or collectively contribute to the distinctiveness of a rural context. This chapter aims to highlight some of these features, particularly those which may have implications for the organisation, success or failure of rural housing improvement. The second section of the chapter will be devoted to establishing the nature and extent of the rural housing problem and in the final section the reasons for housing improvement will be considered.

Section 1

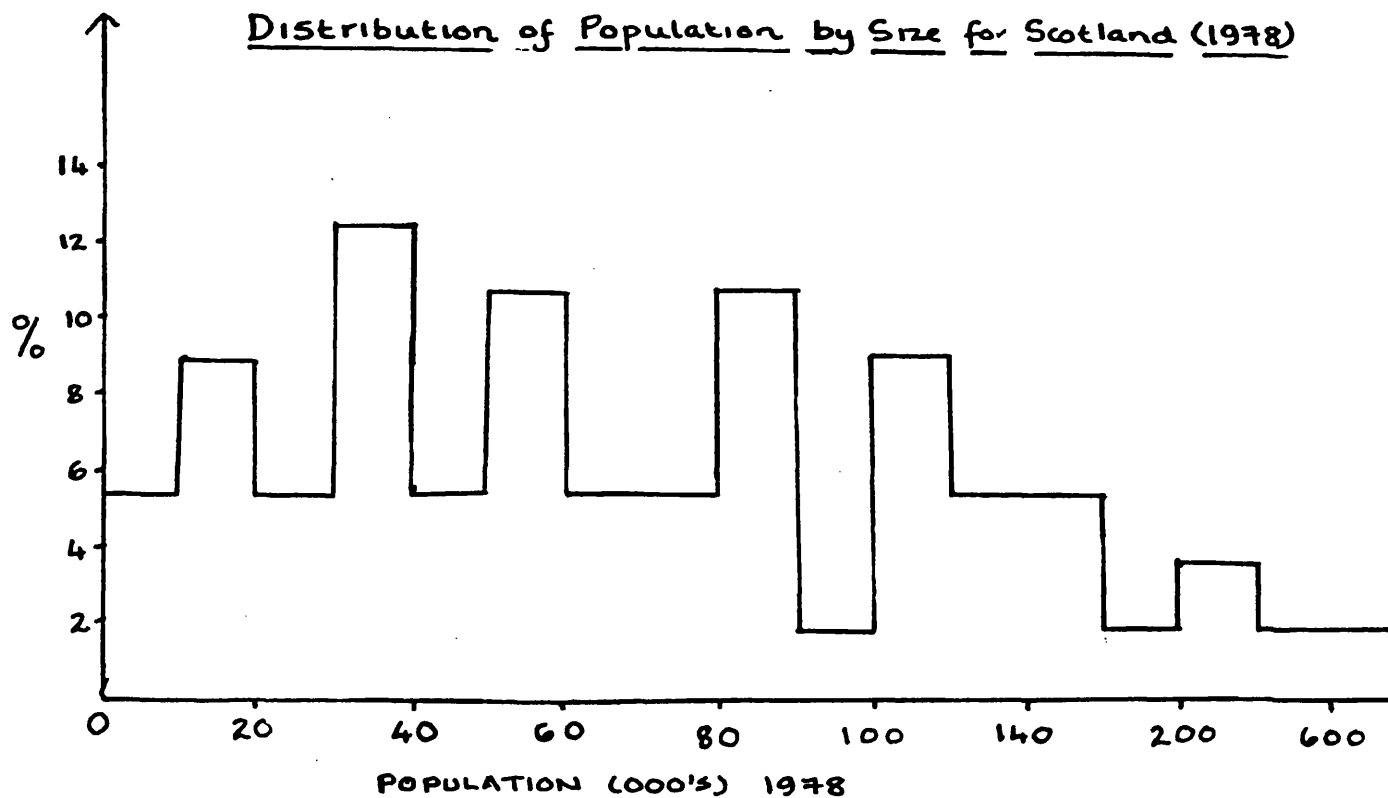
Analysis of a wide range of rural statistics highlights the very distinctive and often varied nature of population, and housing characteristics in rural Scotland. Since the main concern of this dissertation is the improvement of housing in rural areas only a brief discussion of the main population characteristics is necessary. A summary chart setting out details for all rural Districts has been prepared to emphasise the variations between areas.

The population of most rural Districts is relatively small. In 1978 only 22.7% of the Scottish population lived in rural areas and 60% of all rural Districts had a population of less than 40,000. (See Diagram A). Because of the very hilly and desolate terrain which characterises many rural areas, large tracts of rural Scotland remain uninhabited. For this reason the population density figures shown in Table 1.1. should not be taken as a good indicator of population distribution. For example, Lochaber District has a very low population density. The reason for this is it includes Ben Nevis where no-one lives. In fact, the people of Lochaber are closely

Distribution of Population by Size for Rural Scotland (1978)



Distribution of Population by Size for Scotland (1978)



Source: Registrar General's Midyear Estimates 1978.

concentrated in Coull and Fort William where the population densities are very high. The Rural Housing Study examined the distribution of the population in six case study areas and this also revealed the very distinctive nature of population distribution in rural areas. In Orkney two-thirds of the population lived on the mainland, with the majority concentrated in the two main settlements, Kirkwall and Stromness. Similarly in Argyll and Bute almost half the total population lived in the seven main settlements, and in Ettrick & Lauderdale and Moray heavy concentrations were found in the former burghs. Only in Sutherland and the Western Isles did the majority of the population live in the rural landward areas (R.H.S. 1979).

In common with all areas of Scotland there have been significant and varied changes in the population of rural Districts. The Rural Indicators Study showed that in the period 1961 - 71 rural Scotland suffered a general decline in population through negative rates of net migration and low rates of natural increase. This trend was reversed between 1971 and 1975 when most rural Districts experienced some population increase through positive rates of net migration (S.D.D. 1978). Population change in rural areas has varied quite widely as Table 1.1. shows when the density figures for 1971 and 1978 are compared. Possibly the most important feature of population change has been its scale and selectivity. (McCleary 1979). While a region may be experiencing net population gain, within that region the more sparsely populated areas are likely to be losing population to centres of established growth. This has been the case in Grampian and Highland Region where the rapid growth of oil related industry has accentuated the core/periphery divergence. The persistent trend

TABLE 1.1.

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION 1978

<u>District</u>	<u>Total Pop.</u> <u>(000's)</u>	<u>Sq. Mls.</u>	<u>Pop.</u> <u>Density</u>	<u>1971</u>
Skye & Lochalsh	10.1	958.362	10.5	(10.1)
Sutherland	12.7	1732.433	7.3	(6.9)
Western Isles	29.7	1118.752	26.5	(25.2)
Gordon	57.2	854.989	66.9	(52.6)
Berwickshire	17.9	338.016	52.9	(50.2)
Shetland	21.4	551.824	38.7	(31.4)
Orkney	18.2	376.759	48.3	(45.3)
Kincardine & Deeside	38.2	983.801	38.8	(33.9)
Badenoch & Strathspey	9.6	895.401	10.7	(10.4)
Ross & Cromarty	42.7	1930.386	22.1	(18.1)
Stewartry	22.4	645.079	34.7	(34.4)
Wigtown	29.7	661.295	44.9	(45.3)
Lochaber	20.1	1724.988	11.6	(11.1)
Argyll & Bute	64.7	2608.603	24.8	(25.0)
Caithness	27.8	1217.155	22.8	(24.3)
Banff & Buchan	78.6	589.306	133.4	(123.6)
Tweeddale	13.9	347.254	40.0	(39.4)
Annandale & Eskdale	35.1	599.775	58.2	(57.7)
Perth & Kinross	119.5	2021.246	59.1	(57.4)
N.E. Fife	65.7	292.535	224.6	(210.7)
Moray	81.5	861.234	94.6	(87.8)
Roxburgh	35.9	594.778	60.4	(59.5)
Inverness	55.4	1081.155	51.2	(46.0)
Lanark	56.1	511.601	109.6	(104.6)
Angus	91.9	784.935	117.1	(107.2)
Nithsdale	56.2	553.331	101.6	(102.1)
Nairn	10.2	162.910	62.6	(67.8)
Ettrick & Lauderdale	32.9	523.621	62.8	(61.9)
Scotland	5179.4	29795.690	173.8	(175.5)
Rural Scotland	1155.3	25521.529	45.3	(42.7)

Source: 1978 Mid Year Estimates & 1978 Scottish Rural Indicators Study.

of depopulation in remoter rural areas is still a serious problem and is one which casts some doubt on the future use of substandard stock in such areas. Another distinctive aspect of population, which is also liable to have some bearing on the success of improvement in rural areas, concerns the high proportions of elderly and relatively low proportions of young people which characterise rural Scotland. Table 1.2. shows the population structure in Rural Scotland in 1975 and highlights the variations between individual Districts.

The 1971 Census provides the most wideranging standardised set of statistics suitable for the comparison of rural and urban housing characteristics. These are summarised in the table 1.3. below to highlight the distinctiveness of housing in a rural context.

TABLE 1.3. KEY HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS 1971

	<u>Scotland</u>	<u>Urban Scotland</u>	<u>Rural Scotland</u>
<u>Dwellings</u>			
Total dwellings	1809380	1411427	397956
% Occupied	94.9	95.6	92.3
% Vacant	5.1	4.4	7.7
<u>Households</u>			
Total Households	1686060	1332126	353934
% in permanent dwellings	99.6	99.8	99.1
% not in permanent dwellings	0.3	0.2	0.9
<u>Tenure - % of:-</u>			
Households in L.A. rented housing	53.6	57.6	38.3
Households in private rented housing	17.1	15.1	24.8
Households in owner-occupied housing	29.3	27.3	36.9
<u>Amenities</u>			
Households living at more than 1.5 persons per room	6.5	7.3	3.5
Households living at less than 0.5 persons per room	18.8	16.3	28.3

Source: 1971 Census, Small Area Statistics

TABLE 1.2.

POPULATION STRUCTURE 1975

<u>District/Islands Area</u>	<u>Males 65+ Females 60+ % Pop. retired</u>	<u>% Aged 55-64 M 50-59 F</u>	<u>% Aged 15-54 M 15-49 F</u>	<u>% Aged 0-14</u>
Tweeddale	23.7	10.8	44.6	20.9
Western Isles	23.0	11.1	41.9	24.0
Skye & Lochalsh	21.6	12.4	43.3	22.7
Berwickshire	21.1	12.0	45.8	21.1
Argyll & Bute	20.9	10.7	45.6	22.8
Ettrick & Lauderdale	20.9	12.1	45.5	21.5
Roxburgh	20.6	11.1	46.0	22.3
Stewartry	20.5	11.2	46.0	22.3
N.E. Fife	19.9	10.8	48.3	21.0
Orkney	19.9	11.4	45.4	23.3
Shetland	19.5	10.3	46.4	23.8
Kincardine & Deeside	19.4	10.4	47.7	22.5
Sutherland	19.3	10.9	48.8	21.0
Nairn	19.1	9.6	47.9	23.4
Perth & Kinross	19.1	11.2	47.5	22.2
Angus	19.0	11.1	47.0	22.9
Gordon	18.8	10.4	47.4	23.4
Badenoch & Strathspey	18.1	11.7	46.8	23.4
Annandale & Eskdale	17.6	11.4	47.7	23.3
Wigtown	17.3	11.0	47.4	24.3
Nithsdale	16.6	11.1	48.2	24.1
Banff & Buchan	16.5	10.6	48.6	24.3
Caithness	15.9	10.1	48.0	26.0
Ross & Cromarty	15.6	9.7	50.0	24.7
Lanark	15.5	10.7	49.3	24.5
Moray	15.4	9.7	50.1	24.8
Inverness	15.3	10.2	50.4	24.1
Lochaber	14.1	9.6	48.5	27.8
Scotland	16.3	10.9	48.2	24.6
Rural Scotland	18.4	10.7	47.6	23.3

Source: Registrar General's Office Annual Estimates of Home
Population. 1975.

Four main conclusions can be drawn from the table:

- i) the proportion of vacant stock is higher in rural areas.
- ii) a greater percentage of rural households live in non permanent dwellings.
- iii) owner occupation and private sector renting are more common in rural areas and public renting less common.
- iv) overcrowding is less prevalent in rural Scotland and there are greater proportions of households in under-occupation.

Once the data is broken down to District level wide variations between rural areas can be detected (See Summary Chart for details). For example 64% of the rural areas of Scotland had vacancy rates of more than 7% in 1971 and only Nithsdale had a lower rate than Scotland as a whole. The very high proportions of vacant dwellings in rural areas can be explained in part, by the reluctance of many rural authorities to demolish vacant substandard property. In remote areas this is compounded by the abandonment of property as a consequence of outmigration.

Perhaps the most interesting contrasts within rural Scotland are those associated with the distinctive patterns of housing tenure. Generally the largest sectors of local authority housing are found in areas which have experienced some form of rapid economic expansion, e.g. Lochaber, or have locations near the main urban settlements, e.g. Lanark. Local housing traditions, preferences and estate policies may also be reflected in the tenure pattern. For example, the high proportions of private rented property found in Kincardine & Deeside, Badenoch & Strathspey, Berwickshire & Roxburgh can be related to estate policies and the pattern of agricultural development. Similarly, the very high owner occupation levels in Orkney, the Western

Isles and Skye reflect the importance of crofting in these areas.

It is more than likely that some change has taken place in the size and quality of housing stock since 1971. The Census figures can be brought more up-to-date by adding some of the information contained in the S.D.D. Housing Statistics. The figures for 1971-78 have been broken down into two periods, January 1971 - April 1975 (when local government reorganisation took place) and May 1975 - December 1978. The figures for 1971 - April 1975 have been worked out from the supplementary tables available with the S.D.D. Rural Housing Study which relate to the old county areas. The May 1975 - 78 figures are derived from the "Scottish Housing Returns" for 1975-77 and the "Scottish Housing Statistics Handbook" for 1978, (both published by the S.D.D.). These figures correspond to the post reorganisation District and Island Authority Areas.

In view of the observed variations in the housing and population characteristics, it is not surprising that the change in the size of the rural housing stock differs, often quite widely from area to area. In the period 1971 to April 1975 rural areas accounted for 23% of all the new houses completed in Scotland. The majority of the 32,167 completions took place in the counties of Aberdeen, Angus, Perth and Ross & Cromarty. During the same period the rural areas of Scotland closed or demolished 3,670 properties which represented only 1% of the total rural stock and 5% of all the closures and demolitions in Scotland. In most areas very few buildings were demolished and in Orkney there were no demolitions or closures at all. Only in Perthshire and Selkirk were a significant number of dwellings demolished.

In the period following local government reorganisation to

December 1978 rural Scotland experienced a 19.5% rise in the number of new house completions. Just over 64% of the 39,989 houses completed were located in the Districts of Ross & Cromarty, Inverness, Angus, Perth and the four rural Districts of Grampian Region. With the exception of Perth all these Districts can be associated with areas which have experienced rapid growth in oil related industry. In contrast with the rise in new building activity there was a dramatic decrease in the number of demolitions and closures for the same period. Only 0.4% of the total rural stock was demolished between May 1975 and December 1978. Not surprisingly, four Districts failed to demolish any dwellings at all and just 5 Districts demolished over 150 dwellings in rural areas. The decrease in the number of dwellings demolished was equally noticeable in urban Scotland which experienced a 67% drop on the 1971-75 figures. It is likely that this trend reflects the increasing commitment of many local authorities to a policy of improvement and rehabilitation compounded by the fact that the majority of the worst houses, particularly in urban areas, had already been cleared by the slum clearance and redevelopment programmes of the 1950's and 1960's.

When all the figures for demolitions, closures and new house completions are combined together the total net change in housing between 1971 and 1978 can be assessed. During the eight year period rural Scotland experienced a 12.9% increase in its total housing stock which compares very favourably with the 6.1% increase for Scotland as a whole. The Summary Chart highlights the details of these changes which not surprisingly, bearing in mind the small number of demolitions, are greatest in areas which achieved proportionally greater increases in the size of their stock through new

house completions. So far no consideration has been given to the quality of housing stock in rural areas. However, this omission will be put to rights in the next section when the state of the housing stock in rural areas will be established.

The Rural Housing Problem

By way of introduction to this section it is interesting to note Youngson's description of the Highlands in the Eighteenth Century:

"The first thing that struck the traveller after the general wilderness, remoteness and grandeur of the country seems to have been the atrocious standard of housing. Sod houses were the rule, usually without windows or chimneys, supported with a rough framework of tree branches, and thatched with broom or heather." (Youngson 1972 P.39)

Although there has been an appreciable change in the building materials and style of rural houses since the Eighteenth Century a quote from Cullingworth in 1967 suggests that there are still people in rural areas living under "atrocious" housing conditions:

"We ourselves have seen families inhabiting rural cottages in unbelievably squalid conditions - without water, electricity or sanitation. These may have been isolated cases but we were shocked to discover the extent of the rural problem. What we saw in Ross & Cromarty could no doubt have been repeated many times over in any of the crofting counties. Indeed the landward areas of several counties appear to have proportionally a bigger problem than that which appalled us in Glasgow." (Cullingworth 1967 P.23)

On the basis of his observations in rural areas Cullingworth recommended that a separate study of rural housing problems be carried out. This recommendation was not taken up until 1976 when the S.D.D. Housing Research Unit started work on the Rural Housing Study and reaffirmed the serious problems identified by Cullingworth in 1967.

"From 1971 rural Scotland as a whole fared slightly better in improving many aspects of its housing stock. On the other hand such generalisation conceals very wide discrepancies within rural Scotland and the very serious problems of poor housing which remain in some rural areas." (S.D.D. 1979 P.11)

The observations of Cullingworth in 1967 and the S.D.D. in 1979 seem to suggest that the rural housing problem is localised with the worst problems being concentrated in the remoter or landward areas. What exactly is the nature and extent of the rural

housing problem? Is there really a problem at all? These are questions which must be answered.

The two most widely used indicators of poor housing conditions are those based on the number of households lacking in basic amenities and the number of houses which fail to meet the statutorily defined tolerable standard (the minimum level of fitness). (See Appendices B and C for definitions of standard amenities and the tolerable standard). These two indicators will now be examined in turn to try and establish the true extent of the rural housing problem.

The number of households which lacked the exclusive use of the basic amenities were identified in the 1971 Census at parish level. However, this information has been rearranged so that it corresponds to the reorganised District areas. (See Table 1.4.). The table shows that in 1971 rural Scotland had a marginally lower percentage of households lacking in the exclusive use of all basic amenities compared to Scotland as a whole. However, this generalisation undoubtedly hides the very wide variations between different areas which ranged from Lochaber with only 6.1% of households lacking the exclusive use of all basic amenities to nearly one-third of the households in Orkney. The worst proportions of poor housing were found in Orkney (31.3%), Shetland (30.1%), Western Isles (25.6%) and Skye and Lochalsh (23.8%). These figures illustrate the very concentrated nature of the major housing problems in the Islands and N.W. mainland of Scotland. A closer examination of the table reveals that, in fact, nearly 61% of rural Scotland had proportionally fewer amenity deficient households than Scotland as a whole. The only other Districts with consistently high percentages of poor housing

TABLE 1.4.

Households lacking Exclusive Use of All Basic Amenities as a
Percentage of All Households

<u>District</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Orkney	1783	31.3
Shetland	1562	29.0
Western Isles	2306	25.6
Skye & Lochalsh	692	23.8
Ettrick & Lauderdale	1750	15.5
Banff & Buchan	3534	15.2
Angus	4389	15.0
Gordon	2079	14.6
Argyll & Bute	3053	14.5
Perth & Kinross	5290	13.8
Sutherland	506	13.5
Kincardine & Deeside	1458	13.3
Roxburgh	1624	13.1
Moray	3009	12.8
Badenoch & Strathspey	329	12.2
Ross & Cromarty	1153	10.7
Inverness	1579	10.6
Caithness	966	10.5
Tweeddale	454	9.5
N.E. Fife	1925	9.2
Nairn	234	8.7
Wigtown	777	8.3
Annandale & Eskdale	904	8.2
Nithsdale	1435	8.0
Stewartry	494	6.8
Lanark	1101	6.6
Berwickshire	396	6.6
Lochaber	337	6.1
Scotland	227618	13.5
Rural Scotland	45119	12.9

Source: 1971 Census Small Area Statistics

were Moray, Banff & Buchan and Gordon, all in the North-East, along with Angus and Ettrick & Lauderdale.

When the number of households lacking the exclusive use of all basic amenities is related to the tenure structure a very distinctive pattern emerges (See Summary Chart for details and variations). In 1971 the vast majority of poor quality houses in rural Scotland, were located in the private sector, with 48.8% of all the rural households lacking the exclusive use of all basic amenities concentrated in the private rented sector and 45.3% in the owner-occupied sector. In most rural Districts there was a fairly even split between the two private sectors with regard to the numbers of amenity deficient households, except that is, in the Islands and N.W. mainland area which have already been identified as the areas with proportionally the worst housing conditions. Excluding Shetland, the majority of the households lacking the exclusive use of all basic amenities were found in the large owner-occupied sector which characterises these crofting areas. Since local authorities have limited powers of intervention in the private sector the association of bad housing conditions with the private sector in rural areas has serious implications for the successful implementation of a housing improvement policy. This may be particularly crucial in areas with a large number of poor quality houses in the private rented sector where rent controls have taken away a lot of the incentive for landlords to improve their property. (This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Two).

So far the analysis of the quality of the rural housing stock has only been considered at District level. However, the Rural Housing Study revealed that analysis at this level is often not

sensitive enough to highlight the worst problem areas. When the numbers of households lacking the exclusive use of all basic amenities was analysed at parish level it was discovered that 225 rural parishes had a percentage greater than 13.5% (which was the Scottish average in 1971) and that a few parishes had exceptionally high percentages, e.g. Perth with 30.5%. Table 1.5. sets out the percentage of households lacking exclusive use of all basic amenities by "urban rural" and "landward rural" divisions and shows quite clearly the marked variation within and between different areas of rural Scotland. In the remoter Island areas, namely the Western Isles and Orkney, the worst housing conditions were found in the more densely populated landward areas, whereas in Ettrick & Lauderdale and Moray conditions were worst in the burghs where the main settlements are located. Therefore in 1971 it can be concluded that not only were the worst housing conditions found in distinctive tenure sectors, but they were also concentrated in the more densely populated areas which, on the basis of the analysis of the population structure in Section One of this Chapter, tend to be the areas with high proportions of elderly. The very worst conditions located in the Island areas and N.W. mainland are also the areas which are still most prone to rural depopulation, and are liable to suffer from an "income reducing" effect.⁽¹⁾

Has there been any change in the distribution of substandard properties in rural Scotland since 1971? Analysis of the 1977 estimates of below tolerable stock (B.T.S.) suggests there has been very

(1) No assessment of income characteristics was made in the first section of this chapter because no reliable data sources on income are available. However there is a general presumption in much of the literature that incomes are lower in rural areas. Gaskin 1971 noted that high freight costs in peripheral areas had an "income reducing effect" and this was quantified by MacKay in 1980 through price index studies which show that prices are higher in most rural areas, but particularly in the more peripheral sparsely populated locations).

TABLE 1.5.

Percentage Households Lacking in Basic Amenities in Six Case Study Areas in the Rural Housing Study by "Urban - Rural" and "Landward - Rural" Divisions (1971)

<u>Case Study Area</u>	<u>Subdivision</u>	<u>% Households lacking in Basic Amenities</u>
Ettrick & Lauderdale	Burghs	20
	Landward	7
	Total	16
Moray	Burghs	15
	Landward	9
	Total	13
Western Isles	Burghs	7
	Landward	29
	Total	25
Orkney	Burghs	15
	Landward	44
	Total	31
Sutherland	Burghs	9
	Landward	14
	Total	13
Argyll & Bute	Burghs	17
	Landward	12
	Total	14

Sources: 1971 Census Small Area Statistics

1979 S.D.D. "Housing in Rural Scotland"

little change. However, these figures should be treated with some caution. Since there has been no recent housing condition survey in Scotland, the figures are based on each individual local authority's interpretation of the nine-point tolerable standard. Because of the range of criteria this standard employs it is inevitable that there will be some variation in its interpretation by local authorities.

When the 1977 B.T.S. estimates were taken as an indicator of poor housing condition it was discovered that Rural Scotland had a slightly higher proportion (8.6%) of subtolerable stock compared with Scotland as a whole. Although the relative positions of the proportionally worst areas had changed, they were still concentrated in the Islands and N.W. mainland. There was one newcomer to the "worst" top five and that was Argyll & Bute. In common with the 1971 pattern there seemed to be a quite distinctive gap between the areas with the very worst housing conditions and the next group of areas where conditions were proportionally greater than Scotland as a whole. Diagram B highlights the relative changes in rank position of each rural District based on the 1971 and 1977 housing condition indices. The two columns were tested with the Spearman rank correlation coefficient. The coefficient for the columns is 0.6 and this is significant at the 0.01 level. The correlation suggests that there has been very little significant change in the relative position of the majority of rural Districts. By studying the length and angle of the arrows it can be seen that a small number of Districts have experienced slightly greater changes in their relative position in terms of housing condition. For example, Badenoch & Strathspey, Etrick & Lauderdale, Angus, Kincardine & Deeside and Roxburgh seemed

TABLE 1.6. Percentage of houses failing to meet the Tolerable

Standard as a % of all houses

<u>District</u>	<u>BTS Stock</u>	<u>Total Stock</u>	<u>%</u>
Western Isles	3267	11355	28.8
Skye & Lochalsh	1113	4651	24.0
Argyll & Bute	6000	29058	20.6
Orkney	1390	7334	19.0
Shetland	1342	7695	17.4
Ross & Cromarty	2229	17613	12.6
N.E. Fife	2584	26016	9.9
Banff & Buchan	2925	29971	9.8
Berwickshire	800	8293	9.6
Moray	2450	30104	8.1
Ettrick & Lauderdale	994	13856	7.2
Inverness	1449	20139	7.2
Sutherland	449	6251	7.2
Perth & Kinross	3049	47104	6.5
Angus	3203	36884	5.7
Lochaber	420	7636	5.5
Annandale & Eskdale	694	13459	5.2
Gordon	1052	21780	4.8
Caithness	477	10384	4.6
Roxburgh	675	15306	4.4
Kincardine & Deeside	4074	15656	4.3
Stewartry	387	9520	4.1
Tweeddale	246	6185	3.9
Nairn	94	3748	2.5
Nithsdale	491	21147	2.3
Lanark	427	19610	2.3
Wigtown	232	11888	2.0
Badenoch & Strathspey	84	4226	2.0
Rural Scotland	39250	456869	8.6
Urban Scotland	110628	1470106	7.5
Scotland	149878	1926975	7.7

to have improved their position, whereas in Lochaber, Ross & Cromarty, N.E. Fife, Berwickshire and Argyll & Bute the relative position seems to have become worse. It may be the case that some of these differences can be attributed to the variation in interpretation of the tolerable standard by individual authorities whereby authorities whose housing condition position has got notably worse interpret the standard in the widest possible way to include as many houses as possible and other authorities basing their estimates on a very narrow interpretation of the criteria thereby underestimating the problem. It is worth noting that theoretically if a household only lacks a bath or shower and has no other fault then it would not fail the tolerable standard, but would be included in the category of households lacking the exclusive use of all basic amenities.

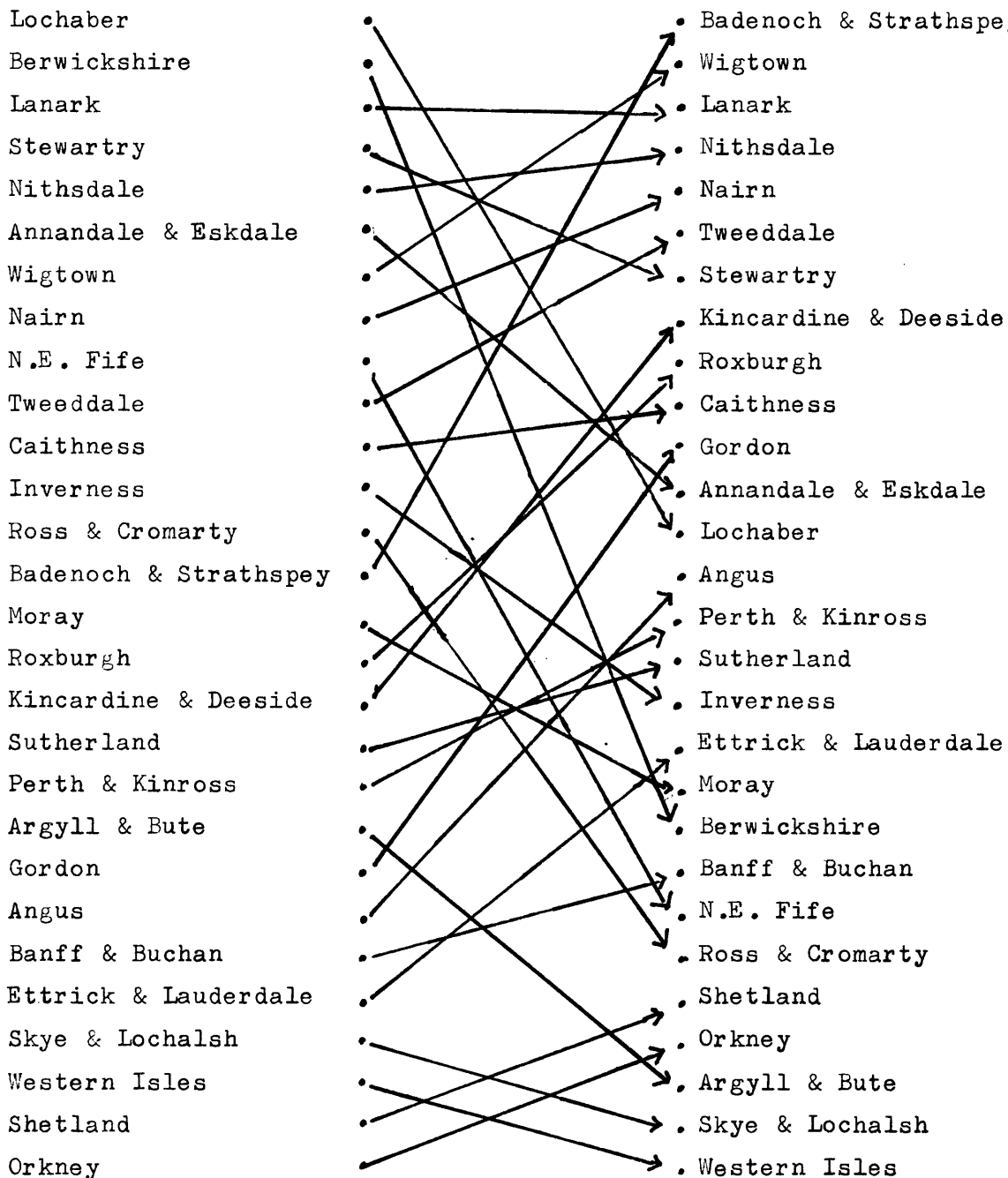
Alternatively it could be tentatively suggested that any relative changes for the better shown in the diagram may reflect the success of some local authorities in their efforts to eliminate substandard housing through a programme of improvement and rehabilitation and/or demolition. The very low demolition rates in rural areas suggest that the latter is unlikely to be the case. Conversely observed changes for the worse might indicate that little effort has been made to improve substandard stock or that any effort which has been made has met with little success. These ideas are worth reconsidering once the scale and pattern of improvement activity in rural areas have been established in Chapter Three.

Case study fieldwork for this dissertation confirmed the S.D.D. observation that District analysis is not sufficiently sensitive to highlight the worst housing problem areas. In Ettrick & Lauderdale the worst housing problems, identified by the proportion of subtol-

DIAGRAM B

Districts ranked by %
Households lacking in
basic amenities (1971)

Districts ranked by %
Dwellings failing to meet
the tolerable standard (1977)



Source: 1971 Census & 1979 Housing Statistics 1st Quarter

The above Districts are ranked with the smallest % of households lacking in basic amenities and the least number of dwellings below the tolerable standard, AT THE TOP, i.e. the higher up the table the better the housing conditions are in relation to other rural areas and vice versa. An arrow pointing steeply upwards shows that housing conditions in that District are relatively better in relation to the rest of Rural Scotland and vice versa.

erable to total stock, still remain in the former burghs of Galashiels and Selkirk where approximately 59.7% and 14.3% of the subtolerable houses are respectively located. According to the Director of Environmental Health for Gordon District the majority of the subtolerable houses are located in the "large tracts of hinterland in Central Aberdeenshire", in other words the remoter landward areas. The most alarming variations in the distribution of subtolerable stock were identified in the Western Isles. As table 1.7. shows the largest numbers of subtolerable houses are found in the landward areas of the northerly islands, however the greatest proportions are located in the islands to the south where more than 50% of the stock fails to meet the tolerable standard.

A housing condition survey of below tolerable stock and its occupants, in six case study areas was carried out by the S.D.D. in the Rural Housing Study. Its findings substantiate the conclusions based on the 1971 Census data, namely that the worst housing conditions are found in the private sector, particularly the owner occupied sector, and are concentrated in the more populated landward parts of the remoter island areas, where there are high proportions of elderly. (The main findings of the Housing condition survey have been set out in Appendix E).

To conclude the first two sections of this chapter it can be said that in the period 1971-78 rural Scotland had a proportionally greater share of the new housing output with the majority of completions being located in areas experiencing oil related growth. Demolition rates, already very low in rural areas, slowed down. Therefore it is not surprising that the main changes in housing stock were also to be found in the oil related areas.

TABLE 1.7.

% Below Tolerable Stock to Total Stock by Area - Western Isles

Estimates 1979

<u>Area</u>	<u>Total Stock</u>	<u>Approx. No. B.T.S. Stock</u>	<u>B.T.S. Total</u> x 100
Lewis	7921	1292	16.3%
Harris	1214	406	33.4%
N. Uist	701	365	52.1%
S. Uist	1191	602	50.5%
Barra	630	327	51.9%
Western Isles	11657	2992	25.6%

Source: Comhairle nan Eilean, Environmental Health Dept. -

31st December 1979

Rural Scotland does have a housing problem which is very distinctive in its nature and extent. In general, poor housing conditions are associated with the more populated parts of rural areas and are concentrated in the private sector where it is more difficult for local authorities to intervene. The proportionally worst housing conditions are found in the remoter parts of the N.W. mainland and the island areas where crofting tends to predominate. The very high proportions of elderly in rural areas may affect attempts to eliminate substandard property by improvement, since old people often cannot afford to improve their property and are generally less willing and able to cope with the upheaval of improvement. The very localised nature of the very worst housing conditions highlights the need for very sensitive analysis in rural areas. The very fact that there are proportionally large numbers of substandard houses in many parts of rural Scotland should serve as a sufficient reason to try and eliminate such stock through improvement and rehabilitation. In the third and final section of this chapter the origins of the Government's commitment to a policy of rehabilitation will be briefly outlined. This will be accompanied by a discussion of some of the points which have arisen in the rehabilitation versus redevelopment debate. Finally a short account of the theory behind investment in improvement will be given.

Reasons for Improvement

Much of the discussion concerning improvement and rehabilitation has centred on the cities where in terms of the sheer numbers of unfit houses the worst problems are seen to lie. For this reason many of the arguments for and against rehabilitation and improvement have developed with urban examples in mind.

To start with the present-day problems of housing will be set in their historical context. Such a review is necessary to emphasise the basic themes in housing. In the Nineteenth Century rural and urban housing problems were equated essentially with the problems of overcrowded and insanitary living conditions. During the present century, however, housing problems have been increasingly placed in the wider context of Town and Country planning so that current housing problems, particularly rural ones, are considered more from the viewpoint of landuse planning than public health.

The legislation in the late Nineteenth Century and early Twentieth Century took the form of Public Health Acts which were aimed at the relief of the insanitary and overcrowded conditions found in both the town and country. By the turn of the century the private provision of housing was becoming more and more difficult. (Rogers 1976). In rural areas the deterioration of the livelihood of the private landowner which accompanied the onset of the agricultural depression resulted in large numbers of rural cottages falling into disrepair as owners could not afford to maintain them. In the towns and cities rapid urbanisation was accompanied by a lot of building activity, however, in both town and country the growing demand for decent housing was not being met. The feeling of the time was that the growing demand could only be satisfied by central

government funding.

In 1907 the Campbell-Bannerman Select Committee followed Ebenezer Howard in considering that poor rural housing was driving people into the towns. The Committee recommended that agricultural housing should be improved and tied cottages abolished. More significantly they also suggested that County Councils should take responsibility for health and housing and that the Treasury should make cheap loans available for local authorities for new house construction. Some of these provisions were built into the 1909 Act. However, it was not until the First World War was over that Central government funding of housing became possible. From this time on Central government and local authorities have become increasingly responsible for the provision of housing. (Rogers 1976).

Since the 1920's housing policy in Scotland has been dominated by an increasing commitment to improve the living conditions of urban and rural poor by the provision of new local authority houses. Following the Second World War concern for rural areas has been largely subsumed by the problems of the nation's housing. Associated with the new building policy have been a number of planning policies for controlling density. In urban areas growth was encouraged away from city centres on peripheral estates and in New Towns. In rural areas the planning machine has seen density control more as a means of preserving the rural countryside, than improving living conditions, with much of the new local authority housing being concentrated in key settlements. At no time after the Second World War was rehabilitation of existing property either in city centres or rural areas perceived as a viable alternative to new housing, that is until the late Sixties.

Commentators and writers on housing in the Fifties had concluded that the only real solution to the housing problem was a massive and sustained programme of new house building. It was not, however, until the early 1960's that central government made a firm commitment to such a programme at the expense of rehabilitation. The reason for such a policy stemmed from a national assessment, by both Conservative and Labour governments, regarding the best use of resources (Balchin 1979) which was compounded in local areas by the attachment of stigma to substandard properties (Glasgow Corporation 1974). However, the expanded new building programme was very short-lived. By the late 1960's there was a growing realisation that there was still extensive socio-economic deprivation in particular urban areas which was highlighted in the plight of the inner cities. (MacLennan et al. 1980). The increasing concern for these areas was reflected in the Urban Programme in 1968, the year which also marked the abandonment of the new building programme and the start of a new era of rehabilitation and improvement.

There is some debate as to the reasons for this change in directive. Generally the abandonment of the new building programme has been attributed to the deflationary measures taken during the backwash of the 1967 devaluation. Berry (1974) has suggested that the true reason was a result of the refusal of newly elected councils to carry on building council houses. Consequently, he argued, the Labour government saw improvement as a quick, cheap way of producing results which would help justify and explain their failure to maintain commitment to new house building.

Regardless of the "true" reason for the slowing up of new house building it was an observed fact that the provision of new houses was

becoming slower than the rate at which older properties were deteriorating. Consequently, rehabilitation was perceived as a necessary, quick and cheap way of "catching up" with substandard property (McLennan et al. 1980). There were, of course, other contributory factors giving rise to the change in perspective, including the potential political popularity of such a move, bearing in mind the discontent slum clearance created among residents.

The major shift in emphasis from redevelopment and new building to rehabilitation in the late Sixties was reflected in the 1968 (Housing (Financial Provisions)(Scotland)) Act which, for the first time, indicated significant financial commitment from central government to rehabilitation, over and above private improvement grants, and the 1969 Housing (Scotland) Act which introduced a positive area based approach to the improvement of substandard housing. These two Acts helped form the foundation of the current legislative framework for improvement which will be discussed in Chapter Two.

The shift in policy gave, and still continues to give, rise to a great deal of debate concerning the merits and demerits of one approach over the other. The advantages of improvement are usually considered to be that it is cheaper; that it does not disturb or break up communities (community breakup has frequently been a major criticism of redevelopment); that an older house which can be improved with the aid of a grant represents an increasingly important option for young, first-time buyers in the face of rapidly rising house prices; that grant aided private improvement ensures that dwellings remain in the private sector, whereas municipal redevelopment will result in an increase in the public sector. (Berry 1974).

In reply critics have pointed out that large-scale rehabilitation

is not quicker than redevelopment (Pepper 1971); that communities are not static and frequently only exist in the minds of planners (Davies 1971); that improvement, though cheaper, does not have a sound economic basis in the sense that it invests several thousands of pounds on individual houses, which are often old and will ultimately have to be replaced, without carefully examining the relative costs and benefits of such action. In addition to these criticisms much has been made of the abuse of grants. In rural areas the use of grants to convert cottages into second or holiday homes has been cited as the major misuse. However, this malpractice has been effectively stamped out by introducing more stringent residency qualifications to the conditions attached to a grant. A grant may only be approved if the applicant is the owner or lessee of the property and intends to take up permanent residence once the improvement works are complete. ((Housing) Scotland Act, 1974).

Most of the criticisms voiced against rehabilitation carry little weight in rural areas. As will be shown in the case studies in Chapter Four, it is generally cheaper to improve rather than rebuild. There are very few large area based schemes in rural areas (see Chapter 3) since subtolerable housing does not occur on the same scale or in the same concentrations as in urban areas which are best suited to such an approach. Communities and their importance in rural life have been recognised for years. Their desirability has been reflected in the attempts to foster, through the neighbourhood concept in urban locations, communities based on a rural ideal.

The more serious allegation concerning the economic rationale behind improvement deserves more scrutiny since it applies to both urban and rural areas. It should, however, be borne in mind that

already some houses built only ten or twenty years ago require extensive improvements and repairs and in some cases replacement. The reasons for this do not always relate to the physical state of the property but may reflect some of the social problems like vandalism which are often associated with high density and, in particular, high-rise living. However, announcements like the one made in March 1980 by Glasgow District Council when they revealed that one-fifth of the local authority stock is affected by dampness, which means it falls below the tolerable standard, and that £140 million is required to eliminate the problem - this is a nationwide problem. The point to be taken from this is that many older, traditional houses which are often built with materials of superior quality to those available today (S.D.D. 1979) can, with proper maintenance and improvement, provide tolerable living conditions for a great many families at reasonable expense when relatively new houses may require costly repairs or even replacement.

It must be pointed out that the legislation tries to guard against unsound investment of improvement grants by demanding that a house after minor improvement work has a minimum expected life of ten years. Usually a life expectancy of thirty years is required before a house is eligible for the maximum "approved" grant expenditure which is currently £4,125, and after improvement work is complete the house must meet the statutorily defined tolerable standard and be in a good state of repair. (See Appendix C for the definition of the tolerable standard and Appendix D for the conditions the house must meet to attain this minimum standard - as can be seen these are very comprehensive). Some local authorities encourage individuals to improve their houses to a level higher than the tolerable

standard. Housing Associations, in particular, try to ensure that improvement work generally exceeds the minimum standard in order to prolong and ensure the life expectancy of the dwelling (S.D.D. 1979).

The S.D.D. have also recommended the state a house should be in before improvement is feasible - at the very least it must have a sound external structure, i.e. four good solid walls. Although this guidance does not have to be adhered to by local authorities it is in their interests to follow it since the Secretary of State must be satisfied that the improvement works and costs were justified before he makes any Exchequer payment to the local authority towards the cost of the improvement grant (at present this payment is about 75% of the cost of the grant). If the Secretary of State considers that the improvements and costs were not justified then payment is withheld and the local authority must shoulder the burden of the full cost of the improvement grant themselves. Very few authorities are willing, or can afford, to do this. Therefore quite careful assessments are made of dwellings and the improvement plan before a grant application is approved. Although it is very difficult to assess the relative costs and benefits of improvement, local authorities do try to consider the economic rationale of individual improvement applications before making any decision. Inevitably there will be a few unsound investments but these will often be justified on social grounds. It, therefore, seems unfair to dismiss improvement on economic grounds.

New houses should not be considered a panacea for all ills; they too will require additional expenditure on repairs and maintenance (often very costly ones as the Glasgow report has shown). It seems

that many of the arguments against rehabilitation stem from a fear that rehabilitation policy may be used as a substitute for replacement. The continuous decline in the new building rates has only served to increase these fears (see table 1.8.). Not even the greatest proponents of rehabilitation have claimed that improvement can ever stop the process of deterioration that will inevitably require that a house be replaced. What improvement can do is slow down, or hold up this process and prolong the life of a house until such time as it can be replaced. Cullingworth in 1967 stated that improvement should be seen as:

"a vital ingredient in the housing programme; not as an end itself, but the means by which a long-term building programme can be instigated." (Cullingworth 1967)

Rehabilitation and redevelopment should not be seen in direct competition with each other, but as complementary means of achieving a good housing stock, providing what is often regarded as a right in this country - a decent house. Because the building of new houses cannot be expanded sufficiently to replace all the existing subtolerable dwellings, it is only prudent to make the best use of the existing stock by keeping it in a good state of repair and from time improving it to meet the rising expectations of the occupants. If improvement work is not carried out there is a great danger that quite large numbers of houses will fall into such a serious state of disrepair that they will have to be demolished and, therefore, will be lost from the available stock. This has particularly serious implications in rural areas since the poorest houses are located in the remoter areas, whereas the majority of the new building is currently confined to areas of oil related growth. There is a grave danger that if poor houses in remoter areas are demolished, they will

TABLE 1.8. New Building Starts and Completions in Scotland 1969 - 78

	Y E A R									
	<u>1969</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>
<u>New Starts</u>										
Public	31162	28364	22339	19821	17285	22258	19706	14605	9840	9134
Private	8640	8141	11922	13649	15593	10258	11965	16304	12631	16566
<u>Total</u>	39802	36505	34261	33470	32878	32510	31671	30909	22471	25700
<u>Completions</u>										
Public	34302	34906	29169	20157	17818	17097	23952	22823	15188	11335
Private	8327	8220	11614	11835	12215	11239	10371	13704	12132	14443
<u>Total</u>	42629	43126	40783	31992	30033	28336	34323	36527	27320	25778

Source: Scottish Housing Statistics (First Quarter 1979)

not be replaced and this may aggravate the ongoing process of depopulation and rural decline.

In the final part of this section the basic theory behind improvement will be considered. MacLennan in 1980 noted that effectively what the government is saying by stimulating improvement and rehabilitation is that the level of investment produced currently or historically by the interaction of housing markets and housing policies is less than the rate required in relation to a number of objectives. He went on to argue that this being the case, the government then has a series of policy instruments available. In a competitive housing market where policy objectives reflect those of residents then improvement investments can be stimulated by a series of tax, subsidy or grant schemes, the former having been widely used in Scottish housing policy through the provision of private improvement grants which have been available since 1949.

However, these incentives to individuals may fail for a number of reasons - other policy instruments may reduce their effectiveness, e.g. policies relating to rent controls. More importantly, there may be information co-ordination problems for rehabilitation which cannot be solved by private markets. For example, in a case where ownership of property in a street is widely dispersed any individual seeking to make an investment decision to improve his property will be uncertain about the intentions of surrounding residents. Therefore if he is the only person to invest he will only receive relatively low benefits of such investment, whereas if a large number of owners invest in improvement, much larger benefits will be achieved through the overall increase in the amenity of the area. In very poor residential environments the cycle of decline and disrepair is often

accompanied by social and economic change which makes owners and residents less able or willing to invest. Generally in such cases individualistic investment cannot break the cycle of decline which manifests itself in the run-down inner city areas and, to a lesser extent, in some larger rural towns and many declining landward rural settlements. In this event some form of intervention is required to organise the planning of rehabilitation and improvement (McLennan 1980).

If the rehabilitation programme is designed merely to break misallocations of resources based on uncertainty in favour of local residents then the role of central government may be considered to be largely "indicative" in planning terms and local authority activity can still exist even if improved houses are reallocated via market mechanisms. However, rehabilitation policy in Scotland has developed from a programme designed initially to improve the physical fabric of houses to a method of housing market intervention and tenure change and, more importantly, as a means of community revitalisation and a method of transferring income via housing subsidy.

"All these functions and outputs require critical scrutiny."
(MacLennan 1979)

For example, if, as has been suggested, rehabilitation policy is mainly concerned with investment, then it is closely related to resident and institutional confidence in the sense that if expectations in a location are pessimistic for any reason, then housing structures may become neglected and fall in relative value. This is very much the case in declining rural communities where, as more and more people leave, the incentives for remaining occupants to improve grow less and less. Similarly the reluctance of many banks and building societies to invest in rural housing, particularly in remoter landward

areas, reduces local confidence and also prevents lower income groups from improving their houses, even if they are willing to do so.

Are there any signs of optimism replacing pessimism? In the Scottish cities there has been a growing sense of achievement and satisfaction as growing numbers of rehabilitated tenements appear on the scene, and these are becoming increasingly viewed as highly desirable places to live. Similarly, in a few rural areas the higher grants available in Housing Action Areas have been used to stimulate private investment. In the Western Isles this policy has created such enthusiasm among residents that the advertisements, initially used to try and stimulate interest, have been stopped because the demand to be included in H.A.A.s is so great! The rehabilitation activities of local authorities, however, will not be examined until Chapter Three. Having just outlined the ideas behind rehabilitation, the next chapter will examine the details of the legislative framework which offers local authorities a number of alternative approaches to rehabilitation and improvement.

DISTRICT	Popn. 1976 ('000's)	Area sq. mls.	1978 Popn. Density	No. Dwellings 1971	% Vacant 1971	Total Households 1971	1971 Households in non Permanent Dwellings	% Households in L.A. Renting	% Private Renting
Ferwickshire	17.9	338.016	52.9	7118	11.0	6002	11	33.5	33.6
Etrick & Lauderdale	32.9	523.621	62.8	12716	8.6	11294	8	40.1	24.7
Roxburgh	35.9	594.778	60.4	13904	7.4	12410	17	33.5	33.6
Tweeddale	13.9	347.254	40.0	5424	6.7	4784	14	33.9	22.8
Annandale & Eskdale	35.1	599.775	58.2	12130	5.3	11165	114	37.1	27.2
Nithsdale	56.2	553.331	101.6	19197	4.1	18029	169	48.5	30.0
Stewartry	22.4	645.079	34.7	8301	6.9	7355	33	28.7	27.0
Higtown	29.7	661.295	44.9	10489	7.7	9462	59	42.9	23.3
N.E. Fife	65.7	292.535	224.6	23507	8.1	20889	75	33.1	24.7
Fanff & Buchan	78.6	589.306	133.4	25388	6.7	23327	64	42.1	20.5
Gordon	57.2	854.989	66.9	16477	9.7	14491	216	27.7	33.7
Kincardine & Deeside	38.2	983.801	38.8	12509	8.0	11014	84	25.8	35.7
Moray	81.5	861.234	94.6	26129	6.1	24024	568	35.6	27.6
Edenoch & Strathspey	9.6	895.401	10.7	3529	12.9	2774	67	29.8	35.0
Caithness	27.8	1217.155	22.8	10326	7.8	9264	69	45.0	25.2
Inverness	55.4	1081.155	51.2	16352	5.3	15089	191	42.7	18.7
Lochaber	20.1	1724.988	11.6	6546	8.9	5627	126	57.6	23.0
Nairn	10.2	162.910	62.6	3005	6.1	2733	30	30.6	29.9
Ross & Cromarty	42.7	1930.386	22.1	13199	12.9	10983	219	33.5	23.4
Skye & Lochalsh	10.1	958.362	10.5	3937	12.4	2997	83	20.3	17.4
Sutherland	12.7	1732.433	7.3	4758	16.8	3792	47	33.5	24.7
Argyll & Bute	64.7	2608.603	24.8	26202	8.0	21325	243	33.7	29.5
Inverclyde	56.1	511.601	109.6	18274	6.3	16809	55	59.8	13.0
Angus	91.9	784.955	117.1	32863	7.5	29304	128	44.9	24.9
Perth & Kinross	119.5	2021.246	59.1	42915	7.3	38657	234	37.5	27.7
Orkney	18.2	376.759	48.3	6541	11.4	5741	38	16.7	22.3
Shetland	21.4	551.824	38.7	5963	6.0	5484	84	28.6	30.1
Western Isles	29.7	1118.752	26.5	10254	10.0	9109	107	20.1	8.4
Rural Scotland	1155.3	25521.529	45.3	597957	7.7	353934	3153	38.3	24.8
SCOTLAND	5179.4	29795.690	173.8	1809380	5.1	1686060	5058	55.6	17.1

CHAPTER TWO

THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR IMPROVEMENT

The Legislative Framework for Improvement

In chapter one it was noted that the main thrust of Scottish Housing Policy until the late 1960's had been directed at the provision of new houses. The lack of real Government commitment to improvement and rehabilitation as a solution to poor housing conditions is reflected in the legislation which failed to offer local authorities any comprehensive approach for improvement until 1969. The post Second World War concern for the nation's housing and more particularly the problems in urban areas has given much of the legislative provision for improvement a strong urban and more particularly tenemental bias. It is, therefore, the intention in this chapter to discuss the origins of the present legislation to highlight the "urban bias" seen, for example, in the 1974 Housing Act which was designed to promote the role of Housing Associations and was almost entirely urban orientated. The present legislative framework will be explained in some detail to try and show why some of the major provisions are often inappropriate to rural areas.

The origins of the present legislation go back to the 1949 (Housing (Scotland)) Act. Prior to this there had been some provision for the improvement of houses particularly in rural areas, e.g. the 1926 (Housing (Rural Workers)) Act which provided grants of two-thirds of the cost of reconditioning up to a maximum level of £100. However, the encouragement given to landlords to improve their property was effectively lost since the same Act also specified that no increased rents could be levied on improved property. Later Acts made some modifications to grant rates and conditions but the initiative had already been lost and the legislation proved largely ineffective. For a summary of the legislative provision

for improvement prior to 1949 see the 1947 S.H.A.C. Report "Modernising our Homes".

The 1949 Housing (Scotland) Act was introduced by the new Labour Government, partly in response to the severe housing shortage after the Second World War, and partly because it was felt that there were large numbers of houses which fell below a certain standard but which had an expected life of over thirty years and could be modernised at less than the cost of new building. The grants provided in the Act were to be given at the discretion of the local authorities and had an upper cost limit of £300 which, in real terms, is about £1,500. Possibly because this limit was set so low the response was rather poor - by the end of 1951 only 313 improvement grants had been given in Scotland. The provisions of the 1949 Act were consolidated in the Housing (Scotland) Act of 1950, which drew certain guidance on housing fitness from the Housing (Scotland) Act of 1930. However, neither the 1949 Act nor the 1950 Act actually codified fitness or unfitness. The first attempt to do this did not come until the 1962 Housing (Scotland) Act which listed eleven qualities which all houses should possess (see Table 2.1.); any property defective in any one of these aspects was considered unfit. All qualities referred to the physical condition of the property and not the housing environment (except the condition of the back court and stairs).

It should be remembered that the main emphasis in the 1950's and 1960's was directed at slum clearance and rebuilding of the central and inner city areas; improvement was considered to be of fairly minor importance. However, the Government did remain committed to improvement. The Joint Under Secretary of State, J.J. Robertson,

Table 2.1. Housing (Scotland) Act 1962.

Determination of Unfitness for Human Habitation

"In determining whether a house is unfit for human habitation, regard shall be had to its condition in respect of the following matters":

- a) general state of repair
- b) structural stability
- c) freedom from dampness
- d) natural lighting
- e) air space
- f) ventilation
- g) adequacy and accessibility of water supply
- h) adequacy and accessibility of sanitary and other conveniences
- i) drainage
- j) condition of paving and drainage of courts, yards or passages
- k) facilities for storage, preparation and cooking of food and for the disposal of waste water.

stated:

"Scotland has a heritage of solidly built stone houses which are worth conserving as a national asset. The improvement of these houses would give tolerable living conditions to thousands of our people at present indifferently houses."
(Crammond 1966)

Accordingly there were several additions to the legislation in the 1950's and 1960's aimed at increasing the number of house improvements. The Housing (Repairs & Rents) (Scotland) Act, 1954, extended the improvement cost limit to £800, entitling the owner to a grant of £400. The required post-improvement life span of the house was halved from thirty to fifteen years. More significantly, the Act made provisions which prevented private landlords, who improved their properties, from passing on to their tenants rent increases of more than 8% of the costs of the improvement. This and subsequent Rent Acts have removed much of the incentive for private landlords to improve their properties.

In 1959, the House Purchase & Housing Act introduced "standard grants" for the first time. These were intended to assist in the provision of "the standard amenities". (See Appendix B). The grants were mandatory and councils could not refuse to pay up to half the cost (up to a ceiling of £155) of installing these amenities. The discretionary improvement grants were relatively unaffected, although certain conditions relating to them were relaxed.

The absence of amenities did not necessarily imply that a house would be cleared and during the 1960's there was a gradual policy shift from redevelopment to improvement based partly on financial arguments but also on the lessened disruption to community life if improvement policies were pursued. The 1964 Housing Act introduced for the first time the concept of the area approach to improvement

and laid down that if half the dwellings in an area lacked amenities, but were capable of improvement, the local authority could declare an "improvement area" and acquire tenements for improvement. The Act also conferred powers on local authorities to compel owners to carry out improvements to those dwellings lacking the standard amenities, although Councils had to help with loans. The improvement grant limit, which had remained at £400 for 10 years, was also raised to £500.

The Housing (Scotland) Act of 1966 consolidated much of the 1964 Act, but it was the publication of the Cullingworth Report, entitled "Scotland's Older Houses", in 1967 which led to an important refinement of the question of fitness. In the report Cullingworth criticised central and local government for their lack of progress in dealing with the problem of inadequate housing and suggested that there was an urgent need both to increase slum clearance and to improve those houses even with only a short life span. He suggested the operation of two standards, the "satisfactory standard" towards which policy should be directed and a "tolerable standard" below which houses became uninhabitable. In addition to this he also urged for a simplification of procedures and for the improvement of the housing environment. More significantly for rural areas, he noted that:

"Measures designed to meet the housing problems of urban areas may be quite inadequate and inappropriate in these remoter (rural) areas." (Cullingworth 1967)

Before any of Cullingworth's proposals were incorporated into the legislation, the 1968 (Housing) (Financial Provisions) Act was introduced. It described the powers of local authorities to give improvement grants and the procedure to be adopted. Local authorities

could refuse to pay grants if they had sufficient grounds but had to explain their reasons if an applicant requested them to do so.

Once a grant was made a house had to remain as a dwelling house for three years and this was to be an enforceable part of a tenancy and was to be recorded in the Register of Sasines. Local authorities had a duty to fix maximum rents for dwellings improved with grants and to keep a register of rents. The Act also gave local authorities a system of exchequer subsidied for setting the cost of improvement schemes for both local authority owned or purchased property and for privately owned houses. The exchequer contribution was set at 75% of the annual loan charges (this was raised to 87.5% in the Highlands & Islands). Finally the Act also raised the upper limit on standard grants to £350.

In the same year of 1968 the White Paper "The Older Houses in Scotland: A Plan for Action" (consequent on the Cullingworth Report) was published and in 1969 the Housing (Scotland) Act was passed. This major piece of legislation introduced the tolerable standard based on Cullingworth to replace the concept of fitness, as well as a positive area based approach for large-scale improvement of substandard property. It also introduced environmental improvement grants to improve the amenity of residential areas for the first time and raised the level of private improvement grant which remained as before in the form of discretionary and standard grants.

The nine-point tolerable standard is set out in Appendix C. In an area where 50% or more of the houses of buildings contained at least one house failing to meet the standard a local authority could declare a Housing Treatment Area (H.T.A) which could be dealt

with either by clearance, improvement or a combination of the two. This new approach afforded an alternative to dealing with urban planning problems which had previously been dealt with by Comprehensive Development Areas. The C.D.A.s involved phased activity over a long period of time, with associated problems of blight and usually required extensive short-term clearance and community disruption. The new approach was able to deal with much smaller pockets of housing and attempted to remove, rather than create, uncertainty. Not surprisingly this urban based initiative was not suited to the majority of rural areas. Most authorities felt that their substandard housing was too widely scattered to be tackled by such an area-based approach and accordingly (as will be shown in Chapter Three) very few rural H.T.A.s were declared. (Duncan & Cowan 1974). Nor, as it happened, did the H.T.A. approach meet with much success in urban areas. Most authorities found it very difficult to persuade particularly elderly owner-occupiers, to cooperate in improvement projects and there was a general feeling that stronger powers for acquiring houses were needed. (Duncan & Cowan 1974).

In the same year of 1969, the Scottish Development Department published "The New Scottish Housing Handbook, Bulletin 2 - Slum Clearance and Improvements" which provided fairly detailed advice on the way in which the improvement grant system should operate, particularly in relation to discretionary grants. These were available for a wide range of work, e.g. conversion, subdivision, as well as improvement to existing houses. "Improvement" included alteration and enlargement, as well as repairs and replacements. Local authorities also had the power to refuse discretionary grants in cases where it was concerned that the proposed work would not raise the

dwelling at reasonable cost to meet the specified requirements.

The 1971 Housing Bill increased private improvement grants from 50% to 75% throughout Scotland and increased the amount of subsidy towards local authority improvement work. The maximum level of grant was raised to £1,800. This was raised again to £2,400 through the House (Amendment) Act of 1973. Positive encouragement to local authorities to include Housing Associations in their strategies was given in the Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1972. New subsidy arrangements for housing associations were proposed, although local authorities could provide additional finance Housing Associations rents were brought into the "fair" rent system (thus necessitating the new subsidy arrangements - previously rents had been set in consultation with the local authority). The increase in the grant from 50% to 75% served as a suitable incentive for some private households to improve their property and this was reflected in a substantial increase in the rate of grant uptake in the early 1970's.

Two of the major problems facing authorities at the time, as the 1973 "Tenth Report from the Expenditure Committee" of the House of Commons noted, was the extent to which applications should be refused on grounds other than failure to meet the statutory obligations and a lack of clear guidance on the kinds of works which should be allowed for discretionary grants. In practice, local authorities had tended to be fairly generous, but the committee felt that rewiring, kitchen extensions, roof conversions and central heating were not improvements designed to raise the physical standard of the property. Therefore they suggested that the listed items should only be eligible for grant when carried out along with

other improvements. From this there emerged a need for clear guidance from central government along with the monitoring of the whole improvement grant system.

The next initiative to promote improvement emerged in the 1973 White Paper "Homes for People: Scottish Housing Policy in the 1970's". This outlined the need for greater choice in matters of house type and tenure and urged local authorities to put forward their proposals relating to sub-tolerable stock while reminding them of the financial assistance available as well as the agencies which could help. A sensitive approach to consultation where residents would be affected by the proposals was deemed desirable reflecting the increasing concern over the public relations aspect of improvement. Improvement was seen as part of:

"a wide-ranging scheme of housing policy aimed at providing a greater choice and rising standards in housing than has been the case hitherto." (SDD 1973)

Many of the proposals in this paper and the subsequent White Paper "Towards Better Homes: Proposals for dealing with Scotland's Older Housing" were incorporated in the 1974 Housing (Scotland) Act. This abolished the distinction between standard and discretionary grants and introduced instead grants relating to different standards of improvement. Special provision was made for a discretionary "special amenities" grant where an application related exclusively to the provision of standard amenities. This has led to some confusion with the old mandatory standard grant. The fact that the official housing statistics still refer to standard and discretionary grants does little to dispel any misinterpretation. Unlike the standard grant the special amenities grant is discretionary which means a house must meet the tolerable standard once the standard amenities have been fitted. In practice, very few rural authorities

give special amenities grants because septic tanks which are often required to treat sewage in landward rural areas are not provided for under the special grant. If a septic tank is needed local authorities encourage applicants to consider additional improvements so they become eligible for a Discretionary grant (a septic tank is eligible for grant aid under a discretionary grant). It is also worth noting, in this respect, that the 1974 Act amended the tolerable standard to include a water closet within the house.

Grant limits of £2,400 per house were laid down in the Act, along with the conditions under which a grant should be made - these were the same as those outlined in the S.D.D. Bulletin of 1969. Before approving a grant the local authority must be satisfied that the house:

- i) will meet the tolerable standard
- ii) have an expected life of at least 10 years
- iii) was not built before 1964
- iv) on the date of application did not have a rateable value over the prescribed limit
- v) will be occupied by the owner after improvement.

If an owner breached these conditions, the Act allowed for repayment of the improvement grant. The amount of grant payable was again reduced to 50%, but this was raised to 75% in Housing Action Areas (H.A.A.s) which replaced the Housing Treatment Areas of the 1969 Act. This was later raised to 90% where a local authority were satisfied that the applicant could not finance the balance of the costs without undue hardship. The reduction in the amount of grant from 75% to 50% removed much of the incentive for private owners to improve their property, and this was reflected in the subsequent drop in the

rate of grant uptake. This has more serious implications in rural areas since the worst housing conditions tend to be concentrated in the private sector. The 75% grant in H.A.A.s was not considered adequate compensation by most rural authorities. There was a general feeling that the H.A.A. procedures were inappropriate in a rural context and accordingly (as the next chapter will show) very few rural authorities, particularly in the early years, took advantage of the greater financial benefits offered by this part of the legislation. Since 1974 the cost limits for grants have constantly been updated and, at the time of writing, the maximum cost of improvement allowed is £5,500 (£7,000 in H.A.A.s).

The H.A.A. legislation was aimed at strengthening the concept of area improvement and its intention was clearly to channel resources "where housing conditions are worst" (i.e. the cities). In the 1973 White Paper, the aim of H.A.A.s was seen as "the remedying of intolerable housing conditions or the prevention of such conditions developing". The preventive role of H.A.A.s was referred to in S.D.D. Circular 67/1975 and this posed a dilemma for local authorities on whether to adopt a "worst first" policy or one to "prevent imminent decline" (Duncan & Cowan 1976). The criteria used to define H.A.A.s is similar though slightly broader than that for H.T.A.s. The main criterion is that "the greater part" of the houses in an area to be designated an H.A.A. be below the tolerable standard or lacking in one or more of the standard amenities and that every building contain a house below the tolerable standard or lacking in one or more of the basic amenities. In rural areas, because there are very few tenements except in a few of the larger towns, e.g. Perth, Hawick, Galashiels, the former clause means that every building

in a potential rural H.A.A. must fall below the tolerable standard. Thus making the legislation in these areas very cumbersome.

The 1974 Act set out the procedures that H.A.A. resolution has to follow. It is worth considering this process in order to highlight its unsuitability to rural areas. The first step in the procedure allows the local authority to draw up a draft declaration for the area (as laid down by the Secretary of State). This is then sent to the Secretary of State who has 28 days to rescind the draft resolution. If the local authority do not hear from the Secretary of State within 28 days of his acknowledgement of receipt of the draft resolution they can assume it will not be rescinded and proceed to the next stage. The 28 day period may be extended if the Secretary of State needs more time to consider the financial/manpower implications of the proposals themselves. If the resolution is not rescinded, the local authority must serve notice on every owner, lessee or occupier of the house stating the effect of the resolution. The public then have two months to object to the resolution. In turn the local authority have two months from the closing date for public representation to consider the views of residents before either rescinding the draft resolution or passing a final resolution. A copy of the final resolution plus a map must then be sent to the Secretary of State, who cannot rescind the final resolution. Once the final resolution is passed, owners within the H.A.A. become eligible for the higher (75%) grant. They may apply for the grant within 9 months of the date of the final resolution.

As can be seen, the procedures associated with H.A.A.s are long and complicated. Although the aim of the two-stage procedure to take account of residents' views before any final decision is made, is

very admirable, in practice in rural areas it acts as a disincentive to adopt H.A.A.s. Duncan & Cowan noted the staff implications of the procedure when they stated:

"as a general rule, a procedure which is complex and which demands a great deal of predeclaration investigation and paperwork is more likely to be taken up by larger authorities who can devote staff units specifically for this purpose, than by smaller authorities who may find it more difficult to devote a full-time staff to the process and who may, as a result, take a very long time to assimilate and operate the procedures." (Duncan & Cowan 1976)

A second point to be made is residents' views in rural areas can be quickly gauged for small H.A.A. proposals either by advertisements in local papers or door-to-door surveys, both of which have been successfully operated in the Western Isles. In general there is little need for a two month consultation period which suggests that H.A.A. procedures could be shortened and simplified in rural areas.

The 1974 Act, for the first time, made provision for repairs grants of up to £800 in H.A.A.s and in cases of hardship local authorities were able to use their discretion in allowing grants up to 90%. Where owners in H.A.A.s showed no intention of improving their property the legislation provided local authorities with powers of compulsory purchase and notices had to be served within 9 months of the final declaration. In practice very few authorities declaring H.A.A.s have used their powers of compulsory purchase, particularly in rural areas where authorities are reluctant to take on properties with high maintenance costs.

Another innovation of the Act was the introduction of a rateable value limit above which a house would cease to be eligible for an improvement grant. This limit was to be prescribed by the Secretary of State. Immediately prior to reorganisation the rate limit for eligibility was £100 for a single house or £250 where a house was

TABLE 2.2.

Limits of Rateable Value in Rural Scotland 1978

The limits of rateable value in respect of each house before improvement or conversion shall be:-

- a) where a single house is to be improved, or where a number of houses are to be converted into a lesser number of houses, the appropriate figure is in Column A.
- b) where a single house is to be converted into two or more houses, the appropriate figure is in Column B.

<u>DISTRICT</u>	<u>Column A</u>	<u>Column B</u>
	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Orkney	225	450
Shetland	285	570
Western Isles	225	450
Berwick	345	690
Ettrick & Lauderdale	315	630
Roxburgh	325	650
Tweeddale	320	640
Annandale & Eskdale	330	660
Nithsdale	325	650
Stewartry	330	660
Wigtown	335	670
N.E. Fife	370	740
Banff & Buchan	310	620
Gordon	315	630
Kincardine & Deeside	310	620
Moray	310	620
Badenoch & Strathspey	330	660
Caithness	250	500
Inverness	350	700
Lochaber	325	650
Nairn	330	660
Ross & Cromarty	330	660
Skye & Lochalsh	275	550
Sutherland	255	510
Argyll & Bute	350	700
<u>Lanark</u>	<u>415</u>	<u>830</u>
Perth & Kinross	390	780

being converted by subdivision. At the moment the limits are £465 and £830 respectively. Table 2.2. shows the current district rate limits in Rural Areas. Not surprisingly, there is a great deal of variation between districts. Lanark district, in fact, has the highest rateable value limits in Scotland.

Finally it is worth noting that the 1974 Housing Act effectively established the current administrative framework for the involvement of Housing Associations in rehabilitation. Although Housing Associations have played an increasingly important role in urban areas, particularly Glasgow, they have not met with any success in rural areas. This is possibly due to the fact that they are best suited to large area based tenement schemes. Also the post improvement management of Housing Associations is likely to place too great a burden on manpower in rural areas, particularly if the schemes are very small and widely scattered. Because of the increasing effort by central government to boost the role of Housing Associations as agents for rehabilitation the potential for Housing Associations in rural areas will be considered in the final chapter of the dissertation. It should be noted that much of the provision made in the 1974 Act forms the current legislative framework for improvement. The only major piece of legislation passed since 1974 was the 1978 Housing (Financial Provisions) (Scotland) Act. Before discussing the 1978 Act it is worth noting some of the changes which occurred in the intervening period.

Following the 1974 Act there were major cutbacks in local government expenditure and authorities were urged to restrict finance for improvement grants. In the cities this tended to affect environmental as opposed to housing improvement grants. However, in rural

areas where budgets were much smaller and environmental improvement grants of little significance, house improvement grants began to be directly hit, but not too seriously since there had been a fall in demand for improvement grants following the 1974 Act. However, the persistence of government expenditure cutbacks throughout the 1970's has lately begun to hit rural authorities hard and as the case studies in Chapter Four will show this is liable to be a significant factor in the failure or success of future improvement policies.

Local government reorganisation and the cancellation of the 1976 census disrupted the gradual build-up of information and monitoring procedures of subtolerable stock by different local authorities. The 1977 Green Paper on Scottish Housing provided the first new directive for improvement since 1974 as well as restating the Government's commitment to improvement, when it commented on the increasingly important role improvement played in local authority housing policy. Perhaps more significantly the document saw an important role for improvement policies in the new Housing Plans:

"Every authority, as part of its Housing Plan, should begin to review its own improvement priorities." ("Scottish Housing" 1977 P.63)

The document also outlined some proposals to overcome the problems of repairs to common parts of tenements (hitherto a great problem in tenement improvement), as well as extending repairs grants through a "repairs only" grant, which had previously only been available in H.A.A.s. Although the main thrust of the document was aimed at the problems in urban areas it did acknowledge the practical problems of applying H.A.A. legislation in areas where subtolerable houses "are scattered or few in number". It went on to say:

"Given that the definition of the tolerable standard is fairly firm, there may be a case for modifying the Action Area procedures to enable individual or small groups (of houses) to

be dealt with more effectively." ("Scottish Housing" 1977 P.64)
A suggestion welcomed by many rural authorities.

Most of the proposals in the Green Paper were enshrined in the 1978 Housing (Financial Provisions) (Scotland) Act. Although H.A.A. procedures were not modified the Act did set out alternatives specifically designed to meet the needs of rural areas. The repairs proposals for "repairs only" grants were included and these were restricted to 50% of the cost of the work up to £1,500. The rateable value limits for improvement grants also applied to the repairs only grant. The drawback came when the Act proposed that applicants could only qualify for a repairs only grant through a means test. There is little doubt that the means test will deter many people from applying for a repairs grant. In addition to this, it was set out that after repairs work is completed the house must meet the tolerable standard. This means that all the older subtolerable properties will be excluded from this financial assistance which is particularly crucial in rurals where a lot of substandard property is owned by elderly people who are not willing to undergo the upheaval of major improvements but might be willing to undertake essential repairs, were the financial assistance available. It is vital that these houses be sufficiently maintained to ensure they become candidates for improvement and not demolition once they have been vacated by their elderly occupants. Yet again it is likely that the "repairs only" legislation intended to benefit older urban tenemental property will play an insignificant part in the preservation of rural housing stock.

However, the other two changes in the 1978 Act were designed to meet the needs of rural areas. The first proposal raised the discretionary improvement grant from 50% to 75% with a maximum expend-

iture of £5,500 for applications covering detached, semi-detached or terraced houses. The higher grant does not apply in the case of a tolerable house, conversion or an application for standard amenities only. The former case will still only receive a 50% grant up to £1,200. The exceptions to the higher grant are not well known to the public who cannot understand why they do not always receive a 75% grant.

The raising of the grant was designed to help house-owners meet the escalating building costs and reduce their personal capital outlay on improvement. In practice this is not the case - the higher grant level will only plug the gap temporarily. In the Seventies in rural areas there has been an ever widening gap between the improvement grant and the actual cost of the improvement. The effect of this will be considered in more detail in Chapters 3 and 4.

The other, and possibly the most original, provision of the 1978 Act was the concept of an Improvement Order. This seems to be an attempt to meet the objections of rural authorities concerning the unsuitability of H.A.A. procedures. The Improvement Order offers an alternative to the service of a Closing/Demolition Order on single, scattered dwellings. An Improvement Order can be served by a local authority on an owner of a subtolerable house outside an H.A.A. The order requires the owner to bring the house up to the tolerable standard and put it in a good state of repair within 180 days. This period may be extended by an authority if they are satisfied with the rate of progress of improvement works. Where a dwelling has a life expectancy of 10 years minimum, the order may require that all the standard amenities be provided. An order cannot be served on a building containing more than one house without the permission of the

Secretary of State since it is considered that such property is best suited to the H.A.A. procedures. If an order is not complied with within the 180 day or otherwise agreed period the local authority may acquire the property, so that they can carry out the works. This clause will probably ensure that very few rural authorities serve closing orders since they are unlikely to relish the prospect of owning properties in scattered locations with high maintenance costs and there is little point in serving an order if it is not enforced. The grant payable for works relating to an improvement order is 75% up to a maximum of £5,500 (i.e. a maximum of £4,125). Although the 1978 Act was more positive attempt to assist rural areas, it is likely that some of the drawbacks will reduce several of the apparent benefits. It is too early to assess the effects of the 1978 legislation, although the case studies will try to consider if there have been any significant changes in 1979 which could be attributed to the Act.

The final addition to the financial assistance available for home improvement was provided under the 1978 (Homes Insulation) Act which concentrates on improving the insulation of roof spaces and water supply. The grant available is 66% of the cost of the works or £50, whichever is the lesser amount.

It is useful at this stage to summarise the different types and amount of grant currently available (See Table 2.3). To conclude this section on the legislative framework it appears that until recently that there has been a strong urban bias which has been based on the Government's notion that improvement should be aimed at the worst areas (i.e. the cities). As a result, much of the legislation has been aimed at tenemental property, which is generally the

TABLE 2.3.

Summary of Types and Levels of Grant Available in Scotland in 1980

<u>Type of Grant</u>	<u>Rate of Grant %</u>	<u>Maximum Level of Grant £</u>	<u>Maximum Cash Available to eligible applicant £</u>
Improvement Grant (covering terraced, detached, semi-detached property)	75	5500	4125
Improvement Grant (for flats, tenements not in a H.A.A.)	50	5500	2750
Improvement Grant (for all property in H.A.A.s which are to be brought up to the spec- ified standard)	75	7000	5250
	90 (in cases of hardship)	7000	6300
Improvement Grant for standard amenities (special amenities grant)	50	1200 (plus 1500 for repairs)	600 (750)
Repairs Grant	50	1500	750

The figures listed in the table are based on the maximum "approved expense" as set out in 1974 (Housing) Scotland Act and the 1978 (Housing) (Financial Provisions) Act. In nearly every case they apply to property which falls below the tolerable standard or lacks the basic amenities.

dominant substandard housing type in urban areas. The more recent legislative changes, particularly those encouraging a positive area based approach, have been found to be less suited to rural areas where substandard properties tend to be more widely scattered. The most recent changes in 1978 marked the first real attempt to offer equivalent financial support and incentive for improvement in rural areas. However, it is too early to assess the effects of this legislation and it is possible that some of the drawbacks associated with it may weaken the intended benefits. The system of rent controls and landlord taxation which has developed throughout the twentieth century (and since the 1950's in conjunction with improvement provision), may well cancel out much of the incentive to improve which is offered to private landlords through private improvement grants. Because of the very large private rented sector in rural areas, this has serious implications for the successful implementation of improvement policies, bearing in mind the limited powers of intervention in the private sector available to local authorities and their reluctance to use the few powers open to them, e.g. compulsory purchase by Improvement Order.

Throughout the late 1960's and 1970's the legislative changes have given growing discretionary powers to local authorities in relation to improvement. This is particularly the case in the interpretation of the tolerable standard which varies widely between different local authorities. Authorities can offer higher levels of grant over and above the approved levels set out in cases where higher costs seem justified - usually these applications have to be approved by the Secretary of State. In exceptional circumstances the conditions relating to improvements may be waived by the Secretary of State.

These provisions are becoming increasingly necessary in rural areas where the widening gap between the approved cost and actual cost of improvement is becoming more critical.

It is the intention to examine some of the discretionary aspects of the legislation in the case study areas to find out how some of the conditions relating to a grant can be "got round" as well as the practical problems associated with the implementation of H.A.A. procedures. It is hoped that the success of the Western Isles in adopting H.A.A.s may inspire other reluctant authorities to follow their example. In Chapter Three the changes in the levels of grant will be compared with the actual pattern in the uptake of grant to establish whether or not the legislative changes have significantly influenced the rate of grant uptake.

To complete the Chapter a brief account of the administrative framework will be given. Since the administrative set-up for improvement varies widely in rural areas more detailed consideration will be left to the case study areas when the administrative framework will be looked at in each area in detail.

To-date the only attempt to establish Departmental and Committee responsibilities relating to improvement was made in 1974 in the Planning Exchange Study "Housing Improvement Policies in Scotland". (Duncan & Cowan 1974). This established that private improvement grants were generally dealt with by the Surveyor's Department in the small burghs and Sanitary or Environmental Health Departments in the larger burghs. The cities and large burghs were found to have more varied and complex sets of arrangements. Public Sector improvements were also dealt with by the Surveyors Department in the small burghs, but larger county authorities generally used the Architects

as opposed to Environmental Health Department. It was also noted that in some areas the Housing Department played a major role in public sector improvement. Again the pattern for the large burghs was found to be wideranging.

Local Government reorganisation in 1975 has led to some changes in the arrangements for improvement. The majority of Scotland is now covered by a two-tier system of Local Government - the Region and the District. Housing is one of the few District responsibilities except in the three Island Authority Areas which have a one-tier structure covering all local government functions, including housing. Generally the departments responsible for improvement are the same as those prior to reorganisation. Private sector improvement is administered by the Environmental Health Departments in most rural areas and the actual work is monitored by the Department's surveyors. There is no longer a separate Surveyors Department. Public sector improvement is generally dealt with by the Housing or Technical Services departments, and a few District authorities have a joint Architectural & Technical Services department. The major change in a small number of rural authorities, apart from the size of the area to which grants may be administered, has been the establishment of special improvement sections which deal solely with Housing Improvement or the appointment of officers to deal with a particular aspect of improvement. These moves are only possible in areas where a large number of subtolerable houses justify such changes, e.g. Argyll & Bute. The major constraint to such provisions in smaller authorities is staffing. Most rural authorities cannot afford to take on extra staff and the workload carried by the available staff make it difficult to set up separate improvement sections. The Housing Committee

is generally the committee most involved in decisions relating to improvement grants. Although special cases which require the Secretary of State's approval and new policy initiatives will generally be dealt with by the full council.

CHAPTER THREE

IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITY IN RURAL SCOTLAND

Improvement Activity in Rural Scotland

Introduction

In Chapter One the size of the subtolerable stock in absolute and relative terms was worked out for each rural local authority on the basis of the 1977 estimate figures set out in the "Scottish Housing Statistics". The comparatively small numbers of subtolerable houses in rural areas appear generally insignificant when they are compared to Scotland as a whole - even Argyll and Bute with 6,000 subtolerable houses seems a drop in the ocean compared to the massive 51,000 problem facing Glasgow District. It is not, therefore, unreasonable that the initiatives of the Central Government legislators and policy makers (discussed in Chapter Two), offered local authorities the kind of positive area based approach, initially through H.T.A.s and more recently through H.A.A.s, needed to tackle the large and highly concentrated problems found in the tenemental properties of the inner city, which in rural areas, because of the more scattered nature of the subtolerable stock, may be considered less suitable.

In Chapter One the very distinctive nature of the rural housing problem revealed that the majority of the poorest housing conditions in rural Scotland were found in the private sector where local authorities have fewer powers of intervention and where in the case of the private rented sector rent controls and landlord taxation have probably reduced the effectiveness of the financial incentives offered by improvement grants.

The unsuitability of H.A.A. procedures and the lack of interventionist powers in the private sector may have a significant effect on the way rural local authorities tackle improvement. It is likely that the improvement policies and approaches adopted by local auth-

orities will reflect their attitude as to the most appropriate method of eliminating their subtolerable stock, therefore any speculation on the effects of H.A.A. procedures, etc., will be left till later in the chapter, once the improvement activities of rural local authorities and private owners have been established.

The proportion of subtolerable stock to total stock in rural areas set out in Table 1.6 is taken as a reasonable indicator of the need for local authorities to reduce the quantity of poor housing. In order to assess the attitudes and commitment of rural authorities to improvement, two different sets of data will be considered. First of all the actual number of private and local authority improvement grants will be assessed, along with the number of H.T.A., H.A.A. and Local Authority Rehabilitation schemes and houses. Secondly, the proportion of capital expenditure on private improvement grants, local authority modernisation and repair and new building will be worked out. Both sets of figures will be compared for different rural areas to highlight any variations and then with Scotland as a whole to show how activities in rural Scotland fit into the national picture. The rehabilitation activities of the Scottish Special Housing Association and other Housing Associations in rural areas have been excluded, as the extent of these activities has been on a very small scale, and they are unlikely to be significant in the future. (See Appendix F for a list of S.S.H.A. and H.A. schemes.)

The main focus of this chapter will be on the period 1975 to '78, however an account of activities prior to 1975 will be given in the opening section to highlight the effective changes in the legislation and the significance of the change in Government attitude to improvement.

Data Sources

The vast majority of the material on which this chapter is based is drawn from the "Scottish Housing Returns" and "Scottish Housing Statistics" published by the Scottish Development Department. The information on H.A.A. declarations and local authority rehabilitation schemes was provided by the Department of Social and Economic Research at Glasgow University who conducted a questionnaire survey of all Scottish local authorities in November 1979 to confirm that the data collected from the S.D.D. sources was, in fact, correct. Eight of the twenty-eight rural authorities failed to return the questionnaire - Berwickshire, Ettrick & Lauderdale, Roxburgh, Tweeddale, Badenoch & Strathspey, Lochaber, Nairn and Ross & Cromarty, and in these cases the data collected from the S.D.D. records is assumed to be correct. Discretionary and Standard Improvement Grant figures have only been published in District form since 1978, figures for 1976/77 were provided by the S.D.D. Housing Statistics Unit and any discussion prior to 1976 is based on data contained in the working papers available with the S.D.D. Rural Housing Study or the Scottish figures found in the "Scottish Housing Returns". This makes for a very piecemeal and unsatisfactory method of assessment, however it is the best that can be achieved with the existing data sources.

Local Authority and Private Improvement Activity Prior to 1975

It is virtually impossible to show anything conclusive about the trends in improvement activity prior to 1975 in rural areas because, as has just been noted, there are no figures available. However, the overall Scottish trends between 1950 and 1975 have been plotted on a graph and it is possible that these trends were similar in rural areas - they most certainly were between 1971 and 1975 as will be shown

later in this section. The figures plotted on Graph A do not include grants given to the S.S.H.A. or any other Housing Associations, but they do include grants approved for conversions in the private sector. From the graph it can be seen that improvements in both the local authority and private sectors were very low key until 1968 when the Government really committed itself to a policy of rehabilitation. Prior to 1968 private sector improvements were more important in Scotland, particularly in the 1950's and early 1960's compared to local authority improvements. However, the low numbers of grants approved in the private sector suggests that the financial incentives available to private owners were not sufficient to encourage any large-scale activity, even in the peak year of 1961 only 4,344 grants were approved. This is not surprising since the maximum discretionary grant of £500 available in 1966 was only worth £680 in real terms and the standard amenities grant of £155 only £216 in real terms. A breakdown of the private improvement grants between 1960 and 1968 revealed that 53% of all grants were approved for discretionary improvements, 38% for standard amenities and only 10% for conversions. In addition to this, 76% of the total went to owner occupiers which suggests that improvements in the private rented sector were very limited. (See Table 3.1. for details.) The very low rate of grant uptake in the local authority sector probably reflects the commitment of most local authorities to the building of new houses at the expense of rehabilitating existing ones. There had been a significant upsurge in local authority activity in 1965 following the decision taken in the summer of 1964 to give assistance for the first time towards the costs of improving houses which were built with the aid of subsidy.⁽¹⁾ However, 1968 marked the start of

(1) The 1964 Act established the procedure by which local authorities receive an Exchequer subsidy at the level of $\frac{3}{8}$ ths of the annual loan charges on the approved costs incurred. The upper limit for the approved costs was set at £1,400.

GRAPH A

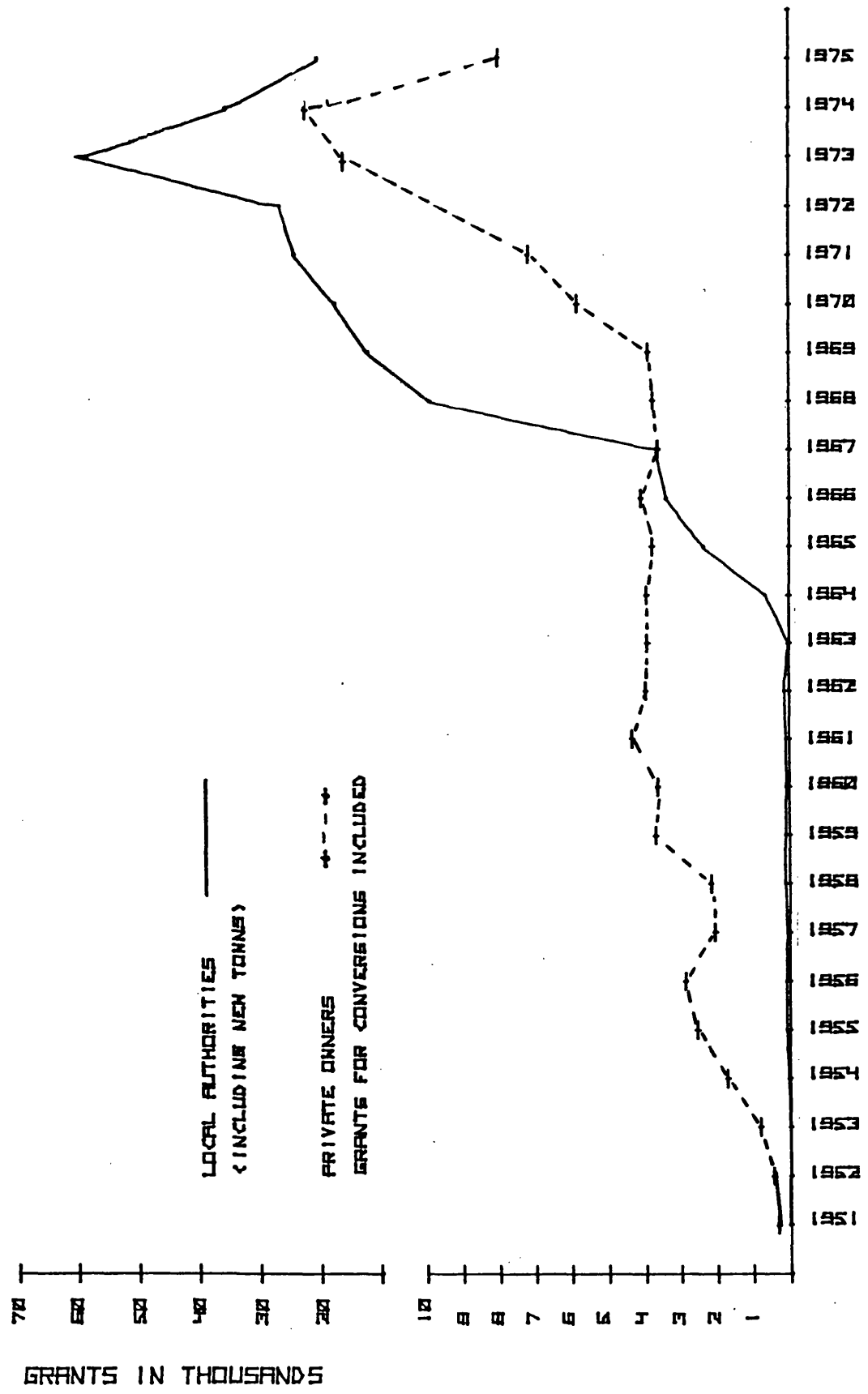


TABLE 3.1.- Analysis of Discretionary and Standard Grants to Private Owners 1960 - 68

PERIOD	Discretionary Grants				Standard Grants			
	Conversion		Improvement		Conversion		Improvement	
	<u>Owner Occupied</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Owner Occupied</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Owner Occupied</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Owner Occupied</u>	<u>Other</u>
1960-65	1339	825	9000	3298	14462	7134	1907	9041
1966	302	158	1686	478	2624	1132	332	1464
1967	233	163	1610	384	2390	1035	178	1213
1968	236	129	1642	361	2368	1186	180	1366
TOTALS	2110	1275	13938	4521	21844	10487	2597	13084

Source: Scottish Housing Returns

a more dramatic increase in the number of local authority approvals when there was a staggering 63% increase, reflecting the acceptance by many local authorities of the new Government housing policy directive in favour of rehabilitation, and the consolidation of the provisions made in the 1964 Act and the 1968 Housing (Financial Provisions) (Scotland) Act. Private improvement grants were less influenced by the change in policy and there was no significant rise in the rate of uptake until 1970 when the rises in the grant level accommodated in the 1968 and 1969 Acts possibly began to take effect.⁽²⁾ Following the dramatic increase in the approvals of local authority grants in 1968, there was a steady growth which rose sharply to a peak in 1973 when more than 66,000 grants were approved. This second significant increase was associated with the higher rates of grant at 75%, as opposed to 37½% which were available for work completed within 2 years of June 1971. There was a similar, less pronounced, trend in the private sector which reached a peak one year later in 1974 when 24,474 grants were approved and this was probably stimulated by the increase in the grant from 50% to 75% which was available between 1972 and 1973. Following the reduction in the grant from 75% to 50% there was a dramatic fall in the number of grants approved in both sectors, which suggests that the preceding rises can be reasonably attributed, in part, to the influence of the changes in the legislation.

It should be noted that the figures for private improvement grants only relate to work which was grant aided. The total amount of grant aided work also includes work which, although part of a grant aided scheme, was not in itself eligible to be taken into account in the calculation of the grant. The Planning Exchange have

(2) The 1978 Act raised the grant for standard amenities from £155 to £350 and the 1969 Housing Act raised the Discretionary Grant from £500 to £600.

shown that in 1973, for example, 21% of the cost of schemes for which discretionary grants were approved was for one reason or another outwith the approved expense. (Planning Exchange, 1976).

Once again it is possible to break down the improvement figures for local authority as well as private improvement. The Planning Exchange Study "Housing Improvement Grants in Scotland 1967-73" looked at the breakdown of grants in great depth, therefore it is only necessary to mention the main points which emerged from this analysis. An appendix has been prepared of some of the tables included in the Planning Exchange report to allow the reader to obtain more comprehensive details of the main trends. (See Appendix G).

To understand the significance of local authority figures three other factors must be considered - the cost of the work, the distinction between houses built by local authorities under the Housing Acts and those acquired by local authorities or built by them under general powers and the different types of improvement work, that is the upgrading of inadequate power supply, and other improvement, including comprehensive improvement and conversion. (Planning Exchange 1976). Interest in this dissertation is concentrated on comprehensive improvements and conversions, and not improvements to power supply since this is effectively a separate programme which, according to the definitions used by the author, would come under the heading of modernisation. The Planning Exchange Study revealed that the average cost per house and the total costs of local authority improvements have been rising more rapidly than the number of houses improved and that the average costs of acquired properties have been much higher than those built by local authorities. The reason for this mainly being due to the very poor state of repair of many acquired houses plus the cost of actually acquiring the houses.

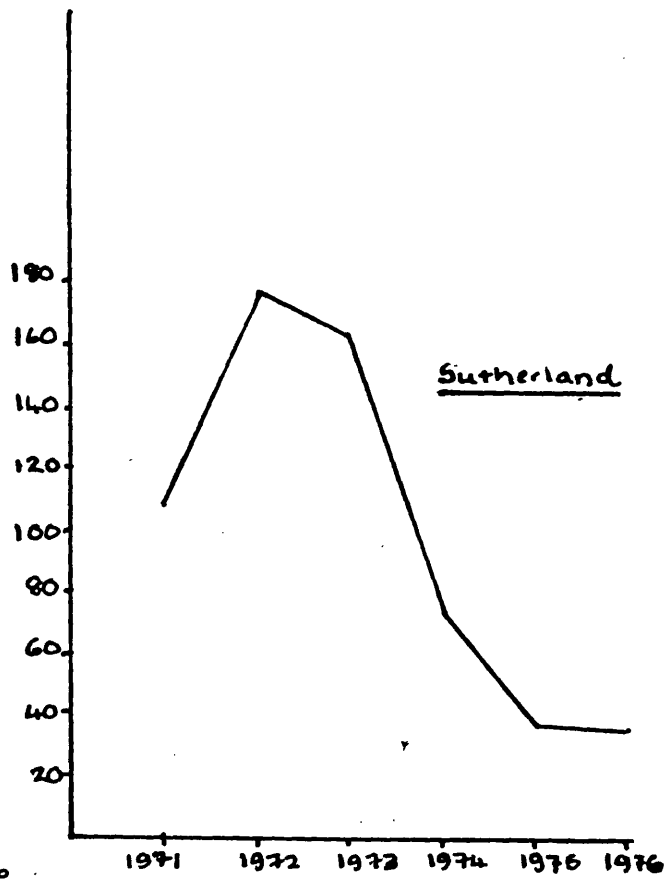
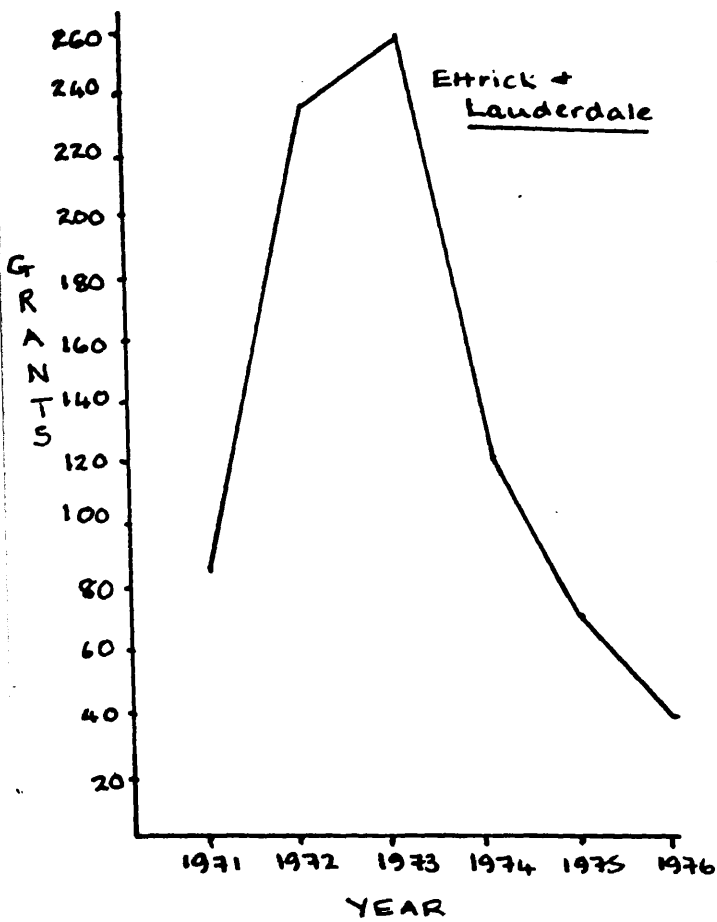
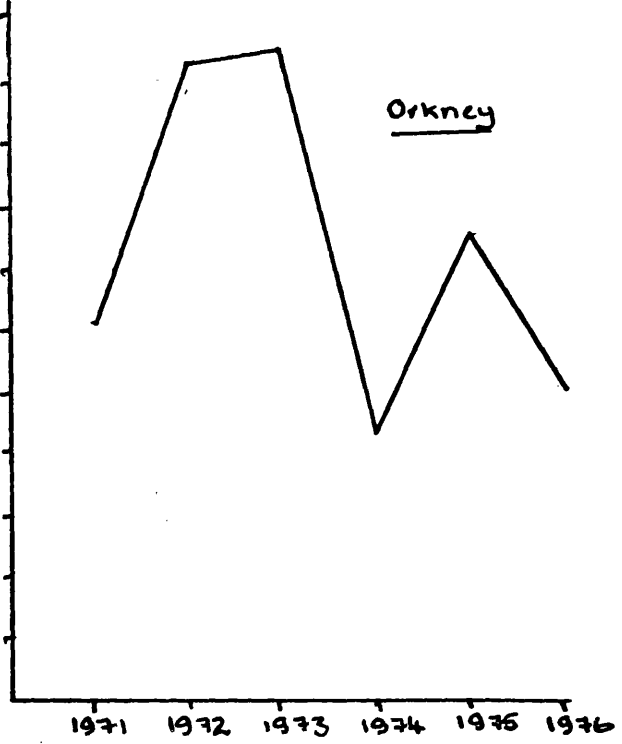
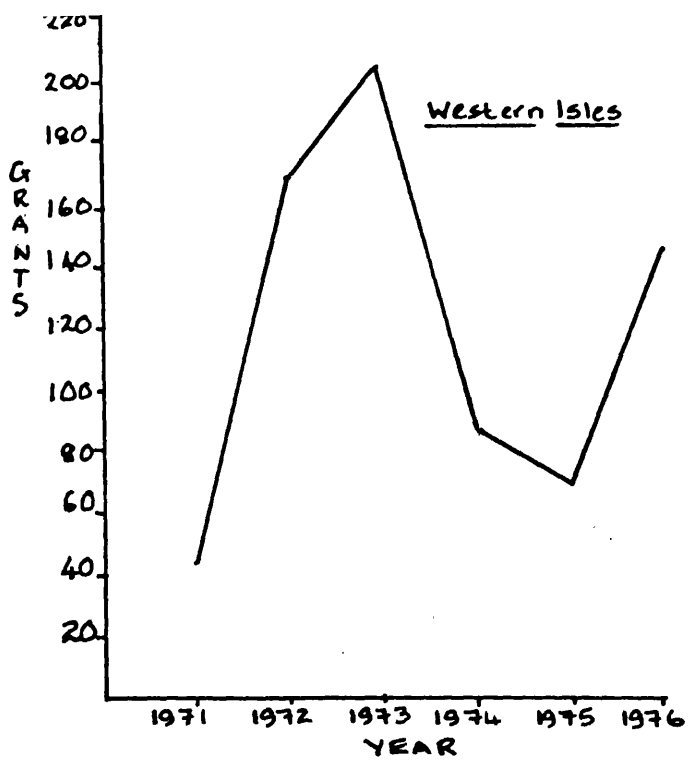
Improvement of acquired houses has been less significant and has not matched the great upsurge in Council house improvement - for instance in the peak year of 1973 less than 3% of expenditure on local authority improvement work was concerned with acquired houses.

The major part of improvement work carried out by local authorities has been to council houses built under the Housing Acts. Initially electrical upgrading was most important, but this was partly absorbed and overtaken by the comprehensive improvement programme in 1972 encouraged through S.D.D. Circular 78/1971.⁽³⁾ This was reflected in the rise in expenditure for "other improvements". The pattern in the improvement programmes varied widely between authorities, with the emphasis of the small burghs in 1973 on "other improvements", and that of the larger counties on upgrading of electrical work. In 1973 the average costs per house of electrical upgrading was £140 and of other improvements £1,590.

In the private sector discretionary grants accounted for 81% of all the grants given between 1967 and 1973. It is not clear why standard grants were declining but possibly it was due to fewer houses lacking in only standard amenities as a result of previous clearance and improvement programmes or, alternatively, some authorities may have encouraged people wanting to carry out house improvements to use discretionary, rather than, standard grants. The vast majority of grants were given to owner occupiers, with less than 20% of all discretionary and 15% of all standard grants going to private landlords. Of the total number of discretionary grants approved, 89% were for improvement and 11% for conversions. The pattern of improvement grants given varied widely between authorities and, in general, the small burghs gave very few improvement grants of any kind.

(3) The Circular modified the administrative policy on improvement works for houses built with subsidy, in view of the "growing evidence for the need for improvement of some older council houses".

Unfortunately it is not possible to establish if the local authority trends were similar in rural Scotland, however, a rough idea of the trends in private can be gauged from the data and graphs contained in the S.D.D. Rural Housing Study. From the graphs of the Four case study areas contained in Diagram D, it can be seen that the overall trends in these areas mirrored those for local authority improvement approvals during the same period with peaks being reached in 1972 and 1973. The total number of approvals for each case study area varied. For instance, Ettrick & Lauderdale reached the highest peak in 1973 when it approved 259 applications, compared to the peak approvals of 212, 161 and 203 respectively in Orkney, Sutherland and the Western Isles. (See Table 3.2. for details). The total number of approvals in these four areas between 1971-75 represented only 12.6% of the rural Scottish total which suggests that there must have been significant numbers of approvals elsewhere; unfortunately no other figures are available, so these areas must remain a mystery. The S.D.D. did comment on the major changes in subtolerable stock in the early 1970's and they indicated that the greatest reductions had taken place in South West Scotland. (S.D.D. R.H.S. 1979) Although the low demolition rates in rural areas noted in Chapter One suggest that these reductions were probably due to improvements, they may not have been in the private sector. However, as will be shown in a few moments, Nithsdale in Galloway & Dumfries (i.e. S.W. Scotland) was one of the few areas which experimented with H.T.A.s. Rural Scotland's share of private improvement grants between 1971-75 was 26% of the Scottish total, comprising 36% of all standard grants and 24% of all conversion and discretionary grants. This is a proportionally greater share since rural Scotland only contained



Source : Local Authority Improvement Registers,
S.D.D. R.H.S. 1979

TABLE 3.2.

Private Improvement Grants in 4 case study Areas - No. of Grants
approved from 1971 - 75

<u>Year</u>	<u>P R I V A T E G R A N T S</u>		<u>A P P R O V E D</u>	
	<u>Orkney</u>	<u>Ettrick & Lauderdale</u>	<u>Sutherland</u>	<u>* Western Isles</u>
1971	124	86	101	41
1972	209	237	161	168
1973	212	259	127	203
1974	88	125	51	84
1975	153	44	14	71
TOTAL	786	751	454	567

Source: R.H.S. 1979

* Grant figures for the Western Isles only cover Lewis and Harris.

20% of all the Scottish households in 1971. In view of the relatively small proportions of subtolerable houses in the local authority sector in rural areas (see Chapter One) it is possible that rural Scotland's share of local authority improvement would have been smaller between 1971-75. The figures contained in the Planning Exchange report suggest that a large proportion of local authority improvement grants went to the four main cities, approximately 50% of the Scottish total; however, this is not to say that the remaining 50% were concentrated in the remaining urban areas.

The other indicator of local authority improvement activity which has, so far, not been reviewed concerns the effectiveness of Housing Treatment Areas which were provided under the 1969 Act. As outlined in the previous chapter, H.T.A.s were considered by most Districts to be inappropriate to their housing situation, and of those authorities who did declare H.T.A.s many found problems in securing resident co-operation and felt there was a need for stronger acquisition powers, differentially higher grants, repairs grants and more flexibility in criteria for declaring H.T.A.s. (Planning Exchange 1976). The questionnaire information provided by the Department of Social and Economic Research revealed that 5 authorities in Scotland had between them declared 64 H.T.A.s and only two, Glasgow and Edinburgh, had declared more than one H.T.A. (See Table 3.3. below)

TABLE 3.3. Housing Treatment Areas

<u>District</u>	<u>No. of H.T.A.s</u>	<u>No. of Houses</u>
Edinburgh	46	1936
Glasgow	17	1261
Nithsdale	1	117
Sutherland	1	17
Clackmannan	1	6
TOTAL	66	3337

From the table it can be seen that two rural Districts had declared one H.T.A. a piece - Nithsdale and Sutherland - and that the number of houses in these represented only 4% of the Scottish total, which suggests that H.T.A.s were considered inappropriate by the bulk of rural authorities. These figures should be treated with some caution since the Planning Exchange Study notes the existence of 213 H.T.A.s, with a total of 15,991 houses. (Planning Exchange 1976). It may be that the records of some H.T.A.s have not survived local government reorganisation and have subsequently been omitted in the questionnaire returns to the Department of Social and Economic Research.

Very little can be said about improvement activity in rural Scotland prior to 1975 except that private improvement grants in rural Scotland accounted for a slightly larger proportional share of the Scottish total between 1971 and 1975. It is possible that the Scottish trends discussed in this section were similar in rural areas on a smaller scale, however what the trends do highlight is the influence of the changes in legislation on improvement activity, with major increases in the number of grants approved from the late 60's onwards reaching a peak in 1973-74 at the time when the available incentives were at their highest level ever. It will be interesting to see in the next section if the subsequent legislative changes have had a similar influence between 1975 - 78. Fortunately in this section a much clearer picture of the activity in rural areas can be obtained.

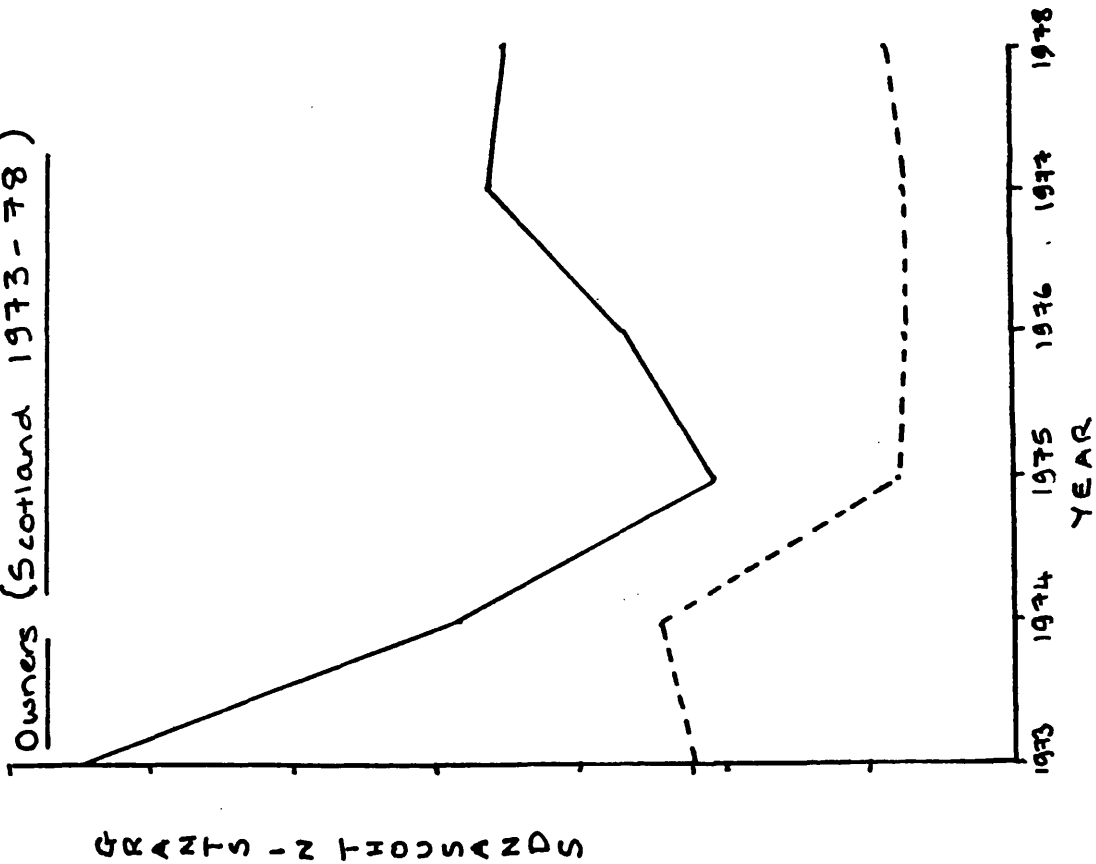
Scottish Trends 1975 -78

In this section both private and local authority improvements will be examined. In the last section it was noted that there had been a very sharp decrease in the rate of grant uptake in Scotland, following the reductions in grant levels. Since 1975, as diagram B shows, local authority grant approvals in Scotland have continued to outnumber private ones and the gap between the two grew until 1977, which also marked the year of greatest local authority activity in this period. The trends in the two sectors have varied slightly, but there have been no major changes in the number of grants approved in either sector. Local authority grant approvals fell in 1975 and increased again in 1976 and 1977; private improvement grants, on the other hand, continued to fall until 1976 before experiencing any increase.

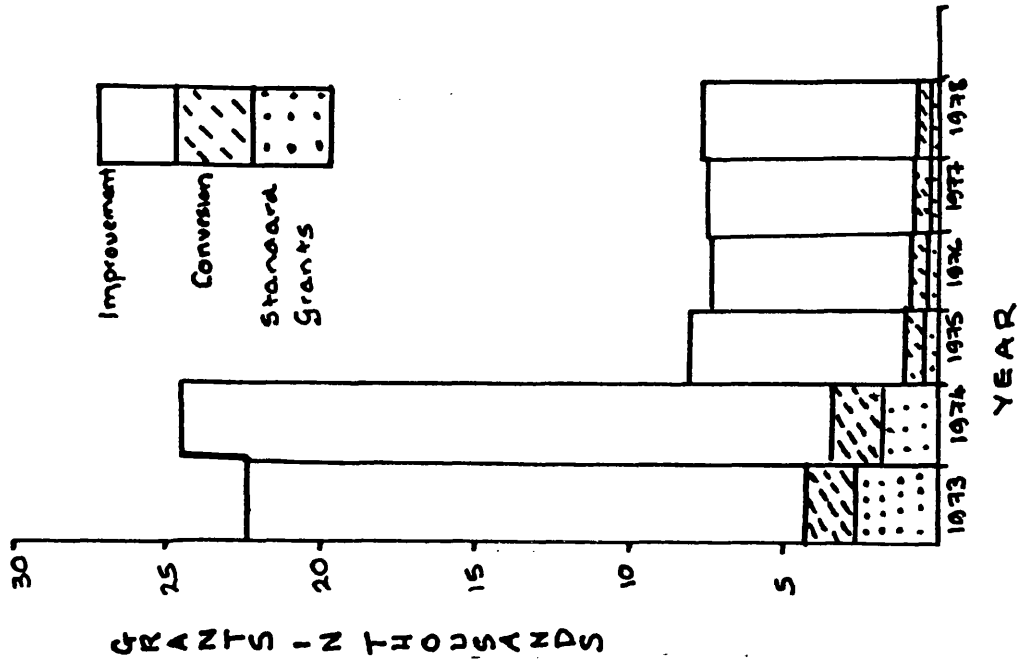
In the local authority sector subsidised dwellings accounted for over 95% of all the grants approved, however, the numbers of non-subsidised dwellings receiving grants increased quite considerably during the same period and this may reflect the growing commitment among some local authorities to the rehabilitation of acquired properties. (This will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter). A breakdown of private sector improvement grants revealed that the vast majority of grants approved were for improvements covering more than the standard amenities - only 4% of all grants approved were for standard amenities. More importantly, it was discovered that the proportion of discretionary grants going to private landlords had increased to 26% of the total. Quite why this has happened is not very clear, but it may be partly due to the gradual build-up of H.A.A.s which has occurred in several areas of Scotland. Analysis of the

DIAGRAM B

Analysis of Improvement Grants
Approved by L.A.s and Private
Owners (Scotland 1973-78)



Analysis of Private
Improvement Grants 1973-78.



latest figures on H.A.A. declarations indicated that 42.7% of all houses in Action Areas are in the private rented sector and it could be that the higher grant levels available in these have provided sufficient incentive for some landlords to improve their property. However, more careful consideration of H.A.A.s will be left until later in the chapter.

Once again it is difficult to accurately assess rural Scotland's share of these improvements since private and local authority improvement grant figures have only been published at District level since 1978. A request for figures was sent to the S.D.D. Housing Statistics Section, however, after several visits and telephone calls only figures for July 1976 to July 1977 were made available. On the basis of these and the 1978 published figures it can be shown that there may have been a very slight decrease in the number of private improvement grants approved in rural Scotland between 1976/77 and 1978, when Scotland as a whole experienced a slight increase. However, this observation should be treated with a great deal of caution since the number of grants only fell by 71 in 1978 and there are still five quarterly returns outstanding, which means that the completed set of figures could rise above the 1976/77 total. What is clear is that rural Scotland's share of private improvement grants, although significantly higher compared to the 1971-75 period, did fall between 1976/77 and 1978. In 1976/77 rural Scotland approved 35.2% of all private improvement grants, whereas in 1978 this fell to 29% (even allowing for the missing returns it is unlikely this figure will change significantly). It may again be the case that this trend can be partly explained by the H.A.A. programme. Although rural Scotland has had a 30.7% share of all the H.A.A. schemes which have been finally

resolved between 1975 and 1978 it has only had a 7.5% share of all the houses in such schemes. Also the average urban scheme for the same period contained 80 houses compared to 15 in the average rural scheme. This means that more people in H.A.A.s outside rural areas had the opportunity of applying for a 75% grant.

In the rural local authority sector there was a noticeable increase in the number of grants approved in 1976/77 and 1978 in keeping with the general Scottish trend when the number of grants rose from 5753 to 7438. On the other hand, this represented a much smaller share of the Scottish total than that of private improvement grants. In 1976/77 only 20% of local authority improvement grants were approved in rural areas and in 1978 this rose by a further 1.3%. Very few of these grants went to non-subsidised dwellings - for example, in 1978 these only accounted for 1.7% of the rural total. The generally lower levels of local authority improvement activity is not all that surprising bearing in mind that only relatively small proportions of substandard properties are located in the local authority sector. (See Summary Chart at the end of Chapter One).

It is also interesting to note that rural Scotland's proportionally large share of private improvement grants is also reflected in the capital expenditure figures. For the financial years 1977/78 and 1978/79 rural Scotland received 64.6% and 65.3% respectively of the total capital expenditure allocated to private improvement in Scotland. In relation to its actual share of grants this seems very high, reflecting the much greater costs of improvement in rural areas which will be considered in some detail in Chapter Four. The rural share of capital expenditure on local authority modernisation and repair was much smaller accounting for 32.2% and 37.4% respectively.

Fortunately reliable data at District level is available for H.A.A. declarations and Local Authority Rehabilitation schemes approvals and this information provides a more accurate and useful indicator of local authorities' improvement activities in rural areas. Before considering the response of individual local authorities in declaring H.A.A.s and pursuing their own rehabilitation programmes it is worth examining the general trends in rural areas between 1975 and 1979 and comparing these with urban areas and Scotland as a whole. The progress of these two activities in rural areas will also be compared to see if there is any evidence to suggest whether or not the two policies are generally viewed as complementary or alternative strategies for improving housing stock.

Housing Action Areas in Rural Scotland

The build up and distribution of H.A.A.s in rural Scotland is set out in table 3.3.(a) which is based on annual and not cumulative activity. From this it can be observed that H.A.A. declarations got off to a very slow start, with no declarations being made in 1975 and only a few in 1976. However, from 1976 to 1978 there was a noticeable increase in rural H.A.A.s which involved more and more authorities and included a greater number of houses. The trend in urban areas was very similar, however, not only did the urban programme begin one year earlier with 3 Districts declaring H.A.A.s in 1975, but it also covered a greater number of authorities and, as one might expect, included a greater number of houses. The greater scale of the urban H.A.A. programme is reflected in the average size of scheme during the period, although there is an interesting contrast in the changing size of the average scheme in urban and rural areas during the period. In rural Scotland the average H.A.A. scheme has increased

TABLE 3.3.(a) Build up and Distribution of H.A.A.s in Rural Scotland

Houses in H.A.A.s fin- ally resolved	1975	1976		1977		1978		1979	
		No.of L.A.	% of L.A.	No.of L.S.	% of L.A.	No.of L.A.	% of L.A.	No.of L.A.	% of L.A.
0	28	24	85.7	23	82.1	20	71.4	22	78.5
1 - 25		3	10.7	3	10.7	3	10.7	2	7.1
26 - 50		1	3.6					2	7.1
51 - 75				2	7.1			1	3.6
76 - 100						1	3.6		
100 - 200						3	10.7	1	3.6
200 - 400								1	3.6
400 +						1	3.6	1	3.6
TOTAL	28	28	99.9	28	99.9	28	100	28	

TABLE 3.3.(b) Build up and Distribution of H.A.A.s in Urban Scotland

Houses in H.A.A.s fin- ally resolved	1975		1976		1977		1978	
	No.of L.A.	% of L.A.	No.of L.A.	% of L.A.	No.of L.A.	% of L.A.	No.of L.A.	% of L.A.
0	26		18		13		10	
1 - 150			4		13		13	
151 - 300	2		4					
301 - 500							1	
501 - 1000			1				3	
1000			1		2		1	

in size from 8 houses in 1976 to 15 in 1978, whereas in urban areas there was a noticeable decrease from 143 in 1975 to 53 in 1978. The apparent reason for this becomes much clearer when the pattern of H.A.A. declarations is studied at a District level. Many of the early urban schemes were located in the cities and were aimed at tackling the major concentrations of subtolerable stock, as a result these schemes were often very big. For instance the largest scheme which has been declared in Scotland is located at Clydebank and covers 800 houses - it was declared in 1976. As more and more of the smaller urban authorities joined in the programme and as cities moved on to identify smaller H.A.A.s the average size of the scheme dropped. In rural areas, however, initially only a few, possibly experimental schemes were declared, by just 4 Districts, 3 of whom went on to declare some more slightly larger schemes - hence the slight increase in the average size.

Despite the growth in H.A.A. activity, the programme in rural areas was, in fact, very limited in its extent. Only 10 Districts have declared any H.A.A.s at all and just half of these declared more than two. Nearly 80% of rural activity has been concentrated in the three Districts of Angus, Perth & Kinross and the Western Isles. Similarly in urban areas just under 75% of H.A.A. houses were located in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Dundee.

The very slow start to the H.A.A. programme and its limited impact in rural areas possibly reflects the reluctance of many rural authorities to adopt a procedure which was generally felt to be unsuitable, particularly in areas with a widely scattered subtolerable stock. This view was strongly expressed at a Planning Exchange Seminar on "H.A.A.s in the Highlands and Islands and Grampian Region"

TABLE 3.4.

H.A.A. Progress in Rural Scotland 1976-78

<u>District</u>	Schemes finally resolved			Houses finally resolved		
	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>
Ettrick & Lauderdale						
Roxburgh						
Annandale & Eskdale	1			20		
Nithsdale			1			14
Banff & Buchan			5			114
Gordon		1			12	
Inverness						
Ross & Cromarty			1			82
Sutherland			1			12
Argyll & Bute			2			15
Lanark		1			15	
Angus	8	4	5	37	54	120
Perth & Kinross	1	1	21	14	16	183
Western Isles	1	10	32	18	66	413
RURAL SCOTLAND	11	17	68	89	163	953

in 1977. During discussions the "one below tolerable standard house in every building" was cited as the major barrier to H.A.A. adoption and all the authorities present agreed that the procedures were unsuitable for dispersed substandard stock. The S.D.D. representatives then explained that there was great flexibility in defining areas, and houses where owners were not keen to improve their property and above standard houses, could be excluded from the H.A.A. by drawing the boundary round these houses in such a way as to miss them out. It is very interesting to note that six of the Districts present at the seminar declared H.A.A.s in 1977-78, four of them for the first time - namely Banff & Buchan, Ross & Cromarty, Inverness and Sutherland. (Planning Exchange 1977).

It may also be the case that some rural authorities considered that the 50% discretionary private improvement grants were sufficient to deal with the relatively small numbers of subtolerable stock that characterise many rural Districts. H.A.A. activity does generally imply a policy of promoting improvement by private owners as table 3.5. bears out. From this it can be seen that the vast majority of H.A.A. houses in both urban and rural areas were located in the private sector. In rural areas almost half of the H.A.A. houses were found in the owner occupied sector whereas in urban areas there was a fairly even split between the two which came down slightly in favour of the private rented sector. When the distribution of H.A.A.s and Private Improvement grants is related to the size of subtolerable stock for the year 1977 a far greater correspondence between private improvement grants and subtolerable stock is found in rural areas, compared to H.A.A.s. (See table 3.6). The table shows that every rural authority approved some private improvement grants. This,

TABLE 3.5. Tenure Distribution in H.A.A.s.

% of H.A.A. houses at final resolution	T E N U R E S P L I T				
	<u>0.0.</u>	<u>P.R.</u>	<u>L.A.</u>	<u>H.A.</u>	<u>Not known</u>
<u>1975- July 1979</u>					
Rural	54.3	32.2	5.8	0.24	7.5
Urban	42.3	45.5	7.8	2.6	1.9

TABLE 3.6. Distribution of L.A.s by No. of Private Improvement Grants approved in 1976/77 in relation to size of B.T.S. stock in Rural Scotland

Private Imp- rovement Grants Approved	S i z e o f B T S S t o c k					
	<u>1-500</u>	<u>501-1000</u>	<u>1001-2000</u>	<u>2001-3000</u>	<u>3001-4000</u>	<u>4000+</u>
0	-	-	-	-	-	-
1-25	4	1	-	-	-	-
26-50	3	2	3	-	-	-
51-75	1	1	-	-	-	-
76-100	-	2	-	-	-	-
100-125	1	-	-	2	-	1
126-150	-	-	2	-	-	-
151-200	-	-	-	2	1	-
200+	-	-	-	-	2	-

Distribution of L.A.s by H.A.A.s Houses Declared in 1977 in relation to size of B.T.S. Stock in Rural Scotland

Houses in H.A.A.s Declared	S i z e o f B T S S t o c k					
	<u>1-500</u>	<u>501-1000</u>	<u>1001-2000</u>	<u>2001-3000</u>	<u>3001-4000</u>	<u>4000+</u>
0	8	5	4	3	-	-
1-25	2	-	1	-	1	-
26-50	-	-	-	1	-	-
51-75	-	-	-	-	1	-
76-100	-	-	-	-	-	-
100-125	-	-	-	-	1	-
126-150	-	-	-	-	-	-
150+	-	-	-	-	-	-

coupled with the fact that very few declared H.A.A.s suggests that some rural authorities either felt no need to declare H.A.A.s to stimulate private improvement activity or decided that the procedures associated with H.A.A. declaration were too cumbersome and/or unsuited to their particular problem. The cynic might also suggest that some rural authorities could not be bothered making the extra effort required to declare H.A.A.s. The attitudes of 3 rural authorities to H.A.A.s as a means of stimulating private improvement will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

Although there are no comparable figures for 1979 there are a few signs that H.A.A. activity may be dropping off in rural areas. A 50% sample of the H.A.A. declarations contained in the S.D.D. records revealed that the average period between draft and final resolution was 4 - 6 months for over 75% of the rural H.A.A. schemes. From further analysis of the H.A.A. data it was discovered that 43 draft schemes in rural areas had yet to be resolved. Assuming that most of these are resolved before the end of 1979 and bearing in mind that 22 schemes had already been resolved by mid-1979, it is possible that up to 65 schemes could be resolved by the end of the year, which would only mean a slight decrease on the 1978 figures. However, what leads one to expect a possible decrease in the H.A.A. programme is the fact that only 13 new schemes were drafted in the first half of 1979. Unless there has been a very sudden increase in the declaration rate in the second half of 1979 it is highly unlikely that the figures for 1980 will approach anything like those for 1978 and the potential 1979 ones. It would not be all that surprising if there was a drop in H.A.A. declarations bearing in mind that the 1978 (Financial Provisions) Scotland Act has made 75% grants available outside H.A.A.s

for single dwellings.

However, it would be wrong to make any conclusions about the more recent trends in rural H.A.A.s until the complete set of 1979 figures has been verified. Having examined the main trends in H.A.A.s, it is time to consider what has been happening to Local Authority rehabilitation schemes in rural areas during the same period.

Local Authority Rehabilitation Activity in Rural Scotland

Between 1974 and 1979 rural Scotland was responsible for 31.4% of all the local authority rehabilitation schemes approved in Scotland, but these included only 16.9% of all the houses which suggests that the rural share of local authority rehabilitation and the size of scheme in these areas was generally very small.

The pattern and growth of local authority rehabilitation in Scotland is shown in Tables 3.7.(a) and 3.7.(b) and these are based on annual and not cumulative figures. From the tables it can be seen that rehabilitation activity in both rural and urban areas was spread over a far larger number of authorities than H.A.A. declarations. At no time during the 5 year period were less than 60% of rural Districts involved in rehabilitation and only four rural Districts failed to approve any schemes. However, as table 3.8. shows, the majority of rural Scotland spent less than £¼ million on local authority rehabilitation between 1974 and 1978, whereas in urban areas the vast majority of authorities spent more than this.

A comparison of tables 3.7.(a) and (b) revealed that more rural Districts had been involved in local authority rehabilitation than urban ones and it was not until 1978 that the number of active urban Districts exceeded those in rural areas. Also it was discovered that the majority of annual local authority schemes in both urban and rural areas were quite small - rural schemes generally contained less than 10 houses, and quite a few had just one or two, as table 3.9. shows, similarly urban schemes, although slightly larger, usually only covered 10 to 25 houses. In view of rural Scotland's very small share of local authority rehabilitation measured in terms of the absolute numbers of houses included in the programme and the generally low

TABLE 3.7.(a) Distribution of Local Authority by size of rehabilitation programme in Rural Scotland

<u>Houses approved for L.A. rehabilitation</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>
0	18	16	11	14	13
1-5	7	4	10	5	7
6-10	1	5	3	2	2
11-20			3	4	4
21-30	1		1	1	1
31-40		3		2	1
40+	1				

TABLE 3.7.(b) Distribution of Local Authority by size of rehabilitation programme in Urban Scotland

<u>Houses approved for L.A. rehabilitation</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>
0	19	15	21	15	10
1-25	7	11	6	7	9
26-50	1	0	1	-	1
51-100	1	1	-	3	6
100+	-	1	1	3	2

TABLE 3.8.(a) Distribution of Rural Local Authorities by Total

Estimated Expenditure on Rehabilitation 1974-79

<u>Expenditure on houses approved for rehabilitation (£)</u>	<u>% Total Expenditure</u>	<u>No. of L.A.s</u>	<u>% of L.A.s</u>
0	-	4	14.3
1-10000	0.17	2	7.1
10001-100000	8.65	9	32.1
100001-250000	12.46	4	14.3
250001-500000	30.17	5	17.9
500001-1 million	48.54	4	14.3
TOTAL	£6194310	28	100.0

TABLE 3.8.(b) Distribution of Urban Local Authorities by Total

Estimated Expenditure on Rehabilitation 1974-79

<u>Expenditure on houses approved for rehabilitation (£)</u>	<u>% Total Expenditure</u>	<u>No. of L.A.s</u>	<u>% of L.A.s</u>
0	-	3	10.7
1-250000	1.73	10	35.7
250001-500000	2.23	3	10.7
500000-1 million	7.10	5	17.9
7 1,000,000	89.07	7	25.0
TOTAL	£51,028148	28	100.0

TABLE 3.9. The Pattern of L.A. Rehabilitation Activity in Rural Scotland

1974 - October 1979

	S C H E M E S					H O U S E S				
	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>
Ettrick & Lauderdale	2				1	5				15
Roxburgh		4	1		2		31	5		8
Tweeddale	1	1				1	1			
Annandale & Eskdale		1	1	7	1		1	6	16	19
Nithsdale	2	1	2	1		2	6	12	15	
Stewartry			1					2		
Wigtown			1					2		
N.E. Fife		2		2	3		3		4	5
Banff & Buchan		2		1	2		9		2	5
Moray	1		2	2	6	1		6	10	31
Badenoch & Strathspey					1					1
Caithness	1		1			5		3		
Inverness			1	1				2	1	
Lochaber			2					6		
Ross & Cromarty	1	1	1	1	3	2	8	1	19	5
Skye & Lochalsh				1					12	
Sutherland		1	1	1	1		1	1	9	2
Argyll & Bute	1	2	3	1	8	4	8	13	2	25
Lanark			1	6	2			1	24	7
Angus	5	5	4	4	2	70	35	21	40	2
Perth & Kinross	4	4	2	2	2	30	39	5	33	17
Orkney	2		3	3	2	6		12	5	19
Shetland		1	1				9	3		
Western Isles					1					4
RURAL SCOTLAND	27	25	28	33	37	131	151	101	192	165

expenditure on rehabilitation, it is perhaps a little surprising that there has been no significant contrast in the size of urban and rural schemes. In fact what has happened is that the vast majority of rehabilitation activity has been concentrated in 17 urban Districts with Glasgow alone counting for 59% of the Scottish total. (MacLennan et al. 1980). Unlike H.A.A.s there has been no noticeable variation in the average size of rural scheme throughout the period which has ranged from 4 to 6 houses.

The general trend in the build up of local authority rehabilitation activity throughout Scotland has been far less marked than the increase in H.A.A. declarations (See Table 3.3.). This is not very surprising since such activity was already an established practice when the provisions for H.A.A.s were established in 1974. Local authority activity in both rural and urban areas reached a peak in 1977 which can be attributed partly to the first year of full 'recovery' from the upheaval of local government reorganisation which probably also explains the slight decrease in activity in 1976. There are some signs that rehabilitation activity is tailing off. There was most certainly a decrease in 1978 and by October 1979 only 21 schemes covering 72 houses had been approved in rural areas, however no firm conclusions can be made since some of these may have been abandoned because of public expenditure cuts and others may already be underway without the knowledge of the S.D.D.

The Social & Economic Research Department questionnaire asked local authorities to state whether or not any of their rehabilitation schemes lay within H.A.A.s. Only two of the 23 forms returned by rural authorities indicated that this was the case and only 18 houses were affected. Bearing in mind the very low percentage of local auth-

ority ownership in H.A.A.s this suggests that there is little overlap between the two activities. So is there any evidence to suggest whether or not local authority rehabilitation and H.A.A. activity are seen as alternative strategies?

Table 3.10. shows the growth and relationship in the H.A.A. and local authority rehabilitation programmes in rural areas, and this seems to indicate that the two approaches are used as complementary, as opposed to alternative, strategies. When table 3.11. which sets out the improvement activity of all rural authorities as a percentage of the rural total, is studied those areas which declared H.A.A.s were all involved in local authority rehabilitation. For instance Angus and Perth & Kinross have been very active in both spheres. In contrast the Western Isles has tended to concentrate on H.A.A.s, but this is not very surprising bearing in mind that the majority of subtolerable stock in this area is concentrated in the owner occupied sector. The two sets of data were, in fact, tested to try and establish whether or not there was any significant correlation in the growth of the two activities. Although a positive correlation was obtained it did not prove to be significant at the 0.1 level, therefore no firm conclusions can be made. MacLennan et al. carried out the same tests on the aggregate Scottish data and in this case a significant positive correlation was obtained.

Having established the general H.A.A. and local authority rehabilitation trends the final section of this chapter will consider the activities of individual rural authorities to see how these relate to the scale of the rural housing problem in each area.

TABLE 3.10. Growth and Relationship of the L.A. Rehabilitation
and H.A.A. Programmes in Rural Scotland Year by Year

	<u>No. of H.A.A.s declared</u>	<u>Houses in H.A.A. declared</u>	<u>No.of L.A. involved in H.A.A.s</u>	<u>L.A. rehab. schemes approved</u>	<u>No.houses in L.A. rehab. schemes approved</u>	<u>Nos. of L.A. involved in rehab.</u>
1975	0	0	0	25	151	12
1976	11	89	3	28	101	17
1977	17	163	5	33	192	14
1978	68	953	8	37	165	15

Source : S.D.D. Records

The Improvement Activities of Individual Local Authorities in Rural
Scotland 1975 - 79

In Chapter One it was noted that the housing problem in rural Scotland, measured in terms of the proportion of substandard stock to total housing stock varied very widely between and within different areas. Discussion of the general H.A.A. trends also revealed the very limited and concentrated nature of the rural programme. Therefore one might expect the responses of individual authorities to improvement as a means of eliminating subtolerable stock to be varied.

Table 3.12. lists rural authorities according to the scale of their improvement work between 1974 and 1978 in relation to the size of their subtolerable stock and it also includes some other variables to indicate the level of activity in public new building, demolition and modernisation and repair of subsidy built dwellings. It is recognised that not all improved houses will have been defined as B.T.S., and accordingly the numbers of houses improved does not necessarily imply a corresponding decrease in the B.T.S. stock. Table 2.11. lists authorities according to their share of the rural B.T.S. stock and compares this with their share of H.A.A. houses, houses approved for rehabilitation and private improvement grant approvals. These two tables will be considered in conjunction to show how active rural authorities have been in the field of improvement. A third table, table 3.13., showing the changes in the percentage of capital expenditure allocated to private improvement grants, local authority modernisation and repair and new building for the years 1977/78 and 1978/79 has been prepared and this provides a rough guide to local authority commitments and priorities in rural areas. Generally the vast majority of capital expenditure is allocated to new building and the

LOCAL AUTHORITIES, STS STOCK AND IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITY AS PERCENTAGE OF RURAL SCOTTISH TOTAL

TABLE 2.11.

District	A		B		C		D		E		F	
	B.T.S. stock as % of Rural Total	L.A. rehab. houses 74-78 as % of Rural Total	L.A. rehab. houses 74-78 as % of Rural Total	H.A.A. houses 74-78 as % of Rural Total	H.A.A. houses 74-78 as % of Rural Total	H.A.A. houses draft resol. 74-79 as % of Rural Total	H.A.A. houses draft resol. 74-79 as % of Rural Total	Priv. Imp. Grants 76/77 + 78 as % of Rural Total	Priv. Imp. Grants 76/77 + 78 as % of Rural Total	% Households in 1971 lacking in basic amenities in each tenure sector in Rural Scotland	L.A. O.O.	P.K. P.R.
Berwickshire	2.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.91	0.91	3.3	50.5	46.2
Ettrick & Lauderdale	2.5	2.46	2.46	-	-	1.67	1.67	2.23	2.23	7.7	48.3	44.0
Roxburgh	1.7	7.22	7.22	-	-	0.67	0.67	0.93	0.93	8.0	46.1	45.9
Tweeddale	0.6	0.16	0.16	-	-	-	-	0.81	0.81	7.7	45.2	47.1
Anandale & Eskdale	1.7	6.89	6.89	1.42	1.42	0.71	0.71	1.58	1.58	3.3	50.0	46.7
Nithsdale	1.2	5.42	5.42	1.00	1.00	1.13	1.13	4.18	4.18	13.0	56.8	30.2
Stewartry	0.9	0.32	0.32	-	-	-	-	2.01	2.01	3.0	44.7	52.2
Wigtown	0.6	0.32	0.32	-	-	-	-	1.83	1.83	5.9	42.6	51.5
N.E. Fife	6.5	2.10	2.10	-	-	-	-	4.87	4.87	4.1	52.0	43.9
Banff & Buchan	7.4	2.63	2.63	8.11	8.11	5.08	5.08	9.62	9.62	4.8	45.6	49.6
Gordon	2.6	-	-	0.85	0.85	0.43	0.43	5.34	5.34	2.1	55.4	42.5
Kincardine & Deeside	1.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.15	3.15	2.5	60.0	37.5
Moray	6.2	7.71	7.71	-	-	-	-	5.8	5.8	3.2	45.6	51.2
Badenoch & Strathspey	0.2	0.16	0.16	-	-	-	-	0.33	0.33	4.3	61.4	34.4
Caithness	1.2	0.49	0.49	-	-	-	-	3.8	3.8	4.4	46.9	48.7
Inverness	3.8	0.49	0.49	-	-	1.35	1.35	2.07	2.07	4.7	50.7	44.6
Lochaber	1.0	0.96	0.96	-	-	-	-	0.63	0.63	6.5	45.4	48.1
Nairn	0.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.57	0.57	7.3	60.7	32.0
Ross & Cromarty	5.6	5.42	5.42	5.84	5.84	2.91	2.91	5.52	5.52	2.1	36.7	61.2
Skye & Lochalsh	2.8	1.97	1.97	-	-	-	-	1.42	1.42	2.5	20.8	76.7
Sutherland	1.1	2.13	2.13	0.85	0.85	0.42	0.42	1.67	1.67	2.4	35.0	62.6
Argyll & Bute	15.3	7.88	7.88	1.06	1.06	14.2	14.2	5.22	5.22	4.6	58.6	37.6
Lanark	1.1	5.25	5.25	1.06	1.06	0.53	0.53	2.25	2.25	7.8	44.2	48.0
Angus	8.2	16.1	16.1	29.25	29.25	16.07	16.07	8.04	8.04	9.9	57.3	32.0
Perth & Kinross	7.8	15.4	15.4	15.16	15.16	13.65	13.65	12.12	12.12	12.3	60.0	27.7
Orkney Islands	3.5	5.9	5.9	-	-	-	-	2.8	2.8	1.6	33.4	65.0
Shetland Islands	3.4	1.97	1.97	-	-	-	-	1.68	1.68	2.6	57.4	40.0
Western Isles	8.3	0.66	0.66	35.37	35.37	41.06	41.06	8.50	8.50	0.8	10.4	88.0

TABLE 3.13.

District	% Total Capital Expenditure on Private Improvement Grants		% Total Capital Expenditure on Local Authority Modernisation and Repair		% Total Capital Expenditure on Local Authority New Building				
	1977/78	1978/79	Change	1977/78	1978/79	Change			
Berwickshire	5.3	4.7	- 0.6	25.5	51.6	+ 26.1	61.0	40.4	-20.6
Ettrick & Lauderdale	3.8	7.1	+ 3.3	20.7	23.6	+ 2.9	61.0	52.3	- 8.7
Roxburgh	4.6	6.3	+ 1.7	32.1	60.4	+ 28.3	49.6	13.6	-36.0
Tweeddale	3.3	7.6	+ 4.3	0.4	57.6	+ 57.2	58.6	8.3	-50.3
Annandale & Eskdale	2.7	3.1	+ 0.4	22.9	22.7	- 0.2	71.2	65.6	- 5.6
Nithsdale	13.0	7.8	- 5.2	23.8	29.3	+ 5.5	58.3	60.2	+ 1.9
Stewartry	3.2	5.4	+ 2.2	36.8	29.8	- 7.0	58.2	61.3	+ 3.1
Wigtown	4.8	6.3	+ 1.5	20.5	38.5	+ 18.0	72.7	45.5	-27.2
N.E. Fife	4.0	7.4	+ 3.4	12.0	8.7	- 3.3	80.2	78.9	- 1.3
Banff & Buchan	3.0	6.8	+ 3.8	8.0	13.3	+ 5.3	86.4	75.7	-10.7
Gordon	6.1	8.1	+ 2.0	25.7	37.1	+ 11.4	63.4	54.0	- 9.4
Kincardine & Deeside	8.2	6.0	- 2.2	25.1	14.0	- 11.1	63.6	63.6	no change
Moray	5.5	13.5	+ 8.0	18.2	21.6	+ 3.4	69.1	46.4	-22.7
Badenoch & Strathspey	3.0	5.0	+ 2.0	14.8	16.1	+ 1.3	72.5	78.4	+ 5.9
Caithness	7.2	7.2	no change	16.1	30.5	+ 14.4	72.8	59.0	-13.8
Inverness	2.6	3.3	+ 0.7	25.3	36.6	+ 11.3	68.3	44.5	-23.8
Lochaber	1.5	0	- 1.5	39.8	24.0	- 15.8	48.0	68.1	+20.1
Nairn	1.5	2.5	+ 1.0	9.3	41.6	+ 32.3	89.2	36.6	-52.6
Ross & Cromarty	2.7	7.0	+ 4.3	9.2	18.5	+ 9.3	77.6	71.1	- 6.5
Skye & Lochalsh	6.9	15.4	+ 8.5	13.2	15.9	+ 2.7	78.9	66.8	-12.1
Sutherland	9.8	13.6	+ 3.8	6.9	30.5	+ 23.6	76.5	51.4	-25.1
Argyll & Bute	4.1	4.3	+ 0.2	9.6	9.9	+ 0.3	57.1	60.1	+ 3.0
Lanark	3.1	5.9	+ 2.8	23.1	44.1	+ 21.0	58.2	27.3	-30.9
Angus	11.1	9.3	- 1.8	26.7	26.1	- 0.6	39.7	39.2	- 0.5
Perth & Kinross	9.7	11.6	+ 1.9	16.1	10.7	- 5.4	58.1	63.8	+ 5.7
Orkney	8.4	1	- 7.4	12.9	6.2	- 6.7	58.3	27.6	-30.7
Shetland	2.0	3.2	+ 1.2	2.2	6.3	+ 4.1	69.8	71.8	+ 2.0
Western Isles	7.4	11.2	+ 3.8	8.0	2.2	- 5.8	77.3	78.3	+ 1.0
Rural Scottish Average	5.2	6.8	+ 1.4	18.0	26.0	+ 8.0	62.3	53.9	- 9.4

Source: S.D.D. Local Authority Records

TABLE 3.11.

District	LOCAL	AUTHORITY	-97-	IMPROVEMENT	ACTIVITY	IN	RELATION		TO	BTS	ST
	L.A. rehab.houses 74-78 as % of BTS stock	H.A.A. houses at final res. as % of BTS stock	No. of Priv. Improvement grants as % of BTS stock	No. of L.A. rehab. houses 74-78	BTS stock End of 1977	BTS stock End of 1977	BTS stock End of 1977 as % of Total stock	Total Housing Stock			
Berwickshire	-	-	5.75	-	800	800	9.6	8293			
Ettrick & Lauderdale	1.51	-	11.37	15	994	994	7.2	13856			
Roxburgh	6.52	-	6.96	44	675	675	4.4	15306			
Tweeddale	0.41	-	2.78	1	246	246	4.0	6185			
Annandale & Eskdale	6.05	2.88	11.52	42	694	694	5.2	13459			
Nithsdale	6.72	2.85	50.6	33	491	491	2.3	21147			
Stewartry	0.52	-	26.3	2	387	387	4.1	9520			
Wigtown	0.86	-	40.0	2	232	232	2.0	11888			
N.E. Fife	0.46	-	9.55	12	2584	2584	9.9	26016			
Banff & Burnan	0.55	3.90	16.6	16	2925	2925	9.8	29971			
Gordon	-	1.14	25.76	-	1052	1052	4.8	22140			
Kincardine & Deeside	-	-	23.6	-	677	677	4.3	15656			
Moray	1.92	-	12.16	47	2450	2450	8.1	30104			
Badenoch & Strathspey	1.19	-	20.2	1	84	84	2.0	4226			
Caithness	0.63	-	40.46	3	477	477	4.6	10384			
Inverness	0.20	-	7.0	3	1499	1499	7.4	20139			
Lochaber	1.43	-	7.6	6	420	420	5.5	7636			
Nairn	-	-	30.8	-	94	94	2.5	3748			
Rose & Cromarty	1.48	3.68	12.6	33	2229	2229	12.7	17613			
Skye & Lochalsh	1.08	-	6.5	12	1113	1113	23.9	4651			
Sutherland	2.89	2.67	18.9	13	449	449	7.2	6251			
Argyll & Bute	0.80	0.25	4.4	48	6000	6000	20.6	29058			
Lanark	7.49	3.51	26.6	32	427	427	2.2	19610			
Angus	3.06	12.8	12.7	98	3203	3203	8.7	36884			
Perth & Kinross	3.08	6.98	20.2	94	3049	3049	6.5	47104			
Orkney Isles	2.59	-	10.2	36	1390	1390	19.0	7334			
Shetland Isles	0.89	-	6.3	12	1342	1342	17.4	7695			
Western Isles	0.12	13.20	13.1	4	3267	3267	28.8	11355			

rest is divided between local authority modernisation and repair and private improvement grants with private improvement grants generally receiving less than 10% of total capital expenditure. This table will also be used in conjunction with Tables 3.11. and 3.12. to confirm observations on individual improvement activities.

Most rural local authorities have been quite active on a very small scale in the local authority rehabilitation field with the majority of rural Districts undertaking programmes of less than 2% of their subtolerable stock, sometimes covering just 1 - 4 houses. Only four Districts failed to approve any rehabilitation schemes at all - Berwickshire, Gordon, Kincardine & Deeside and Nairn. However, with the exception of Nairn these areas had very low proportions of sub-standard houses in the local authority sector in 1971 and perhaps felt less need to indulge in any rehabilitation work. The average repair and expenditure figures for local authority modernisation in Table 3.12. show that Nairn spent £9 per local authority house and this was higher than the rural Scottish average which suggests that the District council may have decided to concentrate on a wider ranging modernisation programme. This seems to be equally true in several other areas where rehabilitation activity has been non-existent or very low-key, e.g. Berwickshire, Stewartry, Kincardine & Deeside and Lochar, all of whom allocated proportionally large amounts of their capital expenditure to local authority modernisation and repair for the year 1977/78.

A few areas have undertaken slightly larger rehabilitation programmes in relation to their subtolerable stock, e.g. Roxburgh, Annandale & Eskdale, Nithsdale and Lanark. These are all fairly "urbanised" rural areas where large proportions of the population

live in towns and where above average proportions of the substandard houses in 1971 were found in the local authority sector. This is also the case in Perth & Kinross and Angus where 94 and 98 houses respectively, representing more than 30% of the total rural local authority rehabilitation programme, were approved between 1974 and 1978.

The possibility that local authority rehabilitation and demolition policies were consistently related, either directly to make a combined impact on B.T.S. stock, or conversely as an alternative means of tackling the problem was considered since it had been observed that in some areas like Caithness, Nairn and Stewartry where local authority rehabilitation activity was very low in relation to B.T.S. stock, demolitions were quite high. Alternatively in Perth & Kinross and Lanark, where rehabilitation activity also tended to be on a slightly greater scale demolitions were again found to be higher than the Scottish average. These differences may be a reflection of variations in the quality of B.T.S. stock, some of which could have proved unsuitable for improvement, or they may represent the orientation of policy makers towards one course of action or the other. However, when the two sets of data were correlated, no significant relationship was found.

In other areas where rehabilitation activity was low in relation to B.T.S. stock, some of the highest levels of public new building relative to total stock were found. These tended to be oil related areas, e.g. Banff & Buchan, Inverness, N.E. Fife, Ross & Cromarty and Shetland. The apparent commitment to new building in these areas was strongly reflected in the high proportions, generally of around 70% or more, of capital expenditure allocated to new building. Elsewhere there seemed little to indicate any consistent relationship

between the rehabilitation and new building programmes in rural areas. However, in view of the fear expressed in much of the literature that rehabilitation may act as a substitute for new building it was decided to test for a relationship. Once again no significant correlation was found between the two data sets.

Some idea of more recent local authority attitudes towards modernisation and repair as opposed to rehabilitation can be gauged from Table 3.13. by studying the proportion of expenditure allocated to local authority modernisation and repair in each area. In general there has been an increase in the allocation between 1977/78 and 1978/79 which suggests that commitment to local authority improvement and maintenance is not waning. Only eight authorities actually decreased their capital allocation for modernisation and repair and five have increased their allocation by 20% or more - Berwickshire, Tweeddale, Nairn, Sutherland and Roxburgh, which suggests that modernisation and repair programmes in these areas are possibly expanding or in the case of Tweeddale which only allocated less than 1% of expenditure to modernisation and repair in 1977/78 just starting.

Bearing in mind the very low proportions of subtolerable stock in the local authority sector and the widespread nature of the rural rehabilitation programme it seems quite likely that a fair impact has been made through local authority rehabilitation and possibly modernisation in many areas of rural Scotland. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said for private improvement activity in rural areas. H.A.A. activity so far has only had a significant effect in the Western Isles, Perth & Kinross, Angus and Banff & Buchan, and this was reflected in their proportionally large share of rural private improvement grants in 1976/77 and 1978 (See Table 3.11. column E.). Although

several other areas declared H.A.A.s some quite early on in the programme, e.g. Gordon, Annandale & Eskdale and Lanark, these were not backed up by further declarations. Why this happened it is not very clear. Perhaps these schemes were experimental and proved unsuccessful, thereby deterring the individual authorities from making further declarations. This was most certainly the case in Gordon District where the only scheme which was declared in 1976 has yet to be completed.

There are some signs that H.A.A. programmes may just be starting in Argyll & Bute, Roxburgh and Ettrick & Lauderdale. All three Districts drafted 3 - 4 schemes each between September 1978 and July 1979 and these covered 19, 19 and 47 houses respectively. Case study fieldwork confirmed that this was the start of a more active H.A.A. programme in Ettrick & Lauderdale. It could be that the signs of a decrease in the H.A.A. programme previously mentioned merely represents a reassessment period in areas such as Angus & Perth which, up until 1978, were quite active. Analysis of the addresses of rural H.A.A.s revealed that with the exception of the Western Isles, all other Districts had concentrated their activities in the main towns and settlements and it may be that in Angus and Perth that more surveys are being carried out to identify further possible H.A.A.s and that declarations will increase again in the future.

Despite the very limited nature of the H.A.A. programme in rural Scotland private improvement activity in a few areas without H.A.A.s has been quite high in relation to subtolerable stock, e.g. Wigtown, Stewartry, Nairn, Caithness and Kincardine & Deeside, although the number of improvement grants approved may not necessarily have been all that high, e.g. Wigtown only approved 93 grants in 1976/77 and 1978

but this was very large in relation to the subtolerable stock. Elsewhere little progress seems to have been made in areas not declaring H.A.A.s. The effect H.A.A.s have on stimulating private improvement activity is reflected in the exceptionally high numbers of grants approved in the Western Isles, Banff & Buchan, Perth & Kinross and Angus. However, when these are related to the size of the B.T.S. stock in each area it can be seen that they all have a long way to go before the worst problems are eliminated.

Excluding the Western Isles and Banff & Buchan who have been active in the private improvement field, of the other areas which were identified in Chapter One as having some of the worst housing problems (namely Skye & Lochalsh, Shetland, Argyll & Bute, Orkney, Ross & Cromarty and N.E. Fife) only Ross & Cromarty seemed to have made some headway by the end of 1978. Argyll & Bute, Shetland, Skye & Lochalsh and N.E. Fife have all been noticeably inactive in relation to both private improvement and local authority rehabilitation. Nor did they appear to have been involved in any sizeable modernisation programmes and with the exception of Shetland, new building did not figure prominently in their activities either. This was equally true of Berwickshire, one of just two Districts who approved no H.A.A.s or local authority rehabilitation schemes between 1974 - 1978.

It is interesting to note that Argyll & Bute, Berwickshire and N.E. Fife were all areas which Diagram B in Chapter One indicated as areas whose position in the rank list of housing conditions in rural areas seemed to have deteriorated, i.e. their situation in relation to the rest of rural Scotland had grown worse. Of those areas where things seemed to have improved only Angus had pursued an active H.A.A. and local authority rehabilitation programme, although Gordon and Kincardine

& Deeside Districts have both approved quite large numbers of private improvement grants.

Once again the possibility was considered that exceptionally high new building activity, particularly in the oil related areas, might help explain the apparent lack of local authority enthusiasm towards private improvement especially noticeable in Inverness and Shetland. The figures contained in Table 3.13. show that these two areas did allocate among the lowest percentages of capital expenditure to private improvement in rural Scotland in 1977/78 and 1978/79. However, the fact that other areas like Kincardine & Deeside and Gordon who also allocated quite high proportions of capital expenditure to new building and who have had very high rates of new building activity, also allocated more money to Private Improvement grants than many other areas and approved quite high numbers of private grants, suggests that there is no consistent relationship between new building and private improvement activity in rural areas. Once again correlation tests confirmed there was no significant consistent relationship. However, this does not detract from the apparent preference for a new building policy at the expense of rehabilitation in Shetland and Inverness.

By comparing the figures in Table 3.13. for private improvement grant allocations it was discovered that only 5 authorities have recently decreased their allocation, while 5 others have increased it by more than 4% - Ross & Cromarty, Tweeddale, Annandale & Eskdale, Moray and Skye & Lochalsh. In fact for the year 1978/79 Skye & Lochalsh and Moray allocated a greater share of their total expenditure to Private Improvement than any other Districts in rural Scotland and it may be the case that this represents a positive policy

aimed at encouraging private improvement activity; a move that is greatly needed in Skye. It is also interesting to note that the areas which appear from tables 3.11. and 3.12. to have been among the more active in rural areas in recent year, all have allocated higher proportions of their expenditure to private improvement than rural Scotland as a whole.

Perhaps the most interesting recent trend in rural Scotland seen in table 3.13. has been the general decrease in the proportions of expenditure allocated to new building and the low increases and maintenance of the levels allocated to private improvement grants and local authority modernisation and repair in the face of expenditure cuts. This seems to suggest that most authorities in rural areas are committed at the moment to maintaining their rehabilitation policies and programmes at the cost of cutting back on their new building programmes. With the exceptions of Roxburgh, Lanark and Orkney, Tweeddale and Nairn who have all axed their new building allocations, rural areas show no signs of favouring one approach by abandoning the other. Despite the cutbacks the majority of Districts still allocated more money to new building than improvement.

Conclusions

To conclude this section on the rehabilitation and private improvement activities in rural Scotland - it has been shown that in recent years rural areas have had about a 20% share of Scottish local authority improvement grant approvals and a similar proportion of the capital expenditure allocated for local authority modernisation and repair. In general, local authority rehabilitation activity has increased between 1975-79 in rural Scotland, reaching a peak in 1977, and has been fairly widespread, albeit on a small scale. Only four Districts have approved no rehabilitation schemes and several others only rehabilitated one or two houses during the period. Although the impact of these very small schemes seems very limited in relation to the size of B.T.S. stock, it should be remembered that in 1971 over half the rural areas in Scotland had less than 5% of their substandard stock in the public sector. Bearing this in mind, it is likely that reasonable progress has been made in many areas through local authority rehabilitation.

Although rural areas have received proportionally large shares of the total number of private grants approved in Scotland which varied from 25% to over 30% during the period and a staggering 60% plus of private improvement expenditure in Scotland as a whole, the impact on the housing problems in rural Scotland which are largely concentrated in the private sector has been generally small and local authority activity very limited. Despite the fact that the H.A.A. programme in rural Scotland grew between 1975-78, both in terms of the numbers of authorities and houses involved, it was discovered that by 1978 only 10 Districts in rural Scotland had declared any H.A.A.s at all, and only Banff & Buchan, Western Isles, Perth & Kinross

and Angus had developed a programme of any significant size. Elsewhere private improvement activity has waned greatly between areas, with a few Districts like Gordon, Kincardine & Deeside and Nairn making some progress without the help of H.A.A.s. Generally, however, the effects of the limited private improvement activities has been minimal in relation to B.T.S. stock. Even in the more active areas like the Western Isles a lot more work needs to be done before major progress is made. What appeared most disturbing was the apparent lack of commitment and activity in many of the areas with the worst housing problems in both relative and absolute terms, e.g. Skye & Lochalsh, N.E. Fife and Argyll & Bute.

Throughout rural Scotland the general lack of commitment to private improvement is strongly reflected in the very small proportions of capital expenditure allocated to private improvement grants - the only positive sign was the decision by most authorities to at least maintain or even slightly increase these expenditure levels in the face of the 1978/79 expenditure cutbacks.

In most areas private improvement and local authority rehabilitation have generally been used as complementary policies and there is nothing to suggest that rehabilitation is treated as a substitute for either new building or demolition in most areas.

So why has there been so little positive effort to encourage private improvement through H.A.A.s? Why has there been so little private improvement activity generally? There seems little doubt that H.A.A.s, rightly or wrongly, have been regarded by many rural authorities as unsuitable, particularly in relation to scattered sub-tolerable stock. Even in the areas where H.A.A.s have been declared they have been, with the exception of the Western Isles, concentrated

in the main settlements. Another factor which has not so far been considered is the higher costs of improvements in rural areas due to additional building and transport costs. These higher costs may have been aggravated by low incomes found in some rural areas, particularly where there are high proportions of elderly and unemployed. The apparent mismatch of costs and low income in many remoter rural areas may well have contributed to low levels of private investment. It is also likely that the reluctance of building societies and banks to invest in housing improvement, particularly in remoter areas (S.D.D. 1979) will also have been a contributory factor.

The general lack of innovation among rural housing departments and an unwillingness to intervene in the private housing market is possibly a reflection of generally conservative political attitudes found in many rural areas or alternatively the very small scale of housing departments in many rural areas may make it difficult to provide the specialist services required to declare H.A.A.s, etc. The higher proportions of capital expenditure allocated to local authority modernisation and repair and new building shown in table 3.13. also seem to suggest that the scope of the housing function in these areas is perceived more in terms of the local authority sector. With these thoughts in mind it was decided that a closer look should be taken at 3 areas - Ettrick & Lauderdale, Gordon and the Western Isles. These form the basis of the case studies examined in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

A CASE STUDY APPROACH

INTRODUCTION

Reasons for a Case Study Approach

The insensitivity of District data as a means of identifying rural housing problems, coupled with the great range in the size scale and diversity of poor housing conditions in different parts of rural Scotland (identified in Chapter One) suggested there was a need to adopt a small area case study approach in order to highlight the worst problem areas within Districts. In Chapter Three the very varied response of individual authorities to the elimination of subtolerable housing conditions in rural areas seemed to indicate that individual attitudes, priorities, policies and approaches to rehabilitation were also very wide-ranging in their nature and that a closer examination of small areas was required to establish, not only the influence that local authority commitment and attitudes had on the level of activity in different areas, but also the true extent of improvement programmes within areas. For instance, the apparent concentration of many H.A.A.s in towns suggests that little effort may be being made to improve houses in remoter areas within these Districts. It was also hoped that small-scale studies would highlight more clearly the sort of factors which could inhibit private improvement investment in rural areas. Are costs very much higher in rural areas and do they vary significantly between the remoter landward areas and the main settlements? Are staffing levels really so small in rural areas that they hinder innovation or are rural councils just conservative by nature? How exactly are private improvement grants administered in rural areas? Do rural authorities make the most of their discretionary powers when they consider private improvement grant applications or do they just carry out their statutory obligations?

These were the sort of questions that it was hoped the case studies might begin to answer.

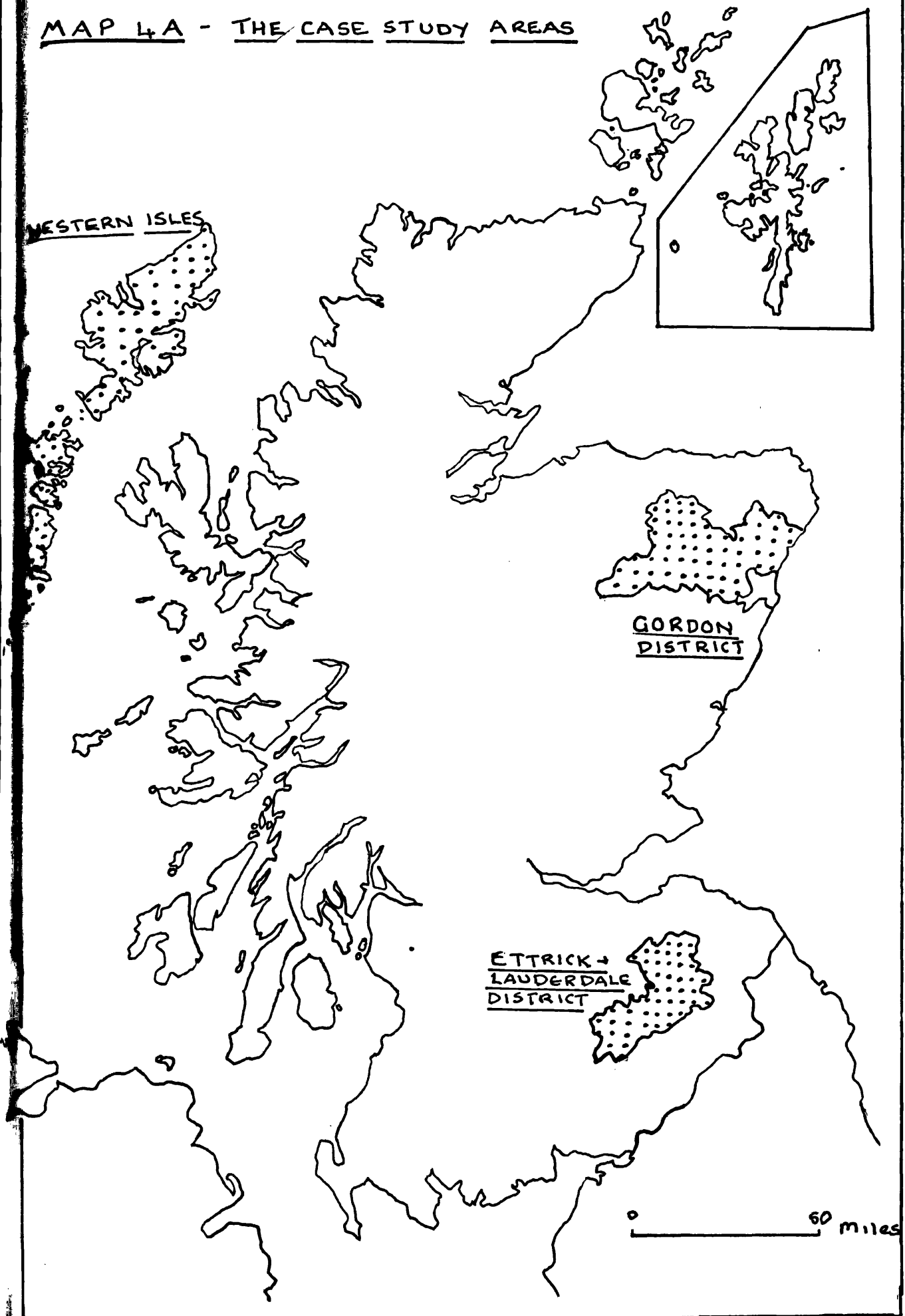
Choice of Case Study Areas

Because the worst housing conditions in rural areas tend to be concentrated in the private sector it was decided to focus attention in the case studies on the efforts of individual authorities to stimulate private improvement activity. In choosing the case study areas it was decided that the following criteria should apply. The areas should be:

- i) typical of areas with the highest absolute numbers and percentages of subtolerable stock since these are the areas where the need to improve is greatest.
- ii) representative of a range of tenure patterns, e.g. areas with a dominance of crofting, or a large private rented sector.
- iii) representative of a range of rural situations - namely islands, mainland and small burghs.
- iv) representative of a range of administrative and geographical regions, e.g. one-tier Island Authority area, District/Region authority.
- v) variable in their response to improve housing conditions - although it was decided that they should have shown some effort to stimulate private improvement activity, e.g. declared a H.A.A. or approved quite a few private improvement grants.

On the basis of these criteria the Western Isles, Ettrick & Lauderdale and Gordon were chosen as the three case study areas (See Map 4A). The Western Isles was chosen because it represented the areas with proportionally the worst housing conditions in rural Scotland which are often characterised by crofting and hence have a very large owner

MAP 4A - THE CASE STUDY AREAS



occupied sector. It is also a one-tier island authority area. However, the main reason for choosing the Western Isles was the fact that by 1978 it had declared more H.A.A.s than anywhere else in Scotland and seemed to be using this approach to tackle the problems in the rural landward areas, where the stock is more widely scattered. Bearing in mind the general feeling among many rural authorities that H.A.A. procedures are not suited to such situations, one of the main aims of the Western Isles case study was to find out how the H.A.A. programme was being organised and whether or not it was proving to be successful.

Ettrick & Lauderdale was chosen because it is an area which has quite large concentrations of subtolerable stock in the main towns and burghs and smaller numbers scattered widely throughout the rural hinterland. Also, prior to 1978, it seemed to have made little effort to stimulate private improvement activity, despite the apparent suitability of H.A.A. procedures for dealing with the main problems found in the towns and it was hoped to establish the reasons for this inactivity and the thoughts behind the recent change in policy.

(Ettrick & Lauderdale currently has 6 H.A.A.s). It is also an area where the main problems are fairly evenly split between the owner occupied and private rented sectors, but has a slightly larger number of subtolerable houses in the local authority than rural Scotland as a whole.

Gordon District was chosen because it is an area with quite a large number of houses falling below the tolerable standard, however in relation to the total stock these seem less significant, and the worst problems are found in the private rented sector. The main reason Gordon District was chosen was because it appeared to have made some

progress in improving its private stock by granting quite a high number of private improvement grants and at the same time successfully implementing a large new building programme. Because so many rural areas in Scotland have been under great pressure from the demands for new housing related to the growth in the oil industry it seemed important to represent these areas in the case studies to find out how one area was coping.

It is acknowledged that the three case study areas are not representative of the wide range of rural situations found in Scotland and, for this reason, it is not intended to draw any general conclusions from the findings. Ideally had there been time, several more case study areas would have been included.

The Case Study Approach

The main aim of the studies was simply to find out a bit more about local authority activity in the 3 areas in the hope that they would provide some ideas as to the sort of approaches which could be adopted in similar situations, e.g. if H.A.A.s can be made to work in the landward areas of the Western Isles, then perhaps they can be implemented in a similar fashion in other areas, e.g. Skye & Lochalsh, Orkney, the landward areas of Ross & Cromarty and so on. Within the general fact-finding aim it was hoped to look at 3 specific topics:

- i) The attitude and policies adopted for improvement in each area and the effect this had on activity.
- ii) The Administrative and organisational framework for the implementation of private sector improvement.
- iii) The potential barriers to improvement - e.g. high costs, lack of builders, etc.

The success in collecting these details varied - the Western Isles were most co-operative and provided an abundance of useful data on the progress of H.A.A.s and allowed detailed surveys of their improvement grant files to be conducted. However, in the Districts of Gordon & Ettrick & Lauderdale, although officials were very helpful in explaining the policies and administrative framework, they would not allow detailed surveys of their records, because of the confidential information they contain. As a result, there will be a strong bias in much of the subsequent discussion in favour of the Western Isles!

The B.T.S. Problem in the Case Study Areas

At the end of 1979 Ettrick & Lauderdale and the Western Isles estimated they had 914 and 2992 B.T.S. houses respectively, representing 6.55% and 25.6% of their total stock. These figures are down on the 1977 estimates of 994 and 3267 B.T.S. houses which suggests that reasonable progress has been made in eliminating such stock in the last two years. In Gordon District the most up-to-date figures are still the 1977 estimates which revealed that the area had 1052 B.T.S. houses and it is likely that these figures will also have dropped, bearing in mind that approximately 200 houses a year have been improved since 1977 (Gordon District Housing Plan 1979).

The distribution of this stock varies in each area. In Ettrick & Lauderdale over half is found in the town of Galashiels and just 210 B.T.S. houses are scattered throughout the landward areas (Ettrick & Lauderdale Draft Housing Plan 1980). In the Western Isles the majority of the B.T.S. stock is concentrated in the landward areas with the majority being found in Lewis, however when the proportion of B.T.S. stock to total stock is worked out, the worst problems are located in the Southern Isles (See Table 1.7.). In Gordon District about 800 B.T.S. houses are located in the rural landward areas and the majority of these are found in the parishes of Alford and Huntly. Less than 200 of the B.T.S. houses in Gordon are found in the five major towns of Ellon, Huntly, Inverurie, Kintore and Oldmeldrum and over half of these are located in Inverurie (Gordon District Housing Plan 1979). The differences in the distribution of subtolerable stock may have implications for improvement policies in each area since the need to improve in the Western Isles and Gordon District is obviously greatest in the more rural landward areas,

whereas in Ettrick & Lauderdale the worst problems are found in the towns and, in particular, Galashiels.

Before examining the attitudes of each authority and the policies adopted to tackle the problems of B.T.S. stock it is necessary to gain some idea of the state of the houses in each area. How much of the B.T.S. stock in each area is "improvable"? To establish the condition of the stock a housing condition survey is necessary, however this is well beyond the scope of this study. The Rural Housing Study sample housing condition survey, however, does provide some idea of the state of the stock in Ettrick & Lauderdale and the Western Isles. In Ettrick & Lauderdale it was discovered that most of the B.T.S. properties were small Victorian walled flats, over half of which had only two apartments. Virtually all of these lacked the basic amenities and in nearly half this was the only defect which implies that improvement could be a relatively simple and inexpensive process in the area. During the case study fieldwork in Ettrick & Lauderdale it was discovered that the local Environmental Health department were, in fact, carrying out a housing condition survey and although the results of this are not complete it appears that there are far higher numbers of B.T.S. houses in the rural landward areas than originally thought. The main problem apparently lies in the siting of the toilet off the kitchen/scullery which means that most of the houses will require a new bathroom and kitchen to meet the tolerable standard. Also there are a few houses which would require a lot more work to bring them up to standard - reroofing and damp proof coursing being the main requirements.

In the Western Isles the Rural Study team found that the incidence of very poor house conditions was high and that many houses had structural defects as well as lacking in the basic amenities.

(See Diagram 4A). In the opinion of the team:

"the realities of severe disrepair, often involving reroofing, associated with a deficiency of amenities might well render improvement an impractical proposition." (R.H.S. 1979 P.27).

Case study fieldwork in the Western Isles confirmed the very poor quality of much of the B.T.S. stock. However, marked contrasts between the Northern and Southern Isles were found. The problems were far worse in the Southern Isles, particularly Barra, where there are still a lot of thatched cottages. Apparently previous policies had resulted in the replacement of thatched roofs in the Northern Isles but not in the South. As a result, improvement in the South always requires extensive work, whereas improvements in the North, though often quite large, are also mixed in with more minor ones.

Gordon District has just started on a housing condition survey although there is no suggestion yet as to the results. It was the opinion of the District Environmental Health officers that the majority of the B.T.S. stock is structurally sound and that the main need in most areas is a proper bathroom with a bath. In the more remote landward areas quite a few houses still have no inside toilet and some have yet to be connected to the main electricity supply. The Gordon District Housing Plan for 1978 also noted that there are a large number of holiday homes which are unlikely to be brought up to the tolerable standard and it was also suggested that in many estate locations there were high numbers of vacant houses unlikely to be re-occupied because of the decline in agricultural employment. It seems likely that many of these houses will be used as stores in the future.

The Administrative Framework for Private Improvement in the Three Case Study Areas

Before examining the individual approaches to private improvement in each case study area it is worth establishing the administrative

DIAGRAM 4A Housing Condition by Category in the Western Isles
and Ettrick & Lauderdale

KEY



- 1. Lacking amenities* only
- 2. as 1. above and structurally unsound
- 3. as 1. above and having inadequate natural lighting and ventilation

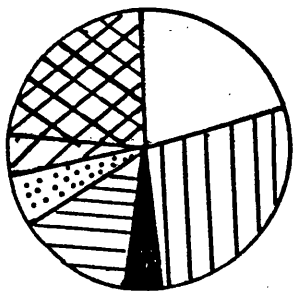


- 4. Structurally unsound only
- 5. As 4 above and having inadequate natural lighting and ventilation

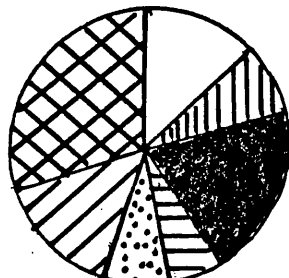


- 6. Having inadequate natural lighting and ventilation only
- 7. Lacking amenities, structurally unsound and having inadequate natural lighting and ventilation

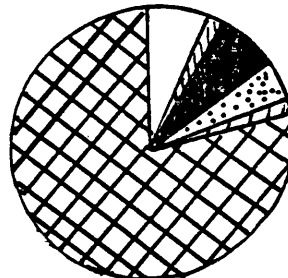
*The term 'amenities' is used here in a broader sense to embrace not only the Census basic amenities but also the provision of drainage and piped water supply.



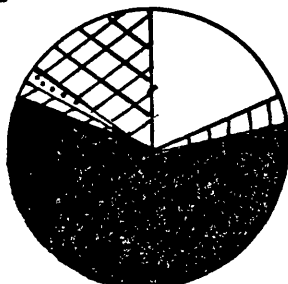
W. Isles



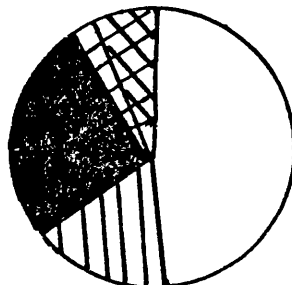
Orkney



Shetland



Moray



Ettrick &
Lauderdale

set up in each area. In all three areas private improvement grants are assessed by the Environmental Health Department which is a District function in Ettrick & Lauderdale and Gordon and an island authority function in the Western Isles. The size of the staff in each area varies. In Gordon District there are 5 members of staff actively involved in private improvement grant work and they are located in 5 different offices. The main office in Aberdeen is where all grant applications are first sent. These are then checked by the Administrative Officer who then posts them on to the appropriate District Officer in either Inverurie, Ellon, Huntly or Alford. He then assesses the grant and inspects the property. The grant is then sent back to Aberdeen where it goes forward to the Housing Committee. If it is approved, the application is once again sent back to the District Officer who then inspects the improvement works as they progress. Once the work is complete the District Officer makes a final inspection and if he is satisfied that the house meets the tolerable standard, a completion certificate is issued and sent to Aberdeen where it is passed onto the legal department who pay the money for the "approved" grant expense! From there the certificate is sent to the S.D.D., and if they are satisfied that the works are eligible for grant, an Exchequer payment is made to the District. A similar procedure is followed in the other two case study areas.

In Ettrick & Lauderdale there are 5 members of staff, only 3 of which are actively involved in private improvement. There are 2 field officers who assess the private improvement grant applications and inspect the improvement work, as well as 1 Home Improvement Supervisor who deals specifically with H.A.A.s and is also in charge of the Housing Condition Survey. There is only 1 office and it is located in Galashiels - this effectively means that three men have

to cover an area of 1,356 km². All the administrative details are carried out by the District Administration Department, including the actual grant payment, and they also liaise with the legal department to check the title deeds. (It is a condition of the grant that the applicant is the owner - hence the need to check on the deeds).

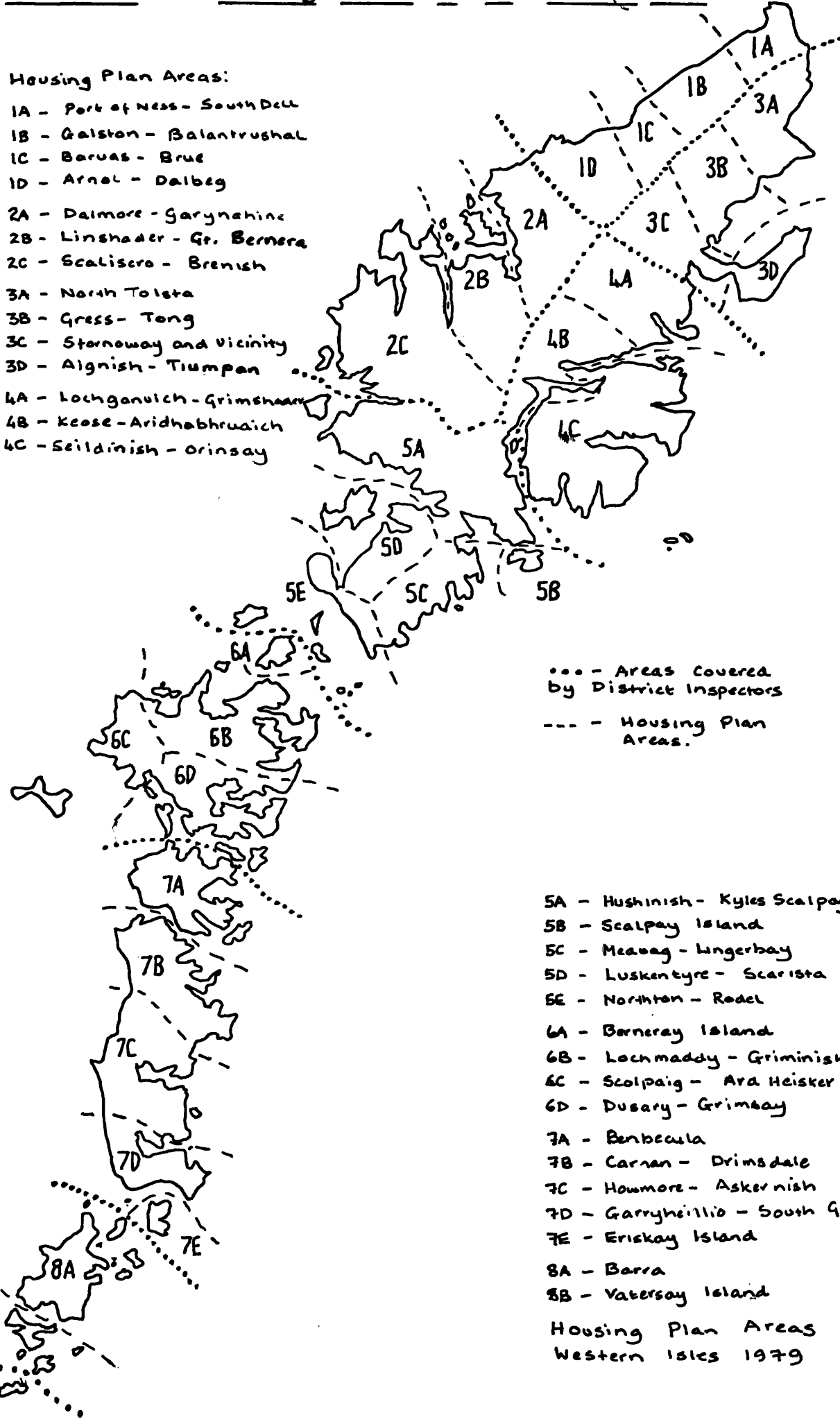
In the Western Isles there are 10 members of staff actively involved in private improvement work, and they are split between 2 offices. The main office in Stornoway has four District Officers, and one building control officer who assess the grants and inspect the work in Harris and Lewis. Stornoway is also the main administrative centre and all this work is carried out by one man who was only appointed late last year. Prior to this, all the administration was done by the Administration Department in Stornoway. The Administrative Officer also liaises with the legal services department in connection with title deeds, which are often a problem in the Western Isles because of the intricacies of the crofting system. (See Appendix J). Grant payments are made by the Finance Department.

In the other office in Benbecula there are 3 District Officers covering all the Southern Isles. The area covered by each District Officer in the Western Isles is shown on Map 4B, and this gives some idea of the vast distances which have to be covered to make inspections, e.g. to go from Benbecula to Barra you can either fly or go by ferry and there is no way a trip can be made in a day. This means that field inspections can be a long, weary, and expensive process in the Western Isles.

Bearing in mind the differences in the distribution and quality of B.T.S. stock and the organisational set up in each area, what are the attitudes and policies of each authority to private sector improvement?

Housing Plan Areas:

- 1A - Port of Ness - South Dell
- 1B - Galston - Balantrushal
- 1C - Barvas - Brue
- 1D - Arnel - Dalbeg
- 2A - Dalmore - Gargnahine
- 2B - Linshader - Gr. Bernera
- 2C - Scalisco - Brenish
- 3A - North Tolsta
- 3B - Gress - Tong
- 3C - Sternoway and Vicinity
- 3D - Aignish - Triumpan
- 4A - Lochganulch - Grimshaan
- 4B - Keese - Aridhabruaich
- 4C - Seildinish - Orinsay



... - Areas Covered by District Inspectors
 --- - Housing Plan Areas.

- 5A - Hushinish - Kyles Scalpay
- 5B - Scalpay Island
- 5C - Meavag - Lingerbay
- 5D - Luskentyre - Scarista
- 5E - Northton - Rodel
- 6A - Berneray Island
- 6B - Lochmaddy - Griminish
- 6C - Scolpaig - Ara Heisker
- 6D - Dusary - Grimbay
- 7A - Benbecula
- 7B - Carran - Drimsdale
- 7C - Houmore - Askerinish
- 7D - Garryheillic - South Glendale
- 7E - Eriskay Island
- 8A - Barra
- 8B - Vatersay Island

Housing Plan Areas
 Western Isles 1979

Housing Policies in the Three Case Study Areas

All three areas are committed to a policy of improving unfit housing in the private sector, and a statement of each council's objectives is set out in Appendix H to show how the private improvement objectives fit into the overall policies objectives of each area. Only in the Western Isles is the improvement of subtolerable private stock identified as one of the main priorities of the Council which is not very surprising, bearing in mind the size of the problem. The strong commitment to private improvement in the Western Isles is reflected in the tremendous efforts made by officials to both help and encourage private owners to improve their property. In Ettrick & Lauderdale the apparent end of the new building programme suggests that the area is committed to improving and maintaining existing stock in both the private and public sector. In Gordon District improvement of existing private stock is just one of a large number of policy objectives which seem to be directed mainly at the public sector.

Individual Approaches to Private Improvement in the 3 Case Study Areas

In this section the approaches adopted by each Council will be examined in turn.

The Western Isles - have adopted a very positive approach to private improvement which has involved the declaration of a very large number of H.A.As. The programme got off to a slow start and it was not until the Planning Exchange conference in 1977 where officials heard of the great flexibility in the drawing of H.A.A. boundaries that the full potential of H.A.A.s was perceived. Since then the Western Isles have deliberately developed their H.A.A. programme in order that as many owners as possible are eligible for the maximum amount of grant. Initially the local authority approach to H.A.A.s was to identify likely

areas, advertise them in the local paper and then go out and speak to people in the area concerned to gauge local opinion. Those people who did not wish to improve their property were excluded from the Action Area. However, this caused problems as some people changed their minds and decided they did want to be eligible for a higher grant. As a result the policy has changed to include all houses in the H.A.A. and along with this came the guarantee that owners not improving their property would not be faced with compulsory action. Instead what happens is any B.T.S. house in the Western Isles which becomes vacant, be it in an H.A.A. or not, is immediately issued with a closure order. This means anyone wishing to move in to it must improve the house first. The overwhelming response to the H.A.A. proposals in the Western Isles has been so great that advertisements were stopped over 18 months ago.

The H.A.A. programme initially concentrated on the Southern Isles and Harris where some of the worst problems are found. Since then a more careful look has been taken at many other areas and H.A.A.s have gradually spread over a much wider area - most of Harris is now covered by H.A.A. as are the more populated parts of Lewis. However, new areas are still being found and assuming the finance is available the Western Isles Council consider there is scope to include a further 1000 houses in H.A.A.s in the future! (Comhairle nan Eilean Draft Housing Plan 1980).

The Western Isles' very positive approach to private improvement is also reflected in their wide use of the available discretionary provisions in the legislation. For instance, very high numbers of discretionary hardship grants have been approved in H.A.A.s - by February 1980 63.2% of all the grants approved in Lewis and Harris were hardship grants at the higher rate of 90%. This has partly been

a result of the very reasonable criteria on which hardship means assessment is based. Unlike most authorities, the Western Isles have devised a method of assessment based on "household income" as opposed to the rent rebate criteria more widely used in other areas. The "household income" figure is based on average gross earnings for a ten-week period prior to the application for a hardship grant and this figure is adjusted according to the number of household dependants, other income sources and so no. (See Appendix K for details). This method of assessment ensures that as many people as possible are eligible for the higher rate of grant unlike the rent rebate approach where effectively to stand any chance of eligibility the applicant must be unemployed.

The Western Isles also interpret the guidelines relating to the condition a house should be in to be eligible for a grant - it is not unknown for four basic walls to be "improved" with the aid of a grant. Similarly they do, on occasion, approve a grant for works which the S.D.D. do not recommend in their guidelines - as a result there are usually a couple of exchequer payments withheld by the S.D.D. each year. The Council also present several "special cases" to the Secretary of State each year where it is felt that an applicant deserves a higher level of approved expense than he is normally entitled to, e.g. there was one case where a house comprising of a living room, kitchen, bathroom and two bedrooms was occupied by a husband, wife and six sons which was not in a H.A.A. - in this case the field officer recommended the maximum approved expenditure of £5,096 to allow 3 bedrooms to be added on, on the grounds that the turnover of stock in the area was low and that being an isolated croft it was unreasonable to expect the family to move away from their land to a larger house in a different area. Normally if a house has more than one

bedroom, any new additional bedrooms are not eligible for a grant. However, in this case, the Secretary of State approved the higher level of grant. These cases take a lot of time to prepare and this places an extra burden on the small staff who, as will be shown later, are stretched to the limit.

It is worth mentioning in conclusion two other examples of the council's commitment to improvement. Apparently it is not unknown for the rateable value of a house to be lowered for a year to make an owner eligible for a grant. Also, by the middle of last financial year the Western Isles had already spent their private improvement grant allocation, but this did not stop them approving grants, and it is likely that by the end of the financial year that they will have greatly overspent. The Western Isles are perhaps fortunate that they are looked on favourably by the S.D.D.!

The very positive co-operative approach adopted by the Western Isles has to be admired and commended and it should be stressed that this wide use of their discretionary powers regarding various grant conditions does not result in a poor standard of work. Environmental Health officials are only too well aware of the importance of a sound watertight house in a climate as wet and windy as it often is in the Western Isles. Before assessing the impact of this very positive approach a look will be taken at the approaches adopted in the other two case study areas.

Ettrick & Lauderdale adopted, until recently, a slightly more conservative approach to private improvement by only giving the ordinary 50% discretionary grants. The only promotional campaign to try and stimulate interest had taken place in 1971 when the District set up a home improvement exhibition. However, officials felt that most people knew of the grants available, particularly anyone buying a house

that was likely to be eligible for a grant. (Apparently local solicitors advise clients of the availability of grants).

There was a change of policy in 1978 and a special H.A.A. officer was appointed. The reason no H.A.A.s had been declared prior to this was that the available staff did not have the time to become involved with the unfamiliar procedures H.A.A. declaration entails. Following the appointment of the H.A.A. specialist the search for possible sites began. Since the main problems are found in Galashiels it was decided to adopt a "worst first" policy, and to tackle it with a phased programme of H.A.A.s. The first two phases were set in motion in October 1979 when 4 H.A.A.s, covering 47 houses, were declared in Galashiels. These included some of the worst tenemental areas in the town and it was hoped that the H.A.A.s would do a "mopping up" job. Many of the properties were vacant, particularly in the phase one scheme and the H.A.A. approach was seen as having the added advantage of bringing these properties back into use.

The phase one scheme reached final declaration in June 1979 and phase two in July of the same year. Although it had been hoped to start proceedings with phases 3 and 4 the District ran out of money later in the year and work on these phases was stopped. The Department requested further funds from the S.D.D., and this year they were allocated £160,000, most of which will go on private improvement grants. It is hoped that phases 3 and 4 will be successfully initiated this year.

It is possible that there will be a new policy directive once the true extent of the B.T.S. problem in the landward areas is established. Although little thought has yet been given to possible approaches, the Environmental Health officials did not think H.A.A.s would be a suitable approach - instead they thought it would be left

to the 75% grant incentives available under the 1978 Act used in conjunction with improvement orders.

The fieldwork visit to Ettrick & Lauderdale suggested there was in fact quite strong commitment to furthering private improvement in the area. However little use is made of the discretionary powers - only one repairs grant has been given (repairs grants are only given in cases of hardship and are means-tested) and no special cases are sent to the Secretary of State - basically because there is no need to. The main theme of the approach is to "follow the letter of the law" and this is reflected in the levels of approved grant expense - very few maximum grants have been approved and only "eligible" expenditure as set out in the S.D.D guidelines is ever considered. Probably because the stock rarely falls well below the tolerable standard there is less need to be flexible.

Gordon have adopted a very low-key approach. They did declare one H.A.A. in 1977 in Inverurie, the town with the highest numbers of B.T.S. houses, but this has not been very successful. The declaration took over a year to go from draft to final resolution and the work on the 12 houses is still nowhere near completion.

Last year the Council sent a letter to every known occupant of a B.T.S. house informing them of the availability of the higher 75% grant. However this did not result in any renewed demand for improvement grants.

The basic theme of the Council's approach is a "softly, softly" one. The officials have no desire to use their compulsory powers to force people to improve their houses if they do not want to. As much as possible is done to encourage and help applicants, e.g. when applications for standard amenities are sent in the District Officers inspect the property and usually recommend other repairs and improve-

ments to entitle the applicant to a discretionary grant. In the past, special cases usually relating to overcrowding in cottar houses have been sent to the S.D.D.

In keeping with the other two areas Gordon District ran out of money in the later part of the financial year and in November announced in the local press that only 50% grants would be given for essential improvements. Because of lack of funds the District stopped giving grants for conversions several years ago and it is likely that more and more items will be removed from the eligible approved expenditure list as the cutbacks become more severe.

So how have these different approaches worked in each area?

Have they, in fact, been successful?

Western Isles - analysis of the private improvement grant approvals in the Western Isles suggests that the approach has been very successful. See Table 4.1. The number of grants approved since the start of the H.A.A. programme in 1977 have increased significantly every year and this growth has been accompanied by a rise in the "approved" expense. The average approved expense for each grant rose significantly between 1977 and 1978 as an increasing number of hardship grants were approved and there has been a slight increase between 1978 and 1979, probably reflecting the/costs of improvement in the Western Isles.
higher

How are the H.A.A.s progressing? To-date the policy in the Western Isles has been "leave them to get on with it" so there has been no close monitoring of the programme. However, during a field-work visit to the Western Isles, figures were collected for Lewis and Harris where the greatest numbers of H.A.A.s are located. Table 4.2. shows the progress that is being made in each area and this should be related to Map 4B which shows the location of each Housing Plan Area. The quite low rates of grant uptake should not be taken as a sign

TABLE 4.1. Improvement Grant Analysis Western Isles
May 1975 - 1979

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Grants Approved</u>	<u>Amount of Grants Approved</u>	<u>Grant Payments Made</u>	<u>Total "Approved Expense"</u>
		<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
Part 1975	76	126,438	123,313	250,073
1976	173	286,773	154,117	570,774
1977	97	163,204	197,018	309,712
1978	267	813,074	176,201	1,157,272
1979	458	1,724,867	511,396	2,186,275

Source: Comhairle Nan Eilean, Environmental Health Department 1980

that the programme is not working well, since the majority of H.A.A.s in the Western Isles have only been declared in the last two years. Although very few houses have been completed so far, if the number of grants approved is compared with the "works in progress" column it can be seen that quite a lot of owners have started work. However, progress varies widely from area to area - for example in the very first H.A.A. ever declared (in July 1976) at Northton in Harris 18 houses were included and of these, 10 have had grants approved (6 at 90% and 4 at 75%), but work has only been completed on 4 houses and starts made on a further 4. In contrast in the Lochs area, the Leurvost H.A.A. with five houses was resolved in September 1977 and in this case all five owners have had grants approved (4 at 90% and 1 at 75%) and work on three houses has been completed and work on the other two has started.

There are a number of reasons why progress is so slow in many areas. First of all the Council policy to include everyone in a H.A.A. inevitably means that some owners, particularly elderly ones, will never improve their houses, either because they do not want to or cannot afford to. Secondly there are often problems in obtaining building materials and contractors in the Western Isles, particularly in the remoter areas and the most southerly islands. The three big building contractors based in Stornoway are more interested in building new houses than improving existing ones, therefore the bulk of the improvement work is left to fairly small concerns, who often stipulate that owners have to supply their own materials. Also a lot of crofters do as much of the improvement work themselves as possible to keep costs down and this inevitably leads to delays depending on how busy they are on the land.

Building materials can be obtained either from the Department of

TABLE 4.2. Western Isles Housing Action Areas: Table of Progress
at 11 February 1980

(Housing Action Area to Final Resolution)

HPA	No. of HAA	No. of houses	No. of Grants Appr. @ 90%	No. of Grants Appr. @ 75%	No. of Completions at 90%	No. of Completions at 75%	*In Progress	% Uptake **
(1A	2	42	9	5	0	0	5	33
(1B	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(1C	5	53	15	13	1	-	13	53
(1D	6	129	45	33	3	1	33	60
(2A	3	28	4	1	-	-	1	18
(2B	4	54	9	3	-	-	5	22
(2C	7	49	7	3	-	1	1	20
(3A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
(3B	2	45	5	2	-	-	2	12
(3C	9	130	15	13	1	-	16	21
(3D	5	138	19	9	-	1	12	20
(4A	11	110	32	22	10	4	22	49
(4B	1	18	6	6	2	3	4	67
(4C	2	26	9	1	-	-	1	38
(5A	9	62	14	9	2	5	10	37
(5B	2	26	6	3	-	1	6	35
(5C	10	98	18	2	-	-	5	20
(5D	1	11	5	1	-	-	1	54
(5E	2	30	8	4	2	2	3	40

* Construction work started

** Grants approved as % of total houses in H.A.A.

Source: Comhairle nan Eilean, Environmental Health Department 1980

Agriculture & Fisheries (D.A.F.S.) Building Stores which are scattered round the Islands, (2 on Lewis, 1 in Harris and 1 on South Uist), or direct from the mainland. Costs of building materials vary widely between areas, however this will be examined in more detail in the final section.

In the past there have also been difficulties, particularly in remoter areas in obtaining professional assistance for plan drawing. However the situation has improved in recent years and in the Southern Isles where the shortage is greatest a project was set up by the Department of Architectural Services in Benbecula to draw up improvement plans for crofters in Barra and the Uists.

Ettrick & Lauderdale - private improvement activity in the area has been quite high in recent years with the numbers of grants rising from 39 in 1976 to 75 in 1978 and this is quite impressive in relation to the size of BTS stock in the area. There was a slight decrease in the number of grants approved in 1979 which dropped to 65, but this is probably due to cutbacks the Council had to make in the later part of the year when they ran out of money. From discussions with officials it appears that most private improvement grants are approved for the tenemental properties in the towns, particularly in Galashiels.

H.A.A. progress has been very encouraging to-date with grants being approved at 75% for all but two of the houses in the phase one and two H.A.A.s and work has already been completed on the phase two scheme where it is being organised by individual owners. Work has just started on the phase one scheme and it is being done by just one architect and contractor. The more rapid H.A.A. progress in Ettrick & Lauderdale is probably due to the fact that there is no shortage of builders, contractors or architects and because there was little opposition to the H.A.A. declarations and everyone wanted to improve their

house. Obviously it is far easier to monitor progress in just two H.A.A.s which are almost next door to the Environmental Health Office than it is to in the Western Isles where there are now more than 100 H.A.A.s in very scattered and sometimes remote locations. Gordon District - although Gordon District has not really taken a positive interventionist approach to private improvement, substantial progress has been made as the high number of grant approvals show. In 1976/77 149 grants were approved and this fell to 122 in 1978 and 109 in 1979. Assuming that one-quarter of the remaining subtolerable houses are vacant, which a Shelter Housing Survey suggests they are, it will only take until 1988 to overcome the occupied subtolerable problem, assuming that the grant rate does not drop too far below 100 grants per year. As long as grants continue to be approved at around 100 a year there is little need for Gordon District to take a more direct approach. The slight drop in the grant rate in 1979 is probably due to the cutback in the level from 75% - 50% once the Council ran short of funds.

The Council have not made any close scrutiny of the distribution of grants, although the general feeling of the District Officers was that they were quite widely scattered. Since the worst problems are in the landward areas the Council are aware of the need to stimulate activity in these areas. Once the housing condition survey of the landward areas is complete they are considering identifying areas where improvement orders may be issued. However there is a reluctance to use any compulsion and the orders will only be issued to try and galvanise people into action. They will not be enforced if owners fail to respond, particularly if they are elderly.

The progress of the one H.A.A. declared has been very slow - no work was started until a year after final declaration and only

three of the twelve houses are complete. Although, it is hoped that work on the other 9 houses should be finished later this year. The main problem in this case has been opposition from the private landlords - the properties are owned by 3 landlords, one of whom did not want his property improved - as a result the ensuing arguments have led to numerous delays.

Apart from the problems of obtaining builders and architects in the Western Isles, local opposition to H.A.A.s in Gordon and perhaps, most important of all, Government expenditure cutbacks - are there any other real barriers to private improvement activity in the 3 areas? For instance, how wide a gap is there between the "approved" grant expenditure and the actual cost of improvements?

Barriers to improvement

Costs - the cost of improvement in any area is going to reflect the state of the property and the nature of the work required to bring it up to standard - the poorer the condition of the property the greater the expense. In the Western Isles and possibly many other remoter areas costs are going to be made even greater by the additional burden of transport and freight charges on materials which cannot be obtained locally. Also prices charged by contractors for improvement work and architects for plans and so on will vary from area to area, according to their availability and the demand for their services. It is important to remember that the total cost of improving a house may also include the expense of items or works which are not eligible for grant but which the owner wishes to carry out, nevertheless. Only those works which are essential to the raising of the standard of the house to meet the tolerable standard are eligible for grant. Similarly of the items which are eligible for grants, some owners may prefer to buy more expensive stylish fittings which cost more, e.g. the standard

amenities grant allocation is based on the approved cost for standard white units. Coloured ones are more expensive and owners improving their property often buy more attractive and colourful bathroom suites and pay for the additional costs themselves. It should after all be remembered that grants are available to encourage and help people improve their houses - they are not available so that people can improve their houses free of any expense.

So how exactly did costs vary between and within areas? In Ettrick & Lauderdale cost in the opinion of the Environmental Health officers was not a serious problem. Much of the improvement work in the area is concentrated in the tenements which do not require extensive works. A rough costing of the work being carried out in the H.A.A. properties is shown in Diagram 4C. From this it can be seen that the gap between the approved expense and the costs of the improvements varies from £4,000 - £7,000 depending on the scale of the work. This seems quite a large sum. However, it should be borne in mind that any owner carrying out improvement work in a H.A.A. is entitled to a local authority loan to help with the costs and also the value of these attractive properties apparently rises greatly after improvement because housing in the area is in very short supply.

Officials were asked if costs were higher in rural areas and this being the case did they consider that these might contribute to the apparent lack of improvement activity in the rural areas. Although it was agreed that costs were often £1,000 - £2,000 higher in rural areas because of the more extensive work required to improve the houses (damp-proof coursing, roof repairs being common improvements) the main reason for the lack of activity was, in their opinion, apathy. Most farmers did not mind living in a slightly below standard house and were not interested in improving the property. When asked if

DIAGRAM 4C

Costing for a typical tenemental improvement in a Galashiels H.A.A.

Top Floor Flat

Works - dormer windows,	Est. cost £10,000-
new bathroom & improved	£12,000. Approved Grant
kitchen	Expense £5,125
	Difference - £5,000 -
	£7,000

Middle Flat

Works - new bathroom &	Est. cost £7,000 -
improved kitchen	£8,000. Approved Grant
	Expense £4,300
	Difference £3,700 -
	£4,700

Ground Floor Flat

Works - new bathroom,	Est. cost £9,000
improved kitchen, damp-	Approved Grant Expense -
proof course	£5,125
	Difference - £4,000

Source: Ettrick & Lauderdale District Council,
Environmental Health Department.

they considered that the grant level should be raised to narrow the gap between the approved and real cost all three replied "no", and one official thought that grants in H.A.A.s were perhaps too high!

The influence of "cost" was viewed very differently in the other two areas. In Gordon District figures showing the average approved costs for 1977 and 1978 in towns and rural areas were made available. (See Table 4.3. below):

Table 4.3.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Village & Towns Average Approved Expense</u>	<u>Rural Average Approved Expense</u>
	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
1977	2861.74	4719.65
1978	4992	6708

Source: Gordon District Council Environmental Health Dept. 1980

and these show that costs are much higher in the landward rural areas. Once again this can be attributed to the difference in the type of improvement work. In Gordon District rural house improvement schemes normally comprise of alterations, within the house and an extension to the house, whereas in a township or built up area the improvement schemes are generally confined to within the house. Also water supply and drainage works in the built up areas are less expensive, with relatively simple connections to water main and sewers. Rural houses require the installation of an entire drainage system including a septic tank and effluent outfall. On occasions new or augmentation must be found and sampled. All these additional and special requirements in rural areas result in higher costs. It is therefore not very surprising that rural owners consider the available financial incentives inadequate and are reluctant to improve their property.

At first sight "costs" do appear to be a potential barrier to improvement in the Western Isles. However, the picture is not as simple as it first appears. From a 50% sample survey of local authority improvement records it was discovered that the average cost of improvement in 1979 was £7,000 - £9,000 in Lewis and Harris and £12,000 in the Southern Isles. This difference reflects the poorer state of the stock and the higher materials costs in the Southern Isles. Table 4.4. shows the variation in material costs at 1977 prices in the Western Isles. It should be remembered that in addition to the higher costs in Barra freight charges have also to be added.

Table 4.1. showed that the average approved expense for improvements is very high in the Western Isles with many people getting the maximum 75% or 90% grant. This means that the gap between approved and actual expenditure is of the order of £3,000 - 4,000 in Lewis and Harris and £7,000 - 8,000 in the Southern areas, depending on whether a house is in a H.A.A. or not.

The Lewis & Harris figures are very similar to those in the other two case study areas which is perhaps a little surprising in view of the more extensive works carried out. From a 50% sample of records in Lewis & Harris between 1976 - 1979 it was discovered that 96% of improvements involved repairs or improvements to the fabric of the house, 85% involved the creation or improvement of amenities and 71% alterations to the layout of the house. The reason there is perhaps very little difference in cost is that in the Western Isles contractor costs and professional fees are kept to a minimum in many cases, with owners doing a lot of work themselves and "homers" being employed to draw plans and assist with the more difficult building work.

The situation in fact appears to be even better in the Western

ITEM	QUANTITY	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
		LEVIS	HARRIS	UISTS & BENBECULA	BARRA	DAFS
		%	%	%	%	%
CEMENT	TON	100	131.4	140	140	120
SNOWCRETE	5 cvt	100	N/A	178.8	116.7 + F	102.1
SKYE MARBLE	10 cvt	100	N/A	93.3	N/A	N/A
PLASTERBOARD	200	100	N/A	108.4	89.8 + F	98.7
SAND	20 tonne	100	66.7	100	N/A	N/A
QUARRY AGGREGATE ¾"	10 tonne	100	154.7	226.4	N/A	N/A
CONCRETE BLOCKS	- 1,000	100	146.7	166.7	240.0	N/A
ASBESTOS SLATES	2,000	100	N/A	112.5	116.4 + F	109.4
TIMBER 125 x 50	1,500m	100	N/A	131.5	143.9 + F	109.1
TIMBER 100 x 50	1,000m	100	N/A	140.1	144.7 + F	108.6
TIMBER 50 x 25	1,000m	100	N/A	208.1	154.9 + F	110.9
CHIPBOARD-BUTT	100m2	100	N/A	103.0	97.6 + F	102.1
SARKING	200m2	100	N/A	134.8	171.9 + F	121.9
ROOFING FELT 38 Kg	16 Rolls	100	N/A	73.0	119.4 + F	86.6
CONCRETE LINTELS	metre	100	82.4	N/A	N/A	N/A
CONCRETE SILLS	metre	100	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
FLUSH DOORS 2'9" x 6'6"-15		100	N/A	74.7	158.0 + F	71.6
HOT WATER COPPER DIRECT CYLINDER	1	100	N/A	161.6	N/A	121.3
RAYBURN OIL OF 7	1	100	N/A	N/A	111.7 + F	95.8
RAYBURN OIL OF 22	1	100	N/A	N/A	117.0 + F	95.7
SOLID FUEL RAYBURN	1	100	N/A	N/A	109.4 + F	93.3
ELECTRIC CABLE	50 metre	100	N/A	113.6	148.3 + F	N/A
GLASS - 3 mm	Sq Ft	100	N/A	125.0	N/A	N/A
GLASS - 4 mm	Sq Ft	100	N/A	130	N/A	N/A
	AVERAGE %	100	116.4	130.6	136.2	103.1

Isles when the financial sources to bridge the gap in approved and real costs is considered. Crofters in any area are eligible for a D.A.F.S. improvement loan of £4,000 at a very favourable interest rate of 3½%. The loan is repayable over 40 years. For those people who are not "bona fide" crofters, i.e. feuars who are not eligible for a D.A.F.S. loan (See Appendix J), a local authority loan should be made available to them if they are in a H.A.A. If they are not in a H.A.A. it may be possible to obtain a bank loan. However, before any loan is granted some form of security must be put up and no tenant crofter can offer his title deed as collateral security. Only those crofters who have purchased their crofts under the 1976 Crofting Reform Act may put them up for security and very few crofters have bought their crofts possibly because they already have security of tenure, and rights to bequeath holdings. Bank loans and local authority loans have always been difficult to obtain and recently greater security has been demanded before a D.A.F.S. loan is granted.

Nevertheless the implications of these loans available to most crofters are tremendous. If a D.A.F.S. loan is obtained then the gap between real and approved costs is greatly narrowed, in some cases to virtually nothing. Analysis of improvement grant records showed that 35% of applicants who completed their improvements between 1976-1978 received a D.A.F.S. loan and further analysis of the records showed that approximately 60% of all applicants were crofters. Therefore it seems unlikely that cost is a serious barrier to improvement for many crofters, except perhaps those in the Southern Isles. However it is likely to be more of a problem for feuars and lessees, many of whom will have to find the extra money to bridge the gap between the real and approved expense of improvement themselves.

However, the main difficulty for a number of applicants arises

from the substantial time-lag between the approval of the grant and the completion of the improvement works. According to the legislation improvements should be completed within one year of grant approval. However, extensions are often allowed and in the Western Isles improvement works generally progress very slowly. The average time from the date of grant approval to the issue of a completion certificate varies from 14 months to as much as 5 or 6 years. The average figure for works completed in 1979 was 28 months.

A difficulty exists for a number of applicants due to this substantial time-lag to the completion of improvement works, which is likely to worsen as builders "attempt to keep everyone happy" by keeping more and more jobs going at the same time. Someone starting an improvement scheme in November 1977 when the maximum grant was £1,850 and hiccuping through it to today's inflated prices, finds that his grant contribution does not allow him to purchase adequate materials to finish the job. Even maximum grant instalments from the local authority do not enable him to complete the works. This puts the authority in a difficult position - even if they want to they cannot take over a croft house and complete it and if the house is still B.T.S. the authority are obliged to recoup the grant instalment payments.

This sort of problem is on the increase in the Western Isles and it is likely to be a major barrier to improvement in future. The problem of rising inflation overtaking applicants is not a problem in the other two case study areas where the improvement works are usually carried out within the specified year.

Were there any other barriers to improvement in the case study areas? In the Western Isles the local topography and climate exerts a limiting influence on the type of improvements which can be carried out. For instance in many areas it is virtually impossible to put in a damp proof course because of the very rocky nature of the local terrain. Also the building and improvement standards may be inappropriate especially those relating to lighting and roof height. Because the Western Isles has a very wet and windy climate and the islands tend to be very exposed, the most suitable house type is a low house with quite small windows. However these often fail to comply with the building regulations and as a result owners wishing to improve their property may be faced with far more extensive and costly improvements than they originally envisaged to satisfy the conditions pertaining to the tolerable standard (See Appendix D). The effect of standards on improvement work is an area which requires further study since very little is known about the restrictions and complications these seem to impose.

In the Western Isles the tradition of adding extensions to houses when the owner has saved a little extra cash or as the family increases in size has resulted in very higglety pigglety layouts, uneven floors, variable ceiling heights, etc. As a result improvement may not be the most appropriate solution since even with quite extensive improvements the house is still likely to have quite a few things wrong with it. In such cases it is often more advisable to rebuild. Fortunately in the crofting areas "bona fide" crofters may apply for a new house building loan and/or grant. The grant is currently £4,000 and the loan is £5,500 and this is again at an interest rate of 3½% and is repayable over 40 years. This means that any cost above £9,500 has to be met by the crofter. In the Western Isles a new house comprising

3 bedrooms, living room, kitchen, bathroom can be built for around £14,000 if the work is done by the crofter and odd job men. (D.A.F.S. Stornoway 1980). Therefore in cases where improvements require expenditure of £10,000 - £12,000 very careful consideration has to be given before an improvement grant is approved.

However until very recently the D.A.F.S. grant and loan covered virtually the total cost of building a new house. The widening gap between the grant and loan and the total cost is making it more and more difficult for crofters to find the cash difference required to rebuild. This being the case the local authority is in a very difficult situation of not wanting to approve a private improvement grant in the knowledge that if the crofter cannot afford to rebuild he will have to live in a very poor house which may become so bad that he and his family will ultimately have to be rehoused by the same local authority. At current prices local authority houses are costing between £25,000 - £30,000 to build in the case study areas, depending on their size and location. At the same time increasing cutbacks in government expenditure are forcing many authorities to cut back on their new building programmes which makes the need to improve and maintain existing stock all the greater. As a result in the Western Isles grants for well below standard houses are being approved to try and prevent rehousing of such families at a later date.

A number of serious issues arise from the case studies as a result of the quite high levels of grant approvals. The fact that all three areas ran out of funds in 1979 highlights the difficulties of accurately assessing Housing B allocations. It is very difficult to forecast private improvement grant demand in advance particularly in the Western Isles where the uncertain time-lag between the start and completion of improvement works is so variable. Having created

the momentum for these improvements it is very important that enthusiasm does not become dampened due to non-availability of Block B allocation. Sadly the cutbacks in expenditure make it more than likely that Block B allocation will be insufficient even if it can be more accurately assessed.

The other difficulty relates to the increased workload for the staff if private improvement activity increases. If more staff could be engaged as improvement activity increases it would be no problem. However, once again cutbacks are making it increasingly difficult to employ extra staff. In the Western Isles each District Officer has several hundred cases on his books and the task of keeping tabs on all these is very difficult particularly when many visits involve a lot of travel.

Also the shortage of builders in the Western Isles has serious implications for the future. So far the builders have tried to keep everyone happy with the result that delays are becoming greater and greater, which in turn prolongs the time taken to complete the works. In the future the chances are that more and more people will be unable to afford to finish the improvement work. There is a very definite question mark over the extent to which builders can expand to meet the current growing demand in the Western Isles. On the basis of the findings in the case study areas it is possible to make a series of recommendations. In Chapter Three it was noted that the more attractive improvement incentives available in 1973-74 stimulated private improvement activity throughout Scotland. In all three case study areas the rate of private improvement grant approvals fell after the passing of the 1974 Act which reduced grant levels to 50% except in H.A.A.s. The 1978 Act then raised grants to 75% for detached, semi-detached and terraced houses. In Ettrick & Lauderdale officials

considered that the grant should be raised to 75% for all dwellings so that tenements outside H.A.A.s are eligible for a higher grant. Because H.A.A.s take a long time to set up and organise it is not feasible to include all tenemental properties in H.A.A.s, therefore many private owners with tenemental property can only apply for a 50% discretionary grant at a time when people with detached houses can apply for a 75% grant - this seems unfair and is likely to discourage some owners from improving. Accordingly it is recommended that a 75% grant be made available to all properties.

In all three case study areas it has been shown that costs vary widely and are generally higher in the more remote locations. It is therefore recommended that grant "approved expense" be related to the Regional variations of the Housing Cost indicator to give assistance to the extent required to compensate for the regional variations in building costs. The fact that the government has acknowledged the regional variations in building costs and does give greater financial assistance to areas where costs are higher for building new houses makes it seem all the more unjust that these arrangements have not been made for improving houses.

To overcome the problems of applicants being overtaken by inflation which has been seen to be an increasingly serious problem in the Western Isles it is recommended that some departure be made from the inflexible fixing of the grant, to the grant level prevailing at the time of commencement of work. Some system of updating the level of "approved expense", say at 6-monthly intervals, would help offset the effects of the current severe inflation. If this sort of measure is not taken grants will become less attractive and the incentive to improve will diminish. In view of the severe cutbacks in government expenditure on housing which is forcing many authorities

to stop and severely cut back on their new building programmes it is more important than ever that the incentives to improve and maintain existing properties be made as attractive as possible.

In thecrofting areas because of the importance of the financial assistance offered by D.A.F.S. grants and loans it is recommended that they also be updated to keep pace with inflation.

Because H.A.A.s are generally very small in rural areas and also because it is easy to gauge local opinion and opposition to a potential H.A.A. either by visiting the site and questioning the applicants or advertising in a local paper it is recommended that the H.A.A. procedures be shortened in rural areas as long as the size of the potential H.A.A. does not exceed 30 properties.

It is not possible to make any recommendations on problems particular to one area, e.g. lack of builders in the Western Isles because it is unlikely any central government initiative could help. The only other recommendation is that the building controls and standards be relaxed in rural areas where indigenous housing types are designed to cope with local climatic factors.

As well as making a series of recommendations based on the three case study areas it is also possible to suggest some possible approaches to improvement which could act as models for other authorities with similar problems. The organisational implications of the case studies will be discussed in the concluding chapter.

To conclude this chapter on the case studies it seems that the policies and enthusiasm of the individual authorities concerned have succeeded in stimulating private improvement activity. Although this very success has in turn brought a number of problems particularly in the Western Isles where there is a shortage of builders and in some areas professional assistance for plan drawing. The fact that these

areas are beginning to make an impact on their subtolerable stock and are trying to identify areas which are likely to need further help in the future suggests there is little excuse for the general lack of activity elsewhere in Scotland.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusions

The lack of private improvement activity in many rural areas suggests that it is necessary to both find ways of promoting more vigorously the existing procedures for improving the housing stock and to devise new approaches for tackling the outstanding level of inadequate housing in Scotland's rural areas. The great variation in the size and nature of poor housing conditions in rural areas makes it very difficult to recommend any single approach. However, on the basis of the findings in the case study areas, it is possible to suggest a number of alternative strategies.

Perhaps the greatest need in all rural areas is to carry out a housing condition survey, particularly in areas where there seems to be little private improvement activity, to establish the true nature and extent of the problem facing each authority. Failing this, authorities should use their local knowledge to identify some of the worst problem areas and, if possible, carry out small surveys to find out more about areas where the picture is less well-known. Obviously more extensive surveys will require extra manpower or will necessitate a great deal of extra effort from existing employees. Ideally students or extra employees would be taken on. However, this is not very feasible in the current economic climate and it is therefore suggested that authorities use their initiative, e.g. liaise with local schools to see if there is any possibility of children being involved as part of a project, or contact local community groups to ask for volunteers, and so on.

Having identified the problem as best as possible a number of strategies to tackle it are then required. On the basis of the case studies there exist a number of alternative approaches:

- 1) The positive interventionist approach, i.e. declare H.A.A.s and/or serve improvement orders.

- 2) The promotional advertising approach, i.e. put advertisements in the local newspaper explaining what grants are available and how to apply for them. Hold an exhibition. Ask to speak to local clubs and groups.
- 3) Combine (1) and (2).

For those areas where the numbers of substandard houses are proportionally large it is suggested that a more positive approach be adopted. If there are large numbers of below standard houses in towns then it is likely that H.A.A.s will be suitable. To start with potential sites should be identified and then either advertised in the local paper or visited, to gauge local opinion. Because of the lengthy procedures H.A.A.s are required to follow, it would be best to devote one member of staff to dealing with H.A.A.s particularly if a phased programme is being considered. If a local authority feel they cannot cope with the extra work of overseeing the improvement works it may be possible to use Housing Associations as agents, particularly where tenements are in multiple ownership. This is often the case in the larger cities, particularly Glasgow. Some rural Districts, e.g. Angus and Banff & Buchan are considering using housing associations. However it would be necessary to have quite a few schemes in a fairly small area because of management problems after improvement work is complete. Obviously it would be very difficult for a housing association to manage, say, 50 houses if they are widely scattered.

It is also suggested that crofting areas like the Western Isles consider declaring H.A.A.s so that hardship grants can be approved. (Hardship grants cannot be given outside H.A.A.s except for repairs.) Since the crofting system is based on small townships it should not be too difficult to find suitable sites.

Elsewhere it is suggested that in rural landward areas possible candidates for improvement orders be identified. Consideration will have to be given to the future use of the stock, i.e. is it likely to fall vacant, is it a second home, is the house occupied by an elderly couple, and if so is it likely to be reoccupied after they leave?

It is strongly recommended that these positive approaches be adopted as a "softly softly" tactic along with assurances that enforcement will be avoided if at all possible. If people are made aware of the financial incentives it is likely that some owners will improve their property, particularly if the local authority are seen to be both enthusiastic and helpful. It is doubtful whether much benefit will be gained from adopting the more omnipotent attitude of "improve or else". The only area which has served a number of improvement orders is N.E. Fife and its attempts at enforcement met with great public outcry.

In areas where the subtolerable stock is quite small, there is perhaps less need to adopt such a direct approach, in which case it is suggested that some sort of general propagandising role advertising the existence of grants and how to claim them be considered. Again it is suggested that grants be advertised locally or an exhibition be set up in a few key areas and that Environmental Health officials offer to speak at local meetings and so on.

Obviously any active local authority campaign to promote private improvement is going to require careful forethought. It is essential that the finance be obtained from central Government to back it up. Therefore local authorities should announce their intentions in their housing plan explaining their approach and the need for it and stressing the importance of government backing. Since the government are

committed to encouraging improvement of existing stock local authorities should use this as one of their main lines of argument, especially since they themselves are obliged under Section 13 of the 1974 Housing (Scotland) Act:

"to secure that all houses in their district which do not meet the tolerable standard are closed, demolished or brought up to the tolerable standard within such period as is reasonable."

The Housing Plan also provides a suitable forum for explaining any problems they are finding in tackling improvement, e.g. unsuitability of H.A.A. procedures, problems in assessing Housing Block B allocation, and so on.

It is also very important in remoter areas that the availability of builders, draughtsmen be established. If there is a shortage of plan makers, it may be possible to set up a scheme similar to the one in the Western Isles where the Architectural Services department has helped by drawing plans.

There may be a case for outside help in many areas, particularly where the staff is very small. The possibility of using housing associations as agents has already been considered. However, there are a number of other groups which could help. For instance, Shelter (Scotland) drew up proposals for a rural housing improvement agency - the idea being that a worker would be located in an area where there were major problems and that they would, in close liaison with the local Council, conduct some form of promotional campaign and assist with individual queries. Where common problems were identified it was also thought that the worker could seek to develop residents' groups to take up their case. For instance issues might include the availability of 90% hardship grants, the standard of work required by the local council, the possibility of developing a housing association to purchase vacant property and improve it.

There is a definite need for some sort of advisory service to deal with queries - the legislation which sets out improvement grants is very complex and not always very clear. Secondly, because it is open to local authorities to use their discretion, grant conditions and work standards will inevitably vary between areas. The general public often find all the details very confusing and this, in itself, may put a lot of people off applying for a grant. It may be possible to make better use of local information services, e.g. Citizens Advice Bureaux or even send clear concise leaflets out to shopkeepers going round with mobile shops, and so on.

Ideally what is needed is a national Rural Housing Improvement Agency, preferably one which is allocated a large, independent sum of money, which can then employ field workers throughout rural Scotland to promote private improvement. However, this is not a very practical solution at the moment. The recent announcements of major cutbacks in the allocation for housing in Scotland does not bode well for the future of housing improvement anywhere, least of all in rural areas where the costs are that much higher. However, the fact that so many authorities are cutting back severely on their new building programmes make it essential for all authorities to make the maximum effort to improve and maintain existing stock. Failure to do this may well ensure that rural areas in 20, 50, 100 years time are still described as those with "an atrocious standard" of housing!

APPENDIX A

Districts and Islands Areas Considered as Rural for the Purposes
of This Study

1. BORDERS REGION
Berwickshire District
Ettrick & Lauderdale District
Roxburgh District
Tweeddale District
2. DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY
Annandale & Eskdale District
Nithsdale District
Stewartry District
Wigtown District
3. STRATHCLYDE REGION
Argyll & Bute District
Lanark District
4. TAYSIDE REGION
Angus District
Perth & Kinross District
5. FIFE REGION
North East Fife District
6. GRAMPIAN DISTRICT
Banff & Buchan District
Gordon District
Kincardine & Deeside District
Moray District
7. HIGHLAND REGION
Badenoch & Strathspey District
Caithness District
Inverness District
Lochaber District
Nairn District
Ross & Cromarty District
Skye & Lochalsh District
Sutherland District
8. ORKNEY ISLANDS AREA
9. SHETLAND ISLANDS AREA
10. WESTERN ISLES ISLANDS AREA

APPENDIX B

Definitions:

Basic Amenities

- Exclusive use of:
- a) inside W.C.
 - b) hot water supply
 - c) fixed bath or shower

Source: 1971 Census

Standard Amenities

- the house must have:
- i) a fixed bath or shower
 - ii) a hot and cold water supply at the fixed bath or shower
 - iii) a wash hand basin
 - iv) a hot and cold water supply at wash hand basin
 - v) a sink
 - vi) a hot and cold water supply at sink
 - vii) a water closet within the house

Source: Housing (Scotland) Act 1974

APPENDIX C

Definition:

Tolerable Standard

To meet the tolerable standard a house must:

- 1) be structurally stable
- 2) be free from rising or penetrating damp
- 3) have satisfactory provision for natural and artificial lighting, for ventilation and heating
- 4) have an adequate piped supply of wholesome water within the house
- 5) have a sink provided with a satisfactory supply of both hot and cold water
- 6) have a W.C. available for the exclusive use of the occupants of the house within the house
- 7) have an effective system for the drainage and disposal of foul and surface water
- 8) have satisfactory facilities for the cooking of food
- 9) have satisfactory access to all external doors and outbuildings

Source: Housing (Scotland) Act 1974

REQUIREMENTS TO BE MET BY HOUSES IMPROVED BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES OR WITH DISCRETIONARY GRANTS

After improvement with the aid of grant under section 1 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1974 or, in the case of a house owned by a local authority, with the aid of exchequer contribution under section 14 of the Housing (Financial Provisions) (Scotland) Act 1968, a house should meet the undernoted minimum standard (which should be read in conjunction with the appended explanatory notes).

CONSTRUCTION AND PHYSICAL CONDITION

- 1.1 The house shall be free from basic construction defects. (See Note 2).
- 1.2 The house shall be in a state of repair sufficient to keep it stable and weathertight. (See Note 3).

SANITARY FITMENTS

2.1 FITMENTS

The house shall contain:-

- 2.1.1 A WC.
- 2.1.2 A wash hand basin.
- 2.1.3 EITHER a bath at least 1370mm in length
OR a sitz-bath at least 1000mm in length
OR a shower at least 0.49m² in floor area.

2.2 PLANNING

Each fitment shall have a minimum activity space associated with it not less than that shown in diagrams 1 to 5 as an area enclosed by a dotted line.

- NOTE:
- (i) The height of the activity space shall be not less than 2000mm over its entire area.
 - (ii) The shaded parts of each activity space may overlap one another.
 - (iii) Circulation space between a fitment and any other fitment or obstruction shall be not less than 300mm at any point.

KITCHEN AMENITIES

3.1 FITMENTS

The kitchen shall contain:-

- 3.1.1 A sink.
- 3.1.2 EITHER a space not less than 500mm x 500mm in floor area, together with services suitable for the use of a cooker

OR a solid fuel cooker designed for continuous burning together with $1m^3$ of enclosed fuel storage (which may be elsewhere).

3.1.3 Enclosed storage for dry goods not less than $0.5m^3$ in volume.

3.1.4 EITHER a ventilated larder not less than $0.09m^3$ in volume

OR a space not less than 500mm x 500mm in floor area together with services suitable for the use of a refrigerator.

3.1.5 Working surfaces not less than 500mm in width and 800mm above floor level which have a combined total length of 900mm, of which no section is less than 300mm in length.

3.2 PLANNING

The fitments shall be arranged in the kitchen so that there is:-

3.2.1 An uninterrupted route of not more than 2500mm between the centre of the sink position and the centre of the cooker position.

3.2.2 A minimum activity space associated with each fitment not less than that shown in diagram 6 as the area enclosed by a dotted line.

NOTE: (i) The height of the activity space shall be not less than 2000mm over its entire area.

(ii) The shaded parts of each activity space may overlap one another.

(iii) Circulation space between a fitment and any other fitment or fixed obstruction shall be not less than 700mm at any point.

4. INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

4.1 DAYLIGHTING

The window areas of apartments and of the kitchen shall be not less than:-

4.1.1 Kitchens: EITHER one eighth of the floor area

OR one tenth of the floor area where local artificial lighting is installed over the fitments.

4.1.2 Bedrooms: One twentieth of the floor area.

4.1.3 Other apartments: One tenth of the floor area.

4.2 ARTIFICIAL LIGHTING

Every apartment, kitchen, watercloset, bathroom, stairway and passage shall have at least one terminal point for electric lighting.

4.3 VENTILATION

Every apartment, kitchen, bathroom and watercloset shall be ventilated:-

EITHER by means of a window, roof-light or ventilator having an opening area not less than one twentieth of the floor area

OR by mechanical ventilation which meets the approval of the local authority.

4.4 CEILING HEIGHT

Every apartment and kitchen shall have a ceiling height not less than 2000mm over at least one half of the floor area.

4.5 SPACE HEATING

Every livingroom shall have:-

EITHER an open fire with an effective flue together with lm^3 of enclosed storage for fuel (which may be elsewhere)

OR any other fixed heating appliance which meets the approval of the local authority.

5. SERVICES

5.1 DRINKING WATER SUPPLY

The cold tap of the sink shall be directly connected to the water service pipe for the house.

5.2 HOT WATER SUPPLY

The sink, the wash-basin, and the bath, sitz-bath or shower shall have a piped supply of hot water.

5.3 ELECTRICAL POWER SUPPLY

Every kitchen shall have at least two 13 amp or 15 amp socket outlets (excluding any outlet provided as an integral part of a cooker control unit) and every other apartment shall have at least one such outlet.

5.4 DRAINAGE

The sink and sanitary appliances shall be connected to a drainage system which meets the approval of the local authority.

APPENDIX E

Summary of S.D.D. Housing Condition Survey for Six Case Study Areas

the vast bulk of dwellings are pre-1919;
just over half are in owner occupation, one-quarter are crofts and
the bulk of the remainder are privately rented;
the predominant dwelling type, accounting for almost two-thirds of
the sample, is the detached cottage in the 3-4 apartment size range;
traditional walk-up flats, characteristic of the more urbanised case
study areas (ie Moray and Ettrick & Lauderdale, particularly Galashiels),
comprise only 12% of the sample;
amenity deficiency is the most common reason for failing the tolerable
standard;
failure to comply with the Tolerable Standard on the grounds of structural
instability and/or unsatisfactory natural lighting and ventilation
accounts for only a small proportion of the sample;
almost one-third of properties in owner occupation are deficient in
amenities, natural lighting and ventilation but the likelihood is
that in most cases improvement would be feasible;
crofting properties are marked by severe disrepair in general often
of a structural nature, and consequently, the bulk of crofts (34%)
are classified under the 'worst' house condition category 7, failing
the Tolerable Standard by virtue of being deficient in amenities,
structural stability, and satisfactory lighting and ventilation;
63% of dwellings are occupied by households headed by a person aged
over 60;
most of the occupants of B.T.S. dwellings have been in their existing
home for a long time; 2/3 have been in the same house for more
than 20 years:

cont. overleaf

APPENDIX E (Continued)

only 39% of heads of households in B.T.S. dwellings are economically active; and
on average three-quarters of the households comprise one or two persons.

Source: S.D.D. "Housing in Rural Scotland", 1979

APPENDIX F

Local Authorities in which Housing Associations are known to be operating:

URBAN SCOTLAND

Glasgow

Edinburgh

Dundee

Aberdeen

Falkirk

Clydebank

Renfrew

Motherwell

Inverclyde

Midlothian

RURAL SCOTLAND

Argyll & Bute

Angus

Banff & Buchan

Local Authorities in which the S.S.H.A. are known to be operating rehabilitation schemes:

URBAN SCOTLAND

Dundee

Kilmarnock & Loudon

East Lothian

Falkirk

Edinburgh

Glasgow

RURAL SCOTLAND

Ettrick & Lauderdale

Angus

APPENDIX G - A Selection of Planning Exchange Tables

Discretionary Grants: Applications Approved

<u>Applicant:</u>	<u>Owner/ Occupiers</u>	<u>Landlords and others</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Applications Approved for Landlords & Others as a % of all applications approved</u>
1967	1,843	547	2,390	23
1968	1,878	490	2,368	21
1969	2,171	1,017	3,188	32
1970	3,424	904	4,328	21
1971	4,240	1,127	5,367	21
1972	10,248	2,896	13,144	22
1973	16,279	4,040	20,319	20

Source: Housing Return for Scotland

Total Expenditure Approved on all Local Authority Houses

	<u>No. Houses</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>	<u>Average cost per house</u>
1968	9,290	£1,006,545	£108
1969	11,066	£1,550,523	£140
1970	13,659	£2,581,355	£189
1971	29,297	£7,022,663	£240
1972	28,328	£13,571,983	£479
1973	71,391	£63,339,374	£887

Total Expenditure approved for the Improvement of houses
acquired by local authorities

	<u>No. Houses</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>	<u>Average cost per house</u>
1968	326	£379,596	£1,164
1969	268	£680,400	£2,539
1970	814	£1,027,734	£1,263
1971	1,302	£2,657,619	£2,041
1972	634	£1,753,635	£2,766
1973	665	£1,660,334	£2,497

Total Expenditure approved for the Improvement of houses built by local authorities

	Upgrading of inadequate power supply		Other improvement work		Total	
	<u>No. houses</u>	<u>Cost</u> <u>£</u>	<u>No. houses</u>	<u>Cost</u> <u>£</u>	<u>No. houses</u>	<u>Cost</u> <u>£</u>
1968	8,545	527,593	419	99,356	8,964	626,949
1969	9,879	716,231	919	153,892	10,798	870,123
1970	8,973	978,673	3,872	574,948	12,845	1,553,621
1971	22,811	2,529,599	5,184	1,835,445	27,995	4,365,044
1972	15,128	1,893,673	12,566	9,924,675	27,694	11,818,348
1973	34,490	4,811,954	36,236	56,867,086	70,726	61,679,040

Distribution of Activity - Houses in applications approved for the improvement of houses built by local authorities - No. of houses, by different types of authority

	Counties		Cities & Large Burghs		Small Burghs	
	<u>Electrical upgrading</u>	<u>Other improvement</u>	<u>Electrical upgrading</u>	<u>Other improvement</u>	<u>Electrical upgrading</u>	<u>Other improvement</u>
1970	1,524	1,033	4,147	637	3,302	2,202
1971	2,600	2,285	17,050	999	3,161	1,900
1972	5,082	3,197	4,985	3,536	5,061	5,833
1973	9,852	5,707	19,007	16,171	5,408	14,476

Amounts for Subsidy - All types of local authority houses

	<u>Counties</u>	<u>Cities & L. Burghs</u>	<u>Small Burghs</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>% of total costs* eligible for aid</u>
1969	£83,032	£521,161	£419,936	£1,024,129	66
1970	£247,905	£757,125	£639,057	£1,644,087	64
1971	£1,424,379	£2,400,051	£816,771	£4,641,201	66
1972	£2,136,084	£3,057,026	£4,848,996	£10,181,933	74
1973	£4,272,119	£11,161,668	£8,675,886	£24,109,673	68

APPENDIX H

RECOMMENDED GORDON DISTRICT COUNCIL POLICIES (1978 Housing Plan)

Statement of Objectives

Most of the objectives set out in the 1977 Plan still apply with some amendments. The revised list of objectives is:-

- * a) All persons should have access to an above tolerable standard house possessing all the standard amenities.
- b) The Council, when determining policies to meet specific needs in the public sector, shall take fully into account public demand and public preferences.
- c) All future Council Housing should be built to the highest practicable standards with the ultimate aim of saving on future maintenance costs.
- d) The Council shall maintain and safeguard the condition of its existing housing stock and the adjacent environment and shall continue to carry out their extensive Modernisation Programme, the main themes of which incorporate:
 - i) reduced future maintenance
 - ii) energy conservation, i.e. increased insulation and double glazing. In this connection the Electricity Council are conducting a detailed survey in theory the results of which could be useful on both a District and National scale.
 - iii) reduced condensation.
- e) The Council shall make every effort to meet the existing housing shortage based on demand/needs in the various settlements in the District and the desire to stabilise rural population.
- * f) The Council shall deal with the remaining problem of intolerable housing and those lacking standard amenities in the private sector and the Council shall attempt to anticipate and deal with the

APPENDIX H (continued)

problem of unfit or otherwise inadequate housing as defined in the future, e.g. through existing legislation. Both of these objectives are covered in more detail in policy (iii) below.

- g) The Council shall attempt to combat overcrowding and under-occupation in its properties and to this end shall authorise the carrying out of a detailed survey in 1979 and thereafter will consider taking appropriate action, i.e. inducements.
- h) All new Council houses to be built shall have a flue to allow for choice of fuel, a sensible strategy in view of the fuel situation nationally.
- i) In the 1977 Housing Plan the Council determined to investigate whether it was possible to off-set higher travelling costs by charging lower rents in Council property in selected rural areas. Preliminary investigations have been carried out which indicate that the differential scheme already employed by the Authority does to an extent reflect the lack of amenities in rural areas. It is also difficult to define such rural areas as there can be problems of lack of transport, lack of amenities equally in e.g. Blair of Fintray which can be just as positive for tenants there as for families living in the upper Donside area. The Council will not therefore pursue further this objective meantime.
- j) The Council shall not build flats as general purpose housing as there is no demand for such properties in the mainly rural Gordon District.
- k) The Council shall as far as possible ensure the provision of social and recreational facilities in any new housing developments it is to construct. In addition the Council shall tackle the problems of inadequate facilities within its existing estates through a

APPENDIX H (continued)

phased programme of expenditure.

- l) To facilitate a wider choice of housing, the Council shall investigate and consider in 1979 the following policies:-

- i) Joint housing development venture schemes
- ii) Various rental/mortgage schemes
- iii) Sale of individual building sites.

To this end the Council has requested the Management Team to further investigate these matters and report to the Council as soon as possible.

- m) In the 1977 Housing Plan the Council decided to investigate the possibility of entering into a scheme with the owners of vacant rural properties, i.e. tied cottages, whereby the houses could be let by the Council and yet still be made available quickly if required by the owners for their housing purposes. Investigations have proceeded and two attempts to ascertain the degree of local interest have been made. The response in both cases has been disappointing. The Council intends to reassess this objective after consideration of a Report issued by Shelter following a recent survey carried out by that organisation.

- n) Following representations by the Council to the SSHA in respect of their Housing Allocation Policy an assurance has been received that consideration will be given to housing other categories of essential incoming workers in this area and the Council shall encourage the SSHA to build houses on terms to be agreed with the District Council.

APPENDIX H

ETTRICK & LAUDERDALE (1979 Housing Plan) - Policy Intentions

- 23.1 To carry out a Five Year Capital Programme, as detailed in Appendix VIII attached, subject to an annual review.
- 23.2 To defer consideration of further new public sector housing development for general needs until a proven need is established.
- 23.3 To complete the modernisation of pre-war council houses and carry out improvements in approximately 2,000 immediate post-war council houses as detailed in Appendix VI.
- 23.4 To pursue the Government's policies with regard to energy conservation in relation to the insulation of houses in the public and private sectors.
- 23.5 To encourage actively the rehabilitation of sub-standard houses in the private sector by Housing Action Area procedures, and the provision of Improvement and Repairs Grants.
- 23.6 To encourage and assist Housing Associations to build and improve houses for special needs within the District.
- 23.7 To co-operate with the Scottish Special Housing Association in the provision of houses for economic expansion in pace with projected demand.
- 23.8 To implement a scheme for the sale of council houses to sitting tenants in accordance with the Government's proposals.
- 23.9 To stimulate an increase in the rate of provision of private sector housing of appropriate types and suitably sited by:-
 - a) carrying out a survey in conjunction with the Borders Regional Council and Roxburgh District Council to assess the needs for various types of housing in the area;
 - b) releasing land owned by the District Council for the provision of private sector housing, where applicable, subject to

- suitable conditions with regard to the development of sites;
- c) encouraging the provision of serviced sites on which individuals can build their own houses, and
 - d) consulting the Borders Regional Council in connection with both the assessment of appropriate standards of site servicing to achieve reasonably priced housing and the provision of new private sector housing in rural areas.

WESTERN ISLES (1979 Housing Plan)

10 POLICIES

10.1 THE COUNCIL'S EXISTING POLICIES

Existing housing policies are contained in the Regional Report (published 1976) and in the 1977 Draft Housing Plan submitted to the Secretary of State towards the end of last year.

10.1.1 Regional Report

In determining the Housing Policies and Priorities contained in the Regional Report, the Council identified the following as the main housing issues of the area.

10.1.1.1 BTS HOUSING

- a) Approximately one-third of the housing stock of the area is Below Tolerable Standard.
- b) Present private and public building and improvement works are not reducing the proportion of BTS housing significantly, especially in Uist and Barra.
- c) The rate of owner-occupancy is high due to the system of land tenure - crofting.

10.1.1.2 LA HOUSING

- a) The demand for local authority housing at present exceeds the supply.
- b) Programmes, at various stages, are in hand throughout the area for the provision of additional local authority housing.
- c) The Council has inherited a legacy of poorly maintained assets.
- d) Because of the low rate of house building in the period 1955-70 the Council has been and will be faced with a

heavy burden of capital investment for housing purposes in a period of high cost inflation in order to meet the basic demand for housing.

10.1.1.3 Costs and Availability of Materials

- a) Housing building costs are higher than those on the mainland as a result of transport costs.
- b) Availability of materials and builders remain a problem in some parts of the area.

The policies contained in the Regional Report arising from the issues referred to above are as follows:

10.1.1.4 Council Housing

- a) The Council should continue to provide and improve housing for renting to meet the general and specialist (elderly, disabled etc) housing needs of the area and to maintain and strengthen the population of rural township areas.

Action by: Council: Central Government.

- b) The Council will continue to look to the SSHA for assistance in the provision of housing for incoming workers.

Action by: Scottish Special Housing Association.

10.1.1.5 Crofter Housing

- a) New central government policies particularly in relation to Housing Action Areas in the crofting township context are required.

Action by: Central Government

- b) The DAFS, Crofters etc. Building Grants and Loans Scheme should be extended in terms of the amount of grant and loan payable.

Action by: Central Government

- c) The local authority should improve on or provide a crofters'/builders' merchant and technical service in the area.

Action by: Council.

10.1.1.6 Non-Crofter - Private Housing

- a) The Secretary of State should exercise his discretionary powers to increase the amount of improvement grant to 90% in the Western Isles.

Action by: Central Government

- b) The DAFS, Crofters, etc. Building Grants and Loans Scheme should be extended in terms of eligibility to e.g. 'freehold' crofters.

Action by: Central Government.

- c) See paragraph 10.1.1.5(c).
d) In order to assist the supply of new private housing attempts must be made to ensure that land and finance become readily available.

Action by: Council; Crofters Commission; Building Societies; Landowners.

The Priorities section of the Regional Report states that the major objectives of the Council are:

- the reversal of the trend of population decline due to the persistent selective out-migration from the area, and
- the improvement in the situation of the population in terms of employment and the provision of public and other services.

The statement on housing which follows the above general statement is as follows:

APPENDIX H (continued)

It is considered that another major factor contributing to out-migration is the lack of availability of adequate housing. There is a high proportion of households living in housing which is not simply Below Tolerable Standard, but well below it.

It is therefore among the Council's primary priorities:

- * a) in order to accelerate the rate of improvement of houses below the tolerable standard, to press for:
 - i) the exercise of the discretionary powers of the Secretary of State to increase the proportion of improvement grant to 90%;
 - ii) the increase of the amount of housing grant and loan available to crofters under the scheme administered by the Secretary of State;
 - iii) the extension of eligibility under the scheme to include residents in crofting townships not at present eligible;
- b) to encourage the provision of new houses for owner occupation, by all means including those stated in the preceding two sub-paragraphs;
- c) to provide housing for renting to meet both general and special needs which cannot be met by improvement or provision of new housing by private means.

APPENDIX J - A Note on Crofting

Crofting is a form of agricultural land tenure peculiar to seven former counties in the Highlands & Islands of Scotland - Argyll & Bute, Inverness, Ross & Cromarty, Caithness, Orkney & Shetland. It originated as a late 19th Century attempt to relieve the hardship of a situation which had resulted initially from the breakdown of the ancient clan system of the Highlands and later from the widespread clearances of clansmen from the land they had previously held in favour of extensive sheep farming.

Crofters typically inhabit small communities known as townships and each crofter has his own small area of in-bye land which he cultivates or uses for the production of hay. Each crofter has rights to graze a specific number of stock on a common area of rough grazing managed by a committee on behalf of the township as a whole. Crofters rent their land from the landlord and each crofter is responsible for providing their own houses and all fixed equipments such as farm buildings, fencing, etc. The main distinctive features of crofting tenure as established in the 19th Century are virtually perpetual security of tenure, rights to bequeath or assign their holdings, a fair fixed rent by the Land Court and fair compensation for house and buildings at outgo or when the croft is resumed for a non-crofting purpose. More recently crofters have been given certain rights to use their holdings for secondary non-agricultural occupation, e.g. craft work and tourism.

There is, however, another type of crofter who does not have these rights and security of tenure. Crofters are entitled to feu out parts of their land and the people who have set up crofts on these bits of land are known as feuars. Feuars should have title deeds to this land. In addition to feuars and crofters there are squatters

who have no rights at all to the land they live on. There are not, however, very many squatters in the Western Isles.



WESTERN ISLES HARDSHIP
ASSESSMENT

APPLICATION FOR HIGHER LEVEL OF GRANT

GUIDANCE NOTES

1. The rate of Improvement Grant or Repairs Grant in percentage terms in a Housing Action Area and Repairs Grant outwith a Housing Action Area will be determined by the "Household Income". This "Household Income" will be calculated in accordance with the criteria laid down in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of this Appendix and it will be applied to Table 1 to allow a Rate of Grant to be determined.

TABLE 1

ADJUSTED HOUSEHOLD WEEKLY INCOME	GRANT PERCENTAGE	
	REPAIRS GRANT OR IMPROVEMENT GRANT IN HAA	REPAIRS GRANT OUTWITH HAA
Under £107	90%	50%
Over £107	To be determined in the light of the case presented	

2. HOUSEHOLD WEEKLY INCOME

This will be determined as follows:-

(a) (i) For Single Owner Occupiers:-

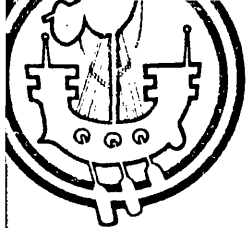
A household weekly income would be determined by aggregating together the total income of the person who is specified in the Titles of the subject as the owner, added to or subtracted from this sum will be the flat rate assessment as listed below where applicable.

(b) (ii) For Married Couple Owner Occupiers:-

The household weekly income will be determined by aggregating together the income of the person who is specified in the Title Deeds of the subjects as the owner, together with the income of the spouse of that person, added to or subtracted from this sum will be the flat rate assessment as listed below where applicable.

(c) (iii) For Multiple Owner Occupiers:-

A Household weekly income will be determined by aggregating together the incomes of all persons who are specified in the Titles of the subject as owners or part owners, added to or subtracted from this sum will be the flat rate assessment as listed below where applicable.

**3. (a) Income:-**

The income of any person listed in Categories (a) to (c) above will be calculated on the average gross earnings from employment as shown by an Employer's Certificate of Earnings, for the ten weeks prior to the date of application for a preferential grant, or as shown by certified pay-slips issued by an Employer for the ten weeks prior to the date of application for a preferential grant.

- (b) An application for a higher level of grant accompanied by details of household income should be submitted at any time before the improvement works are started. The actual percentage of grant (as determined by the adjusted household weekly income) will be bound, however, to the financial circumstances prevailing before the start of the works.

A worsening of the applicant's financial circumstances after the works have started, will not entitle the applicant to a higher level of grant.

(c) Other Specified Income:-

Added to and/or equivalent to the gross weekly earnings shall be income from any of the following sources:

- (a) Sickness Benefit.
- (b) Unemployment Benefit.
- (c) Bank Interest.
- (d) Interest and Deposits with Building Societies.
- (e) Widow or Retirement Pension.
- (f) Pension from previous employment.
- (g) Social Security Benefit.
- (h) Dividends from any Stocks, Shares, Bonds or Securities.

4. FLAT RATE ASSESSMENT

A Flat Rate Assessment will be added to or subtracted from the aggregated income as calculated from paragraphs 3(a) and (b), using factors from the Rent & Rate Rebate Scheme.

The said amounts are as follows:-

	<u>FOR NON DEPENDANTS</u>	<u>ADD</u>	<u>SUBTRACT</u>
A.	Each person aged over 18 but under 21 years and not in full-time education nor in receipt of supplementary benefit	£1.85	
B.	Each person aged 21 years or more, but under pensionable age and neither undergoing full-time education nor in receipt of supplementary benefit	£2.80	
C.	Each person in receipt of supplementary benefit	£1.10	
D.	Each person of pensionable age not in receipt of supplementary benefit except in case (E) below	£1.10	
E.	For married couple where husband is of pensionable age and not in receipt of supplementary benefit	£1.10	
	For each dependant child		£7.70
F.	Earnings disregard: Householder		£5.00
	Spouse		£5.00

NB Sections A and B above do not apply to persons who are undergoing full-time instruction at an educational establishment but are not "qualifying students". For "qualifying students" deductions will apply in accordance with cases A and B above.

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