

## Scotland's Rural College

### Rural Scotland in Focus - 2014

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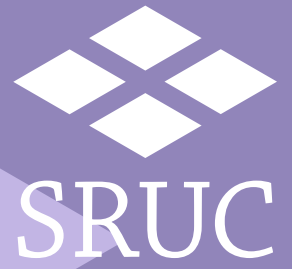
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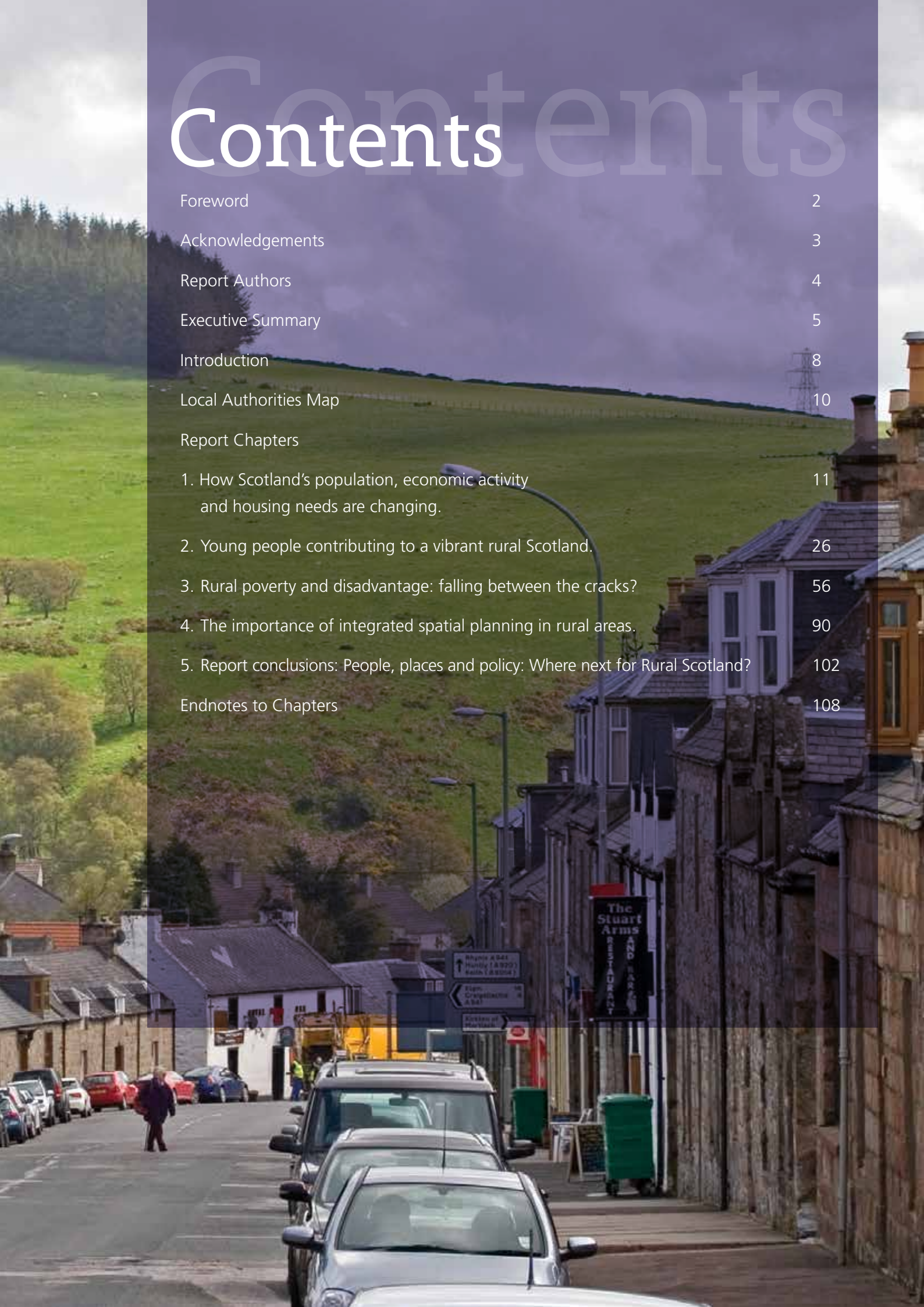


Rural Scotland in Focus

2014

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## Foreword

I am delighted to take this opportunity to welcome you to the 2014 edition of SRUC's *Rural Scotland in Focus Report*. Our two-yearly reports are designed to provide a fast-track to a range of evidence and commentary on how and why rural Scotland is changing, in order to inform policy, practice and research.

The population of rural Scotland currently sits at just over one million people, with rural areas accounting for over 90% of Scotland's overall land mass. In this report, we continue to monitor how rural Scotland is changing: its population (through in and out-migration); its young people (what drives them to stay or to leave); the levels and experiences of poverty and disadvantage; and how our finite rural land resource is negotiated through planning and other means. We also show how these different elements knit together with one another, and highlight how policy and practice too must acknowledge the interconnectedness of rural life, work and environment.

As with previous reports, we also tease out the differences being experienced in Scotland's diverse areas and communities, further illustrating how policies and approaches need to be designed to 'fit' both what rural Scotland looks like now, and how it might evolve.

We are very pleased that, in addition to our core team of writers from SRUC, we have – as in previous years – attracted input from a range of specialists from the private, third and public sectors, to provide their commentary on the issues we present. We value their perspectives and the opportunity to work in partnership with a range of organisations in order to represent better the challenges and opportunities facing rural Scotland.

Finally, in publishing our *Rural Scotland in Focus Reports* in 2010, 2012 and 2014, we are not seeking to plead a special case for rural, or privilege it over urban Scotland. Rather, we are bringing together evidence which shows how national approaches need to be tailored to fit rural Scotland, in order to enhance its assets and its contribution to Scotland as a whole.

## Facal-toisich

Tha e a' toirt toileachas mòr dhomh fàilte a chur oirbh chun an eagrain seo, 2014, den aithisg aig Colaiste Dhùthchail na h-Alba (SRUC), Alba Dhùthchail fon Phrosbaig. Tha na h-aithisgean seo, a thig a-mach a h-uile dà bhliadhna, air an dealbh gus geàrr-chunntas a thoirt dhuibh air farsaingeachd de dh'fhianais agus breithneachaidhean air ciamar a tha Alba dhùthchail ag atharrachadh, agus carson, gus cuideachadh le poileasaidhean, dòighean-obrach agus rannsachadh.

Tha beagan a bharrachd air aon mhillean neach a' fuireach ann an sgìrean dùthchail na h-Alba an-dràsta, agus tha sgìrean dùthchail a' gabhail a-steach còrr is 90% de thìr na h-Alba. San aithisg seo, tha sinn fhathast a' sgrùdadh mar a tha Alba dhùthchail ag atharrachadh: a sluagh (le imrich is in-imrich); na daoine òga a th' ann (dè tha toirt orra fuireach is falbh); an uiread bochdainn is anacothrom agus mar a tha daoine a' fulang; agus mar a thathar a' làimhseachadh ar tìre a tha na stòras 'criochnach', tro phlanadh is modhan eile. Tha sinn cuideachd a' sealltainn mar a tha na diofar eileamaidean seo a' dol còmhla, agus tha sinn a' sealltainn mar a dh'fheumas sinn, nar poileasaidhean is nar dòighean-obrach, an aire a thoirt do mar a tha ceangal ann eadar ar beatha, obair is an àrainneachd air an dùthaich.

Mar a rinn sinn ann an aithisgean eile, tha sinn cuideachd a' nochdadh mar a tha eadar-dhealachaidhean ann eadar na diofar sgìrean is coimhearsnachdan ann an Alba, agus sin a-rithist a' dearbhadh gum feum poileasaidhean is dòighean smaoinneachaidh a bhith air an dealbh gus a bheil iad iomchaidh airson Alba dhùthchail mar a tha i an-diugh, agus airson mar a dh'fhaodadh i a bhith san ùine ri thigheinn.

Tha sinn air leth toilichte gu bheil sinn - mar a thachair ann am bliadhnaichean eile - air beachdan fhaighinn, chan ann a-mhàin bhon sgioba sgrìobhadairean againn fhìn aig SRUC, ach cuideachd bho chaochladh eòlaichean bhon roinn phrìobhaidh, an treas roinn agus an roinn phoblaich, air na cuspairean a bhios sinn a' rannsachadh. Tha sinn a' cur luach sna beachdan aca agus tha sinn taingeil airson a' chothruim a bhith ag obair an com-pàirt ri grunn bhuidhnean gus sealladh nas fheàrr a thoirt air na dùbhlain is na cothroman a th' ann do dh'Alba dhùthchail.

Mu dheireadh, ann a bhith foillseachadh nan Aithisgean Alba Dhùthchail fon Phrosbaig ann an 2010, 2012 agus 2014, chan eil sinn ag iarraidh gum faigh sgìrean dùthchail cothroman nas fheàrr na càch, no gum faigh iad buannachdan a bharrachd nach fhaigh bailtean na h-Alba. 'S e a tha sinn a' dèanamh, a' trusadh fianais a sheallas mar a bu chòir do phoileasaidhean nàiseanta a bhith air an dealbh gus freagairt air Alba dhùthchail, gus feum nas fheàrr a dhèanamh de na stòrais aice agus feuch gun cuir i barrachd ri mar a tha Alba gu lèir a' soirbheachadh.

Janet Swadling

Acting Chief Executive

Àrd-oifigear Eadar-amail

# Acknowledgements

The Report authors would like to acknowledge a number of individuals who have contributed directly and indirectly to the 2014 Report. These include:

Isobel MacPherson, independent consultant, and Dr Alasdair Rutherford and Diarmuid McDonnell from the School of Applied Social Science, University of Stirling, who contributed to the data analysis in Chapter 3: Rural Poverty and Disadvantage.

Representatives of the many different organisations, activities and projects across rural Scotland who wrote specific components as 'Case Study' contributions for the different report Chapters. These individuals are recognised as specialists in their field and they bring added depth and understanding to the report based on their knowledge and experience of policy and practice.

Those who have given their time to comment on earlier drafts of Chapters while they were being written.

Our approach of inviting contributions and input from specialists to complement the work of SRUC researchers reflects the importance we place on presenting multiple perspectives when describing and debating rural Scotland's present and future.



## Report photographs

The majority of the photographs in the Rural Scotland in Focus 2014 Report were specially commissioned by SRUC from Iain White, [www.scotlandoncanvas.co.uk](http://www.scotlandoncanvas.co.uk)



## Gaelic translation

Gaelic translation of the Foreword, Executive Summary was provided by Global Connects, Glasgow: [www.globalconnects.com](http://www.globalconnects.com)

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# Report Authors

The Report Chapters were written by researchers who work within SRUC's Rural Policy Centre, and two specialist external co-authors:

**Dr Sarah Skerratt** is Reader in Rural Society and Policy, Head of the Land Economy, Environment and Society Research Group and Director of the Rural Policy Centre at SRUC. Sarah is Editor of *Rural Scotland in Focus* 2010, 2012 and 2014. Sarah has over 25 years experience in analysing the differences between policy vision and experience-on-the-ground in rural areas and communities. Her work focuses particularly on rural community development policies and strategies, as well as initiatives led by communities themselves, exploring issues of resilience, capacity-building and leadership. Sarah heads up the Scottish Government's multi-institutional rural research programme: "Vibrant Communities: Governance and decision-making for community empowerment" (2011-2016). From July 2012 to May 2013, Sarah served as Vice-Chair of the Scottish Government's Land Reform Review Group, and has since been retained as Ministerial Adviser.

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**Steven Thomson** is an experienced agricultural economist who has worked in SRUC for over 20 years. Steven has a particular interest in agricultural and rural policy evaluation and is also involved in a wide range of rural economy studies, which build on his extensive knowledge of contemporary agriculture and rural development issues. His current work includes supporting Brian Pack's regulatory review of Scottish farming, assessing the impacts of the current CAP reform package, an assessment of dairy supply chains in Malawi, reviewing Scottish agricultural tenure, and assessing the economic impact of Scottish estates.

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Our two specialist co-authors are:

**Professor Dean Carson** is a human geographer/demographer/economic geographer with a particular interest in rural and remote places. Dean has spent the past 20 years living and working in rural and remote Australia, including time with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics Unit at the Australian Bureau of Statistics, the National Rural General Practice Study run out of Monash University in the mid 1990s, as Head of the Centre for Regional Tourism Research at Southern Cross University, Head of Population and Tourism Studies at Charles Darwin University, and Professor of Rural and Remote Research at Flinders University in South Australia. His current interests include understanding the dynamics of social, economic and demographic change at the local level.

For more information, see: <http://www.flinders.edu.au/people/Dean.Carson>

**Richard Heggie** is Director of Edinburgh-based planning and design consultancy, Urban Animation. He is a member of the RTPI and is a recent holder of their Planning Consultant of the Year Award. He founded Urban Animation in 1995 and has over 20 years experience within the public and private sectors. Richard is also a Partner with Dhu Rural LLP, a Scottish rural regeneration consultancy.

For more information, see: <http://www.urban-animation.com/> and <http://www.dhurural.com/>



# Executive Summary

Welcome to the third edition of *Rural Scotland in Focus*. Our reports give you impartial, evidence-based commentary, taking you to the heart of key rural issues.

## How Scotland's population, economic activity and housing needs are changing

- Rural housing stock needs to grow by 20% between 2010 and 2035. Predicted housing need was being met across rural Local Authorities (2010-2013) overall, but with significant shortfall in some regions. From 2008-2013, new house completions fell by 49% (private sector) and 68% (housing association) in rural Local Authorities.
- Rural Local Authorities in the north and north west have more complex migration networks than in the south. The Borders and three Ayrshire Local Authorities appear to have their own regional network; Highland has migration links with a wide mix of other Local Authorities. There is greater rural-to-rural migration in the North; in the South there are more rural-urban migration linkages.
- Employment in the south relies heavily on the primary sector, the north on construction and central Highlands and Islands on tourism. A high proportion of employees regularly work more than 49 hours per week. Remote rural Scotland has very high levels of self-employment.
- Internet uptake is estimated to be 70% in rural Local Authorities. A large proportion of rural exchanges still need upgrading.

## Young People Contributing to a Vibrant Rural Scotland

- There are four "types" of rural youth migration, giving areas with: positive net-migration of those aged 26 and 30; high population churn (high in- and out-migration) amongst young people of all ages; low population churn (i.e. low in- and out-migration) amongst young people of all ages; and negative net-migration of those aged 18 and 21.
- Some young people have access to resources and capacity which give them a choice about where to live. Those who do not may be at greater risk of exclusion if they remain in their rural locality.
- Similar factors push young people to leave or to being socially excluded: poor employment and education opportunities; a lack of (affordable) housing; poor transport provision and leisure opportunities; and negative perceptions and stereotypes.
- Tailored policies are needed to meet the individualised nature of young people's decision to migrate out of rural areas. Interventions need to be joined-up to address the interplay between issues, e.g. transport and employment.

## Rural Poverty and Disadvantage: Falling Between the Cracks?

- Rural poverty and disadvantage are characterised by: low incomes (seasonal, short-term employment); fuel poverty (old housing stock and off-grid); and difficulties in accessing services (health, social care, employment, training, education, retail).
- For those experiencing poverty, different aspects build on each other. Those over 75 find it hardest to access doctor's surgeries. Reliance on private cars is increasingly necessary but in more than a third of rural Local Authorities, half of those in the lowest income brackets have no access to a car. Rural households where the highest income householder is aged 60+ are more likely than not to be living in fuel poverty; in the Orkney Islands and Eilean Siar it is more than 70%.
- Rural poverty appears to fall through policy gaps. National policy is not sufficiently sensitised to 'rural'. Rural strategies do not consistently highlight poverty or how to address it. It will be harder to achieve National Outcome 7: "We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish Society."
- Measurement tools (mainly Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, SIMD) are not designed for rural Scotland. Poverty and disadvantage often remain hidden. Tools must be developed in order to direct support in ways which will have most impact.

## The Importance of Integrated Spatial Planning in Rural Areas

- Addressing the economic, environmental and social challenges facing Scotland's rural areas will require ensuring that the right things happen, at the right time, in the right places, at the right scale.
- The major challenge is how best to ensure that the needs of people and communities in rural areas are taken into account and integrated effectively with the need to manage natural resources sustainably. Only by placing the needs of the land, communities and people firmly at the centre of the spatial planning process, will the economic, environmental and social challenges facing those areas be addressed effectively.
- Positive changes are happening at a national level, but there is still a disconnect between national planning policy aspirations and local level implementation.
- There is currently no agreed vision as to what the Scottish 'countryside' is for. The lack of such a vision can hamper developments of potential benefit to communities and the environment.

## Report conclusions: People, Places and Policy: where next for rural Scotland?

- Rural Scotland comprises people with drive, energy, ideas, experience, and places which are considerable environmental assets. However, there are also people in rural Scotland who live in poverty. Similarly, there are places where rural Scotland's finite land resource is under competing demands as rural Scotland continues to evolve.
- The evidence points to the need for an over-arching vision and strategy for rural Scotland, to move forward positively in the 21st Century. Ten underpinning principles are: Comprehensive; Strategic; Appropriate; Significant; Integrative; Collaborative; People-centred; Holistic; Dynamic; Innovative.



# Geàrr-chunntas Gnìomhach

Fàilte oirbh chun an treas eagrain den aithisg Alba Dhùthchail fon Phrosbaig. Tha an aithisg againn a' toirt dhuibh breithneachadh cothromach, stèidhichte air fianais, air cuspairean a tha fìor chudromach do sgìrean dùthchail.

## Mar a tha slugh, gnìomhachd eaconamach is feuman taigheadais na h-Alba ag atharrachadh

- Feumaidh an àireamh thaighean ann an sgìrean dùthchail a dhol an àirde 20% eadar 2010 is 2035. Chaidh frithealadh air na feuman a bhathar an dùil a bhiodh aig daoine a thaobh taigheadais air feadh nan Ùghdarrasan Ionadail dùthchail (2010-2013) san fharsaingeachd, ach bha cion thaighean nach beag ann an cuid a sgìrean fhathast. Bho 2008-2013, thuit an àireamh thaighean ùra a chaidh a thogail 49% (san roinn phrìobhaidich) agus 68% (le comain thaigheadais) ann an sgìrean Ùghdarrasan Ionadail dùthchail.
- Tha an suidheachadh a thaobh mar a bhios daoine a' dèanamh imrich bho agus gu sgìrean Ùghdarrasan Ionadail dùthchail aig tuath agus san iar-thuath nas toinnte na tha e aig deas. Tha coltas ann gu bheil an 'lìonra' roinneil fhèin aig sgìre nan Crichean agus na trì sgìrean ann an Siorrachd Àir; tha ceanglaichean imrich aig Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd ri taghadh farsaing de dh'Ùghdarrasan Ionadail eile. Tha barrachd imrich ga dhèanamh eadar sgìrean dùthchail aig tuath; aig deas ge-tà, tha barrachd ceangal ga dhèanamh tro imrich bho sgìrean dùthchail gu bailtean.
- Tha cosnaidhean aig deas gu mòr an crochadh air a' phrìomh roinn, aig tuath tha iad an crochadh air obair togail agus am meadhan na Gàidhealtachd agus sna h-Eileanan tha iad an crochadh air turasachd. Tha àireamh mhòr de luchd-obrach ag obair còrr is 49 uairean a thìde san t-seachdain gu cunbhalach. Tha àireamhan àrda de dhaoine ann an sgìrean dùthchail, iomallach an Alba a tha ag obair air an ceann fhèin.
- Thathar a' tomhas gu bheil 70% de dhaoine ann an sgìrean Ùghdarrasan Ionadail dùthchail a' faotainn seirbheis eadar-lìn. Tha feum fhathast air leasachadh a dhèanamh air tòrr ionadan-iomlaid fòn a-muigh air an dùthaich.

## Daoine Òga a' Cur ri Alba Dhùthchail a tha Làidir

- Tha ceithir 'seòrsaichean' imrich a tha ga dhèanamh le òigridh ann an sgìrean dùthchail, a tha toirt dhuinn sgìrean le: imrich a tha cur ris an àireimh de dhaoine aois 26 agus 30; tòrr imrich ga dhèanamh (tòrr dhaoine a' tighinn a-steach agus a' falbh) am measg dhaoine òga de gach aois; gun cus imrich ga dhèanamh (me, gun mòran dhaoine a' tighinn a-steach no a' falbh) am measg dhaoine òga de gach aois; imrich a tha lùghdachadh na h-àireimh dhaoine aois 18 agus 21.
- Tha cothrom aig cuid a dhaoine òga air goireasan is comasan pearsanta a bheir roghainn dhaibh air càit am fuirich iad. Don fheadhainn aig nach eil na nithean sin, tha barrachd cunnairt ann gum bi iad air am fàgail air an 'iomall' ma dh'fhuiricheas iad san sgìre dhùthchail aca fhèin.
- Tha nithean ceudna a' toirt air daoine òga falbh no gan dùnadh a-mach bho chùisean gu sòisealta: cion chothroman cosnaidh no foghlaim; cion taigheadais (aig prìs reusanta); dìth dheagh sheirbheisean còmh-dhail is chothroman air cur-seachadan; agus droch-bheachdan aig daoine air nithean no gnàth-iomhaighean a leanas.
- Tha feum air poileasaidhean a dh'aona-ghnothach gus dèiligeadh ris mar a tha adhbhar aig gach duine òg fa leth sgìrean dùthchail fhàgail. Feumaidh fuasglaidhean coimhead air grunn nithean còmhla gus dèiligeadh ris a' cheangal a th' eadar cuid a chùisean, mar còmh-dhail is cosnadh.

## Bochdainn is anacothrom air an dùthaich: eadar a' chlach 's an sgrath?

- 'S e a gheibhear gu h-àbhaisteach an cois bochdainn is anacothrom air an dùthaich: teachd-a-steach a tha beag (obair ràitheil, no airson ùine ghoirid); bochdainn chonnaidh (seann taigheadas no nach eil air a' ghriod); agus duilgheadasan a' faotainn sheirbheisean (slàinte, cùram sòisealta, cosnaidhean, trèanadh, foghlam, bùithtean).
- Do dhaoine a tha fulang bochdainn, faodaidh diofar dhuilgheadasan duilgheadasan eile adhbharachadh. 'S ann do dhaoine nas sine na 75 as duilghe a tha e faighinn gu ionad dotair. Tha barrachd is barrachd feum air càraichean prìobhaideach, ach ann am barrachd is an treas cuid de sgìrean Ùghdarrasan Ionadail dùthchail chan eil cothrom air càr aig leth de na daoine aig a bheil na h-ìrean teachd-a-steach as lugha. Ann an dachaighean dùthchail far a bheil an duine leis an teachd-a-steach as motha 60 no nas sine, tha iad nas buailtiche a bhith fulang bochdainn chonnaidh; ann an Arcaibh agus sna h-Eileanan Siar tha an àireamh às a' cheud aig 70%.
- Tha e coltach gu bheil bochdainn dhùthchail a' fulang dearmad eadar diofar poileasaidhean. Chan eil poileasaidhean nàiseanta mothachail gu leòr air cùisean 'dùthchail'. Cha bhì poileasaidhean dùthchail a' cur cuideam air bochdainn gu cunbhalach no a' sealltainn mar a thèid dèiligeadh ris. Bidh e nas duilghe Buil Nàiseanta 7 a choileanadh: "Tha sinn air dèiligeadh ris na prìomh nithean a tha ag adhbharachadh neo-ionannachd ann an Comann-sòisealtas na h-Alba."
- Chan eil na modhan-tomhais (gu h-àraidh Clàr-amais Iom-easbhaidh na h-Alba, SIMD) air an dealbh airson Alba dhùthchail. Gu tric tha bochdainn is anacothrom am falach. Feumar modhan a dhealbhadh a stiùireas mar a bheirear taic seachad feuch an toir i a' bhuaidh as motha as urrainnear.

## Cho cudromach agus a tha planadh aonaichte a thaobh na 'mòr-àrainne' ann an sgìrean dùthchail

- Ma thathar a' dol a dhèiligeadh ris na dùbhlain a tha ro sgìrean dùthchail na h-Alba a thaobh an eaconamaidh, na h-àrainneachd agus chùisean sòisealta, feumar dèanamh cinnteach gun tachair na rudan iomchaidh, aig an àm iomchaidh, sna h-àiteachan iomchaidh, agus aig ìre iomchaidh.
- 'S i a' cheist as motha, ciamar as fheàrr a nithear cinnteach gun cuirear diù cheart sna feuman a th' aig daoine is coimhearsnachdan ann an sgìrean dùthchail aig an aon àm agus a thathar a' cumail rian seasmhach air stòrais nàdair, ann an dòigh a tha aonaichte? 'S ann a-mhàin le bhith cur na feuman a th' aig an tìr, na coimhearsnachdan is daoine an teis-meadhan nan dòighean sam bithear a' dèanamh planadh a thaobh na 'mòr-àrainne' a thèid dèiligeadh gu ceart ris na dùbhlain eaconamach is sòisealta, agus a thaobh na h-àrainneachd, a tha ro na sgìrean sin.
- Tha nithean gealltanach a' tachairt aig ìre nàiseanta, ach tha fhathast beàrn ann eadar na cinn-uidhe a gheibhear an cois nam poileasaidhean nàiseanta airson planadh agus na tha ga chur an gnìomh aig ìre ionadail.
- Chan eil sealladh aontaiche fhathast againn air dè bu chòir a dhèanamh le 'tìr dhùthchail' na h-Alba. Faodaidh an uireasbhaidh sin maill a chur air leasachaidhean a dh'fhaodadh a bhith gu buannachd choimhearsnachdan agus na h-àrainneachd.

## Co-dhùnaidhean na h-aithisge: Daoine, Àiteachan agus Poileasaidhean: dè an ath cheum do dh'Alba dhùthchail?

- Ann an Alba dhùthchail gheibhear daoine le spionnadh, lùths, beachdan-smuain, eòlas, agus àiteachan le stòrais nach beag bhon àrainneachd. Ge-tà, tha daoine cuideachd ann an Alba dhùthchail a tha fulang le bochdainn. Cuideachd, tha àiteachan ann an Alba dhùthchail far a bheil iarraidh air an tìr fhèin, stòras nach eil neo-chrìochnach, air diofar adhbharan a tha farpais an aghaidh a chèile fhad 's a tha Alba dhùthchail a' sìor atharrachadh.
- Tha an fhianais a' dearbhadh gum feum àrd-shealladh is ro-innleachd a bhith ann do dh'Alba dhùthchail, a leigeas leatha gluasad air adhart le dòchas san 21mh linn. Tha deich bun-phrionnsapalan ann: Glè fharsaing; Ro-innleachdail; Iomchaidh; Cudromach; Aonaichte; Com-pàirteach; Diù ann an Daoine; Iomlanach; Lùthmhor; Innleachdach.



# Introduction

Welcome to the third edition of Rural Scotland in Focus.

Since starting to publish our Reports in 2010, our ambition has been to produce impartial, evidence-based commentary which takes you to the heart of key rural issues. We also provide links to a wide range of documents for you to explore further.

Each Report has focused on key themes. In 2010, we examined: population change; the resilience of the rural economy; rural infrastructure and services; community empowerment and asset ownership; and climate change, biodiversity and water quality. In 2012, we updated the picture of Scotland's rural population change and its implications, as well as changes in economy and environment. We then focused on rural towns, the role of the third and private sectors, next generation broadband, and rural Scotland's role in a low carbon future.

In our 2014 edition, we continue to address critical issues. These are important not only to rural Scotland, but also to how rural can continue to enhance its contribution to a vibrant Scottish economy, society and environment. However, we have also given ourselves an additional challenge: rather than setting out separate themes and asking the reader to make connections between them, we have sought to identify and articulate some of these connections through how we have approached the writing of the report.



Therefore, the first Chapter provides an update, with new data, on the key underpinning issues in rural Scotland. These include: housing activity and need; population growth or reduction, in-and out-migration patterns; employment trends and self-employment profiles; and the on-going importance of broadband for rural Scotland's inclusion in national digital targets. As in previous *Rural Scotland in Focus* reports, this first Chapter provides the vital scene-setting for the rest of the report. We then go on to explore how the themes investigated in Chapter 1 thread through into subsequent Chapters, as well as echo back to the initial Chapter. So, in Chapter 2, we focus specifically on young people's migration and/or exclusion patterns: whether to stay or leave the rural communities in which they grew up; how key local factors affect their capacity to choose; and what more needs to be put in place to support such choices. In Chapter 3, we unpack rural poverty and disadvantage, basing our discussion



on what is already known and what needs to be known and understood far more clearly. This chapter brings in themes from other Chapters – housing, employment and employability, opportunities, ageing, inclusion/exclusion. We also review the policies and strategies from 1999-2014 which have sought to tackle poverty and disadvantage in Scotland, and query the extent to which “rural” finds a systematic place in these. Chapter 4 then brings these and other land-use threads together. We assess spatial planning, and examine why an integrated approach is essential given rural Scotland is facing multiple and increasing demands and opportunities for its finite land resource. The final concluding chapter (5) then brings together the multiple themes explored in the report, briefly highlighting how they are interlinked. We outline why integration must increase, because people and communities in rural Scotland experience their lives where and when all these different elements intersect. We identify the need for a shared overall vision and accompanying strategy for rural Scotland, with the tools to assess progress.



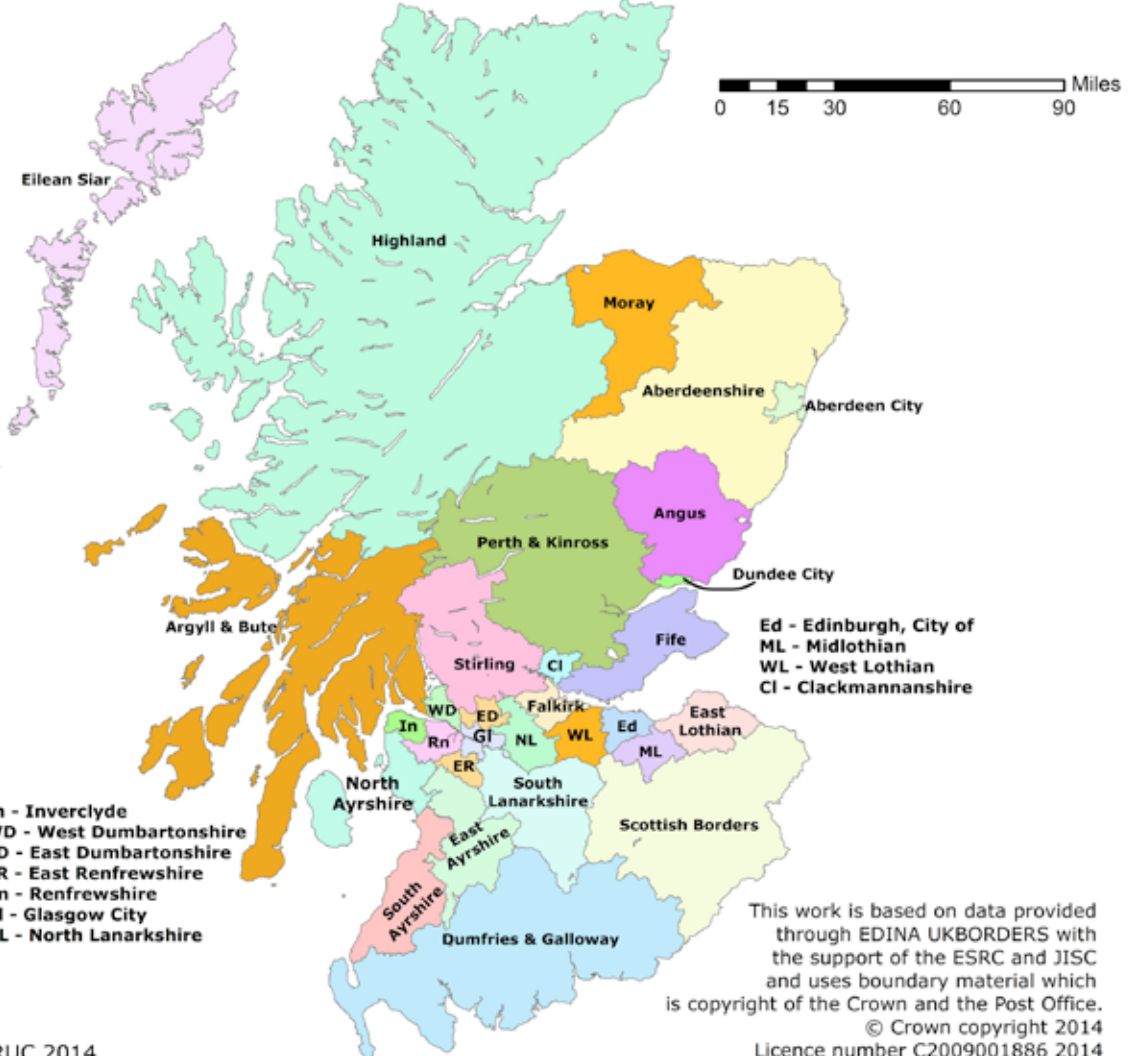


Over time, the Rural Scotland in Focus reports have become part of a wider programme of activities, reflecting on where rural Scotland is now, may well be in the future, and debating where it could be in years to come. As the Rural Policy Centre, we have hosted debates, produced Policy and Research Briefings on specific rural topics, and responded to Inquiries and Consultations through giving written and oral evidence. Also, through providing the Secretariat to the Cross Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on Rural Policy, we have sought to bring key rural issues very much into the public and policy domains, for further debate and discussion. We see an increased need for this, particularly in times of economic constraint, and to support the potential enhancement of rural perspectives on national issues.

The 2014 Report is particularly timely in this regard, since this year we are seeing the further development of, for example: the National Planning Framework (NPF3), the Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), Land Use Strategy, Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill, National Marine Plan, Land Reform Review, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform (2015), the new Scotland Rural Development Programme (SRDP, 2014-2020) and new LEADER Local Development Strategies, plus the first meeting of the Scottish Rural Parliament.

The issues we raise in our report also have resonance beyond these immediate policy frameworks. They span several decades past (with cumulative effects) and several decades to come. We explore what this timeframe means for national and rural policy in Scotland. In so doing, and as with our previous reports, we are not seeking to “privilege” rural over urban. Rather, the evidence shows that to enhance growth or development, inclusion and life-chances in rural Scotland, the design and deployment of policies and practices must be “tailored” to the local specifics of rural Scotland. The evidence we present in the following chapters also leads us to conclude that there needs to be an overarching, comprehensive vision and strategy for rural Scotland, aligned with and supporting the delivery of the National Outcomes. Such a strategy will, we argue, allow for rural needs to be recognised and addressed, and support the development of further resilience and vibrancy across rural Scotland.





In - Inverclyde  
 WD - West Dumbartonshire  
 ED - East Dumbartonshire  
 ER - East Renfrewshire  
 Rn - Renfrewshire  
 GI - Glasgow City  
 NL - North Lanarkshire

Ed - Edinburgh, City of  
 ML - Midlothian  
 WL - West Lothian  
 CI - Clackmannanshire

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# 1. How Scotland's population, economic activity and housing needs are changing

Steven Thomson and Dean Carson

## Key points

1. Projections suggest that between 2010 and 2035 the housing stock in rural Local Authorities will have to grow by 20% with large regional variations (e.g. 32% increase in Aberdeenshire but only 1% in Argyll and Bute). This will undoubtedly place pressures on infrastructure in many settlements and regions, particularly in the more accessible rural areas, meaning there may be need for further investments in road, water and sewerage, schools, medical services, etc. to meet that demand.
2. Whilst there is a predicted need for increased housing stocks there was a 49% decrease in private sector new house completions in the rural Local Authorities between 2008 and 2013 as a result of the recession. After more than doubling between 2000 and 2010, housing association new build completions plummeted 68% between 2010 and 2013 as public sector finance cuts impacted, and unlike urban areas they show no sign of stabilising.
3. Annualised predicted housing need (to 2035) was being met across rural Local Authorities between 2010 and 2013 in their entirety but there is a significant annual shortfall in some regions with other areas appearing to have significant excess. Decisions on housing provision and investment are long-term and it is essential that Local Authorities continue to assess local population dynamics and local economies to ensure the right types of homes are provided in the right locations, with access to employment opportunities for new residents.
4. Of 208 settlements with populations under 3,000 in 2001, 18% had grown by more than a quarter by 2011, with Kintore in Aberdeenshire growing by an astonishing 164%. 12% of the settlements had population decreases of more than 3%, with 28% remaining stable.
5. Rural Local Authorities in the north and north west of the country tend to have more complex migration networks than in the South. In particular, the Borders appears to have its own very regional network, as do the Ayrshire Local Authorities, whereas Highland region has migration links with a wide mix of other Local Authorities. There is also greater rural-to-rural migration in the North whereas in the South there are a lot more rural-urban migration linkages, due to their closer geography.
6. Whilst remote rural Scotland has very high levels of self employment there were considerable geographic differences, with noticeably lower rates in the Western Isles, Shetland and along the east coast. In contrast, self employment levels were very high in coastal areas of Wester Ross, around Hawick and Jedburgh, etc. The South of Scotland had a high reliance on primary sector employment, with the northern region having greater reliance on construction sector work and the central Highlands and Islands having greater reliance on tourism sector jobs. These sectors often require long working hours and this is shown by a high proportion of employees regularly working more than 49 hours per week in rural Scotland compared to urban Scotland, which has high proportions of office based workforce.
7. Internet uptake is estimated to be about 70% in rural Local Authorities with notably lower levels of uptake in the Western Isles (50%). Even in areas with superfast broadband access there is no obvious difference in levels of uptake suggesting that, irrespective of service provision, there are other barriers to uptake. The private sector and Government are slowly making a difference with their investment programmes into superfast broadband provision. However, there are a large proportion of exchanges in these rural Local Authorities that still need upgrading, for which there appears to be no short-term plan.



## Introduction

In the 2010 and 2012 *Rural Scotland in Focus* reports, population dynamics, housing needs, broadband infrastructure, rural economies and vulnerability of towns were examined. With the recent publication of the 2011 Census results, this chapter revisits some of these topics, providing updates and examining the issues from a fresh perspective. The topics covered include housing, population dynamics of small settlements, migration networks, economic activity and broadband infrastructure.

## Housing needs and new build completions

The 2012 *Rural Scotland in Focus* report highlighted Scotland's future housing needs. By statute <sup>1</sup>, Local Authorities (LAs) must prepare a local housing strategy which is supported by an assessment of housing need and demand. It is important that LAs consider demographic and economic changes occurring within their region to ensure appropriate housing stocks are developed and provided in the right locations. The latest projections (2010 based) from National Records of Scotland <sup>2</sup> reveal that due to predicted changes in populations and housing demands (e.g. greater single occupancy households) by 2035 the housing stock in rural LAs will need to grow by 139,000 homes (or 20% from 2010). The areas that are expected to require the largest growth in total housing stock include Perth and Kinross (43%), Aberdeenshire (32%), Stirling (30%), Highland (26%), Orkney (23%) and Shetland (21%). This will likely put pressure on existing service provision (such as transport, water sewerage, etc.) in some localities. The LAs with the lowest expected extra required housing stock by 2035 are Argyll and Bute (1%), Dumfries and Galloway (4%), South Ayrshire (7%) and Eilean Siar (8%). In order for rural LAs to meet the predicted housing requirements in 2035, they will collectively have to build an additional 5,556 houses per year between 2010 and 2035. (See Chapter 4 for a discussion both of the spatial planning implications of this need and indications given in the revised Scottish Planning Policy (SPP), June 2014).

Figure 1 <sup>3</sup> shows that across Scotland since the 1980s there has generally been a steady growth (with the exception of the double dip recession of the late 1980s and early 1990s) in the number of privately built house completions up until 2009. A similar trend is shown in housing association completions, with a rapid decline in LA new builds during the 1980s. What is most notable is the very rapid decline in private housing completions since 2007 due to the economic recession with a 48% decline in completions between 2007 and 2009, with 2012 housing completions being 54% lower than in 2007. The housing association completions continued to rise after the recession started (likely due to public sector monies still being available) but they too fell by 24% between 2010 and 2012 as public sector funding cuts were made.

**Figure 1: Long term trends in Scottish new house completions 1979 - 2012**

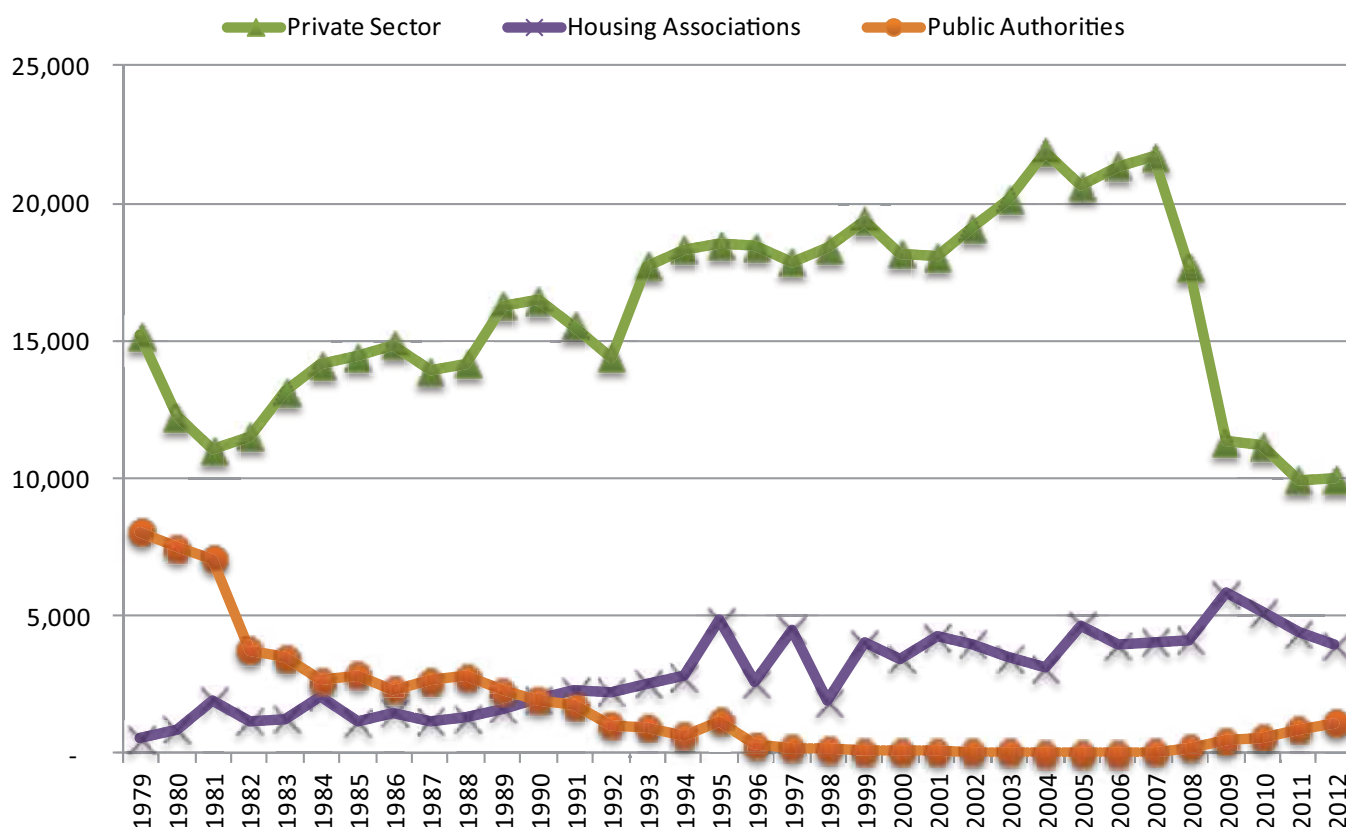
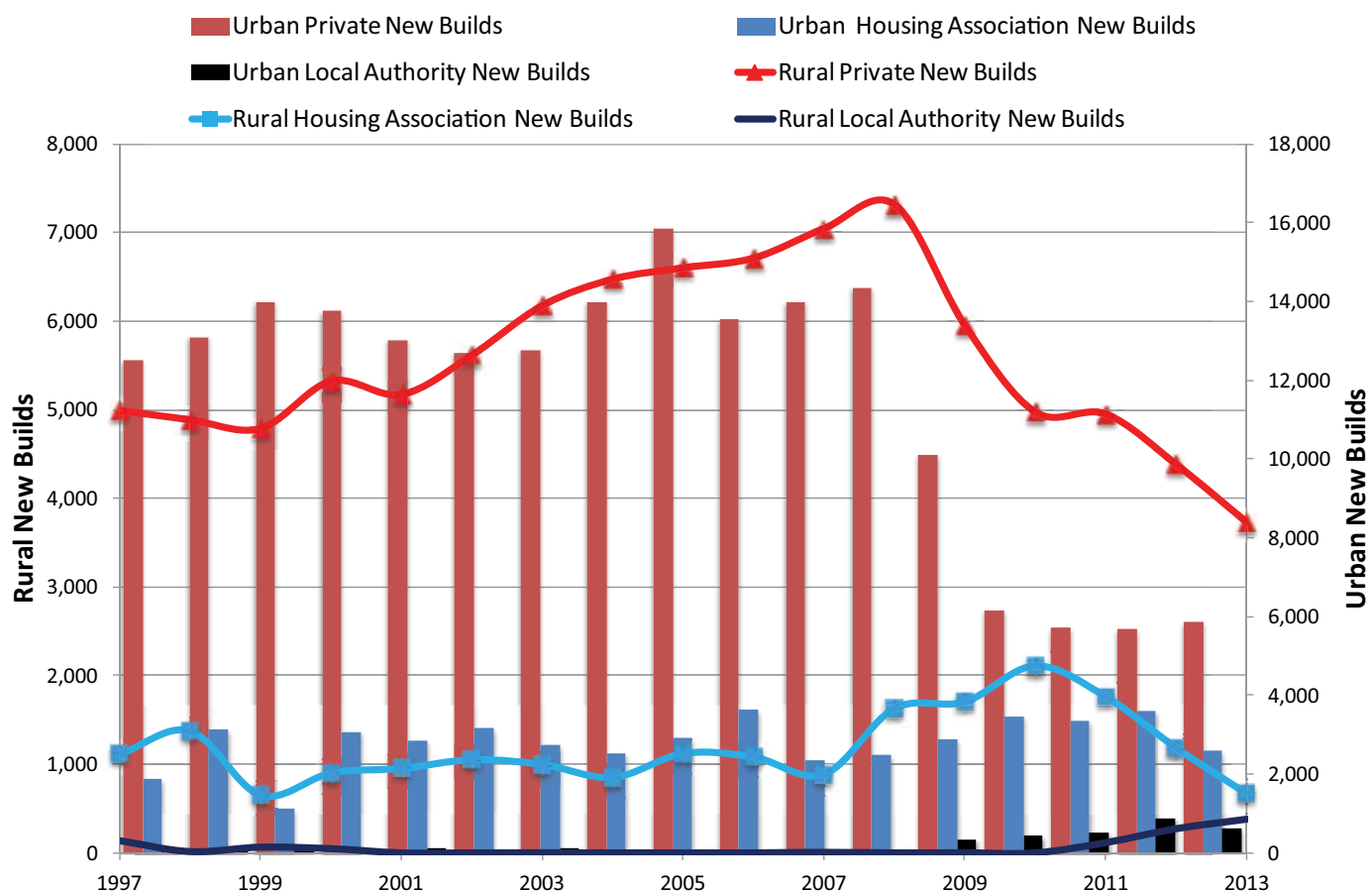


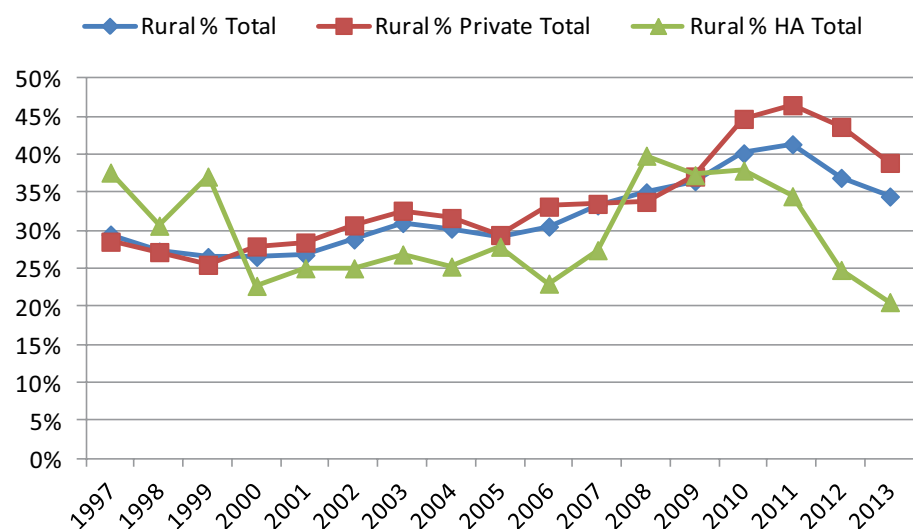
Figure 2 <sup>4</sup> shows the trends in different types of housing completions in rural (lines) and urban (columns) LAs between 1997 and 2013. The amount of annual private build completions in rural LAs grew steadily from 4,795 in 1999 to 7,323 in 2008 (53% increase on annual completions) before falling by 49% between 2008 and 2013 to only 3,736 completions. The number of housing association completions in rural LAs more than doubled between 2000 and 2010 (2,115 completions) before falling 68% in 3 years, with only 669 completions in 2013. It is noteworthy that whilst private housing completions in urban LAs also fell rapidly after 2008 (58% in 2 years), the number of completions has remained relatively stable thereafter, unlike in rural LAs where the initial rate of decline was perhaps slower but currently shows no sign of abating. The urban LA housing association completions continued to rise until 2012 before falling 28% whereas there has been a much longer trend in the decline of housing association completions in rural LAs.

Figure 2: Rural and Urban housing completions 1997-2013



The combined effect of these changes is that the housing construction sector has been hit harder in rural compared to urban LAs with the proportion of total houses built in rural LAs falling from a peak of 41.4% in 2011 to 34.5% in 2013. The proportion of housing association completions in rural LAs has fallen from 40% in 2008 to 20.6% in 2013 (Figure 3). These patterns have direct implications for those experiencing poverty and disadvantage in rural Scotland (Chapter 3) and for young people seeking to stay in, or move back to, rural areas (Chapter 2).

Figure 3: Proportion of Scottish new house completions undertaken in rural Local Authorities





Despite the recent decline in the proportion of new builds undertaken by housing associations, Table 1 shows that across the rural LAs, housing associations were responsible for 22% of new house-build completions in the 2009-2013 period, compared with only 13% in the 2003 to 2008 period. Over the full 1997-2013 time period, housing associations were responsible for 28% of new build completions in Argyll and Bute, 25% in Orkney, 22% in Dumfries and Galloway and 20% in Angus and in South Ayrshire. In contrast, housing associations only contributed 11% of new build completions in Aberdeenshire and the Borders with 12% in East Ayrshire, showing there is far greater reliance on the private sector in these areas for new housing stock. It should be noted that the Scottish Government<sup>5</sup> estimate that since 2000-01 about 5% of the private sector new build completions have contributed to the affordable housing supply although this has risen to “as much as” 15% more recently through New Supply Shared Equity (NSSE)<sup>6</sup> contributions.

**Table 1: Proportion of rural Local Authority new builds completed by housing associations 1997 - 2014**

Local Authority	1997-2002	2003-2008	2009-2013	1997-2013
Aberdeenshire	10%	9%	12%	11%
Angus	27%	16%	19%	20%
Argyll and Bute	33%	19%	35%	28%
Dumfries and Galloway	24%	19%	26%	22%
East Ayrshire	7%	6%	19%	12%
Eilean Siar	12%	17%	23%	19%
Highland	12%	13%	32%	18%
Moray	12%	15%	21%	17%
Orkney Islands	34%	22%	24%	25%
Perth and Kinross	22%	14%	24%	19%
Scottish Borders	13%	8%	15%	11%
Shetland Islands	11%	9%	33%	17%
South Ayrshire	13%	19%	30%	20%
Stirling	8%	17%	21%	15%
Rural Local Authorities	15%	13%	22%	16%

Table 2 reveals that whilst the annualised new housing need (from projections) is being met across the rural LAs (taking an average of 2010 to 2013) there are significant differences across each LA. For example Aberdeenshire (on average 97 houses in excess of long term predicted need) is the only LA meeting its annualised projected new house build requirements of the four LAs that are predicted to have greatest need for new housing. Perth and Kinross needs to double average housing completions made over the 2010-2013 period to meet the long term predicted annualised need in the area. Conversely, in East Ayrshire the 2010-2013 period saw an average of 318 more houses being completed each year than the annualised long term predictions suggest are required. In addition, Table 2 shows the proportion of housing stock turnover (ratio of new build completions to total dwellings) and this shows that Orkney had the highest rate at 1.92% between 2010-12 followed by Aberdeenshire and Eilean Siar, with the lowest rates in Angus (0.48%) Dumfries and Galloway (0.51%), South Ayrshire (0.56%) and Argyll and Bute (0.56%).

**Table 2: Projected annualised housing need (to 2035) and current housing completions in rural Local Authorities**

Local Authority	New house build completions						Annualised Need	Average excess or (shortfall)	Housing stock Turnover (2010-12)
	2010	2011	2012	2013	Average 2010-13				
Aberdeenshire	1,750	1,507	1,258	1,192	1,427	1,330	97	1.36%	
Angus	255	348	180	196	245	271	(26)	0.48%	
Argyll and Bute	229	346	218	179	243	12	231	0.56%	
Dumfries and Galloway	447	319	342	192	325	116	209	0.51%	
East Ayrshire	679	570	527	390	542	223	318	1.04%	
Eilean Siar	173	151	249	136	177	37	140	1.33%	
Highland	1,038	1,205	879	791	978	1,050	(71)	0.93%	
Moray	397	743	619	565	581	248	333	1.37%	
Orkney Islands	187	153	265	231	209	86	123	1.92%	
Perth and Kinross	870	520	602	376	592	1,105	(513)	0.96%	
Scottish Borders	526	633	267	349	444	398	46	0.84%	
Shetland Islands	170	77	148	74	117	84	33	1.23%	
South Ayrshire	397	146	362	163	267	142	125	0.56%	
Stirling	311	427	339	214	323	454	(131)	0.91%	
Rural Local Authorities	7,429	7,145	6,255	5,048	6,469	5,556	913	0.92%	

## Population Change

Both the 2010 and 2012 *Rural Scotland in Focus* reports examined issues regarding the population dynamics of rural Scotland, emphasising the important role that migration from within Scotland and from further afield plays in maintaining and growing the rural populace. With the recent release of Scotland's 2011 Census results <sup>7</sup>, this section examines some interesting changes to rural areas since the 2001 Census and highlights some of the key changes and issues facing rural areas including their migration networks with urban Scotland.



## Settlements

There were 208 settlements <sup>8</sup> which were recorded in both the 2001 and 2011 Census with a population less than 3,000 in 2001 (we classify these as "small settlements"). Across Scotland six small settlements grew from populations of under 3,000 in 2001 to over 3,000 (definition of a small town) in 2011, namely: Kintore (Aberdeenshire), Oldmeldrum (Aberdeenshire), Aviemore (Highlands), Gretna (Dumfries and Galloway), Callander (Stirling), and Innerleithen (Borders). Table 3 shows that of the 208 small settlements, 3% lost more than 25% of their population by 2011, with 9% losing between 10% and 25%. The majority of localities that saw sharp declines were either small (<1,000 people) or medium sized (1,000 to 2,000). 28% of the localities grew by 3 to 10% (with a higher proportion of the larger localities in this group) with 18% growing by 10 to 25% and a further 18% growing by more than 25% by 2011. Faster rates of growth or decline may be expected in the smallest settlements due to

the small starting base, but it is noticeable that the medium sized settlements also show similar patterns of change despite higher base populations in 2001.

**Table 3: Size of locality in 2001 and growth rate to 2011 in rural Local Authorities**

Locality Size (2001)	-25% to -10%	-10% to -3%	-3% to 3%	3% to 10%	10% to 25%	>25%	Localities
<1,000	2 (2%)	11 (12%)	12 (13%)	23 (24%)	26 (27%)	21 (22%)	95
1,000-2,000	4 (5%)	7 (9%)	11 (13%)	23 (28%)	23 (28%)	14 (17%)	82
2,000-3,000	0 (0%)	1 (3%)	5 (16%)	13 (42%)	10 (32%)	2 (6%)	31
Rural LA Localities	6 (3%)	19 (9%)	28 (13%)	59 (28%)	59 (28%)	37 (18%)	208

Across Scotland's rural LAs between 2001 and 2011, Shetland had the highest growth rate of people living in small settlements (under 3,000 in 2001) at 27%, followed by Aberdeenshire (24%), Perth and Kinross (17%) and the Scottish Borders (16%). In contrast, population growth in small settlements within both Moray and Argyll and Bute was below 5%, with Dumfries and Galloway marginally higher at 6%. Kintore in Aberdeenshire was the fastest growing small settlement between 2001 and 2011 with 164% growth (see Table 4). This was followed by small settlements in some of the highest growth LAs with the exception of Garelochhead (80% growth) in Argyll and Bute (only 5% growth over the period). Garelochhead appears to be an outlier in Argyll and Bute and is possibly affected by its location two miles to the North West of the Faslane naval base with the Finnart ocean (oil) terminal three miles to the North and the Coulport Royal Naval Armament Depot to the South West.

The small settlements facing the largest declines in population between 2001 and 2011 (Table 4) were most commonly found in Argyll and Bute, although with its population falling by 879 people (46% decline) Kinloss in Moray stands out as having exceptional population decline. It is likely that this population change was affected by the recent closure of the RAF Kinloss base and, in particular, it ceasing to be operational in July 2011 <sup>9</sup>, although with the base transferring to the army for use as barracks in 2012 <sup>10</sup> there may well already have been some local population recovery in the settlement.

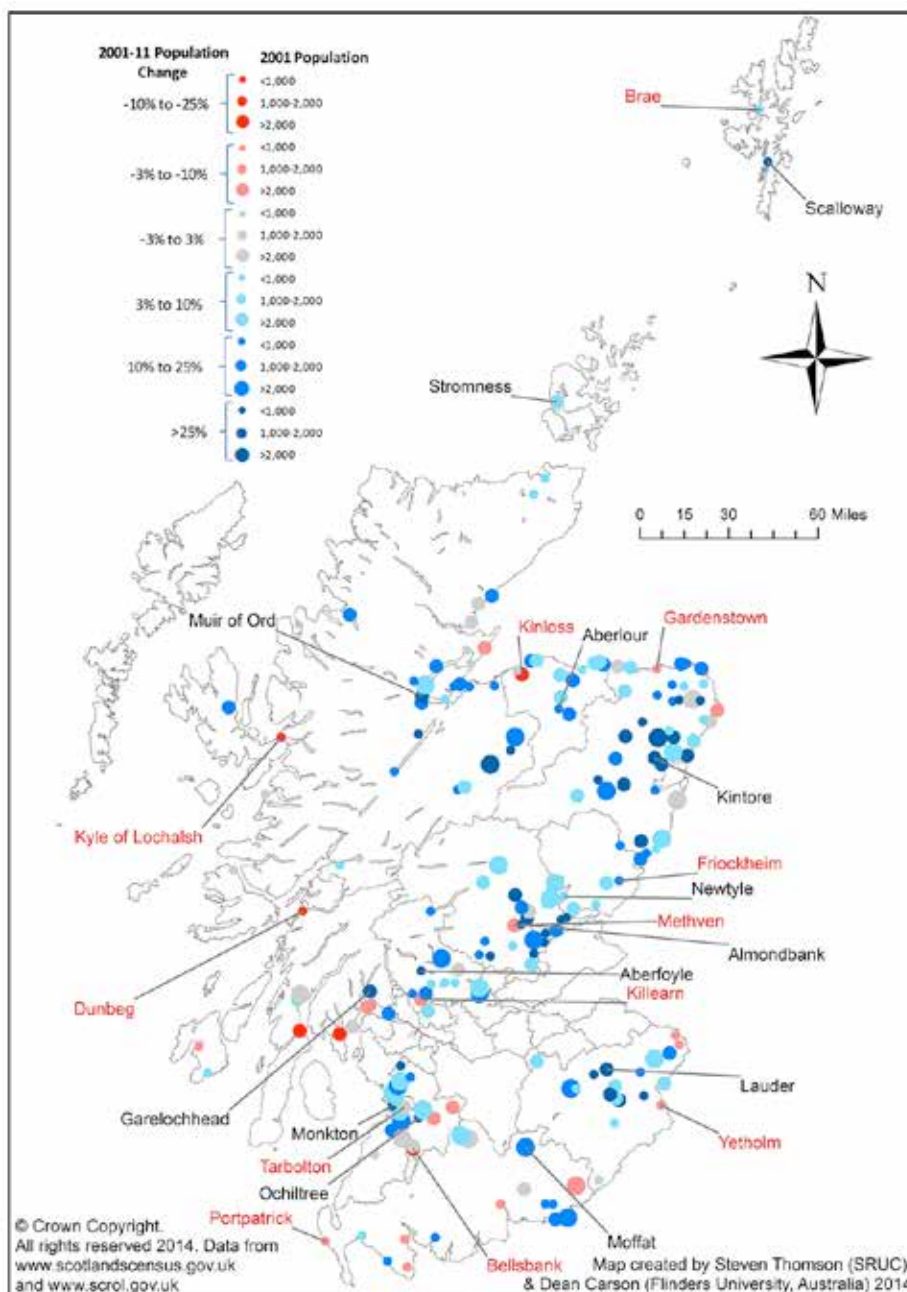


**Table 4: Extremes of changes in populations of settlements with 2001 populations less than 3,000**

Largest growth in Population (2001-2011)					Biggest decline in Population (2001-2011)				
Name	County	2011	2001	Change	Name	County	2011	2001	Change
Kintore	Aberdeenshire	4,476	1,696	164%	Kinloss	Moray	1,052	1,931	-46%
Blackburn	Aberdeenshire	2,960	1,386	114%	Bellsbank	East Ayrshire	1,374	1,619	-15%
Garelochhead	Argyll & Bute	2,277	1,265	80%	Dunbeg	Argyll & Bute	625	730	-14%
Almondbank	Perth & Kinross	1,094	610	79%	Kyle of Lochalsh	Highland & Islands	649	739	-12%
St Madoes and Glencarse	Perth & Kinross	1,181	695	70%	Tarbert	Argyll & Bute	1,179	1,338	-12%
Rothienorman	Aberdeenshire	913	539	69%	Port Bannatyne	Argyll & Bute	1,210	1,354	-11%
Laurencekirk	Aberdeenshire	2,925	1,808	62%	Bowmore	Argyll & Bute	784	862	-9%
Oldmeldrum	Aberdeenshire	3,212	2,003	60%	Gardenstown	Aberdeenshire	667	733	-9%
Lauder	Scottish Borders	1,699	1,081	57%	Rosneath	Argyll & Bute	849	931	-9%
Inchtute	Perth & Kinross	1,155	735	57%	Portpatrick	Dumfries & Galloway	534	585	-9%

Figure 4 identifies small settlements across Scotland's rural LAs according to their 2001 population size (size of circle) which are shaded blue if they grew, shaded red if they shrunk and grey if they had no change (+/-3%) between 2001 and 2011. In addition, in each rural LA the names of small settlements with the largest growth (black writing) and smallest growth / greatest decline localities (red writing) are given. This shows that across these rural LAs many of the small settlements are indeed growing, although there are small settlements with declining populations dispersed amongst them. Generally there are few small settlements that declined in population between 2001 and 2011 in the North and East of Scotland, with higher proportions of declining small settlements in the South and West of the country. Even in regions where populations have grown rapidly (e.g. the Borders) there were a number of small settlements that witnessed declining populations. Additionally, growing and declining small settlements within LAs are not necessarily geographically separated, sometimes being very close to each other (e.g. Methven and Almondbank near Perth). This emphasises the need to look below LA-level statistics when examining change and the impacts of policy, with, for example, the obvious differences in housing demand (and supply implications such as strategic planning for new builds, planning permission, etc.) across these growth and decline settlements. (This need to look below LA-level is a major focus of Chapter 3 on rural poverty and deprivation).

**Figure 4: Summary of changes to rural Local Authority settlements with 2001 populations of less than 3,000.**



A number of factors can help to explain some of the changes experienced by these settlements in rural LAs, namely sex ratio, median age and aged dependency ratio as detailed in Table 5.

- The average sex ratio (males per female) is normally expected to be between 97 and 101 males per 100 females. Across the rural LAs the average sex ratio in small settlements was 93 men per 100 women in 2001 with a marginal increase to 94 in 2011. Orkney had the lowest ratio (88:100) of males to females in 2001 and by 2011 it had marginally declined (87:100). Dumfries and Galloway, East Ayrshire, South Ayrshire and Stirling also had relatively low, albeit relatively stable, sex ratios in 2011 (about 91 to 92 males per 100 females). Argyll and Bute rose dramatically from 93 males per 100 females in 2001 to 103 in 2011, with Shetland Isles increasing from 97 to 105 over the same period. There are a number of settlements that have high sex ratios (e.g. Garelochhead (203), Potterton (109), Johnshaven (107), Kyle of Lochalsh (106), Brae (106), Gourdam (105), Boddam (105), Kinloss (104)) and this normally arises when there is high employment in the resource sector, out-migration of young females for work or education (see Chapter 2) or out-migration of older females for personal reasons (e.g. divorce). It is likely in many of these extreme cases that the underlying factor is employment in oil, fishing or defence sectors.
- According to the census results the average of median age of these rural LA small settlements was 41.4 years old in 2001 rising to 44.5 in 2011. Small settlements in Dumfries and Galloway (48), Angus (46.9) and Scottish Borders (46.9) had the highest average median ages in 2011, with Shetland (36.5) and Aberdeenshire (East Ayrshire 42.8) having small settlements with the lowest average median age. Small settlements in Angus aged fastest on average, followed by those in Dumfries and Galloway. As with the sex ratio, there were small settlements at the extremes in terms of median age. Yetholm was the small settlement in rural LAs that had the highest median age in 2011 at 58 years, followed by Portpatrick (57), Edzell (56), Inellan (56), Gatehouse of Fleet (56), Comrie (56) and Port Banantyne (55). In contrast, Garelochhead had the youngest median age in 2011 at 27 years, followed by Kinloss (29), Balmedie (34), Blackburn (Aberdeenshire) (34), Rothienorman (34) and Kintore (35). Most of these small settlements are located in Aberdeenshire. There is great variety between small settlements within LAs with, for example, Ballater (51) and Balmedie (34) within Aberdeenshire having very different age structured populations in 2011. The median age in Garelochhead fell by 10 years between 2001 and 2011 with Kintore's falling by 7 years and Scalloway in Shetland falling by 5 years. In contrast, Gardestown in Aberdeenshire and Loans in South Ayrshire had a 10 year rise in their median age over the period, with St Cyrus and Cruden Bay increasing by 9 years and Easttriggs, Portpatrick, Evanton and Kyle of Lochalsh all having increased median ages of 8 years. This disaggregation at settlement level again shows the importance of localised data, particularly in terms of understanding and addressing issues of age-related poverty, as explored in Chapter 3.
- On average, the small settlements in the LAs that had populations of less than 3,000 in 2001 had 19% of the population aged 65 and over in 2001, rising to 21% in 2011. The average proportion of the population aged 65 years and over across the small settlements within the rural LAs was lowest in Aberdeenshire (18%), East Ayrshire (18.7%) and South Ayrshire (19.3%) in 2011. Those rural LAs with small settlements with the highest proportion of older people in 2011 included Dumfries and Galloway (24.9%) and Angus (23.7%). The small settlements with the highest aged dependency ratios in 2011 included Comrie (33.6%), Gatehouse of Fleet (33.1%), Thornhill (Dumfries and Galloway) (32.2%), Edzell (31.4%) and Dunkeld and Birnam (30.9%). Those with the lowest dependency ratios in 2011 included Kinloss (1.7%), Balmedie (5.8%), Newburgh (Aberdeenshire) (7.6%) and Newtonhill (7.8%). These data have implications for support and services for older people (Chapter 3).

**Table 5: Average sex ratio, average median age and average aged dependency ratio for settlements (less than 3,000 in 2001) in rural Local Authorities, 2001 and 2011**

Rural Local Authority	Average sex ratio		Average median age		Average aged dependency ratio	
	2001	2011	2001	2011	2001	2011
Aberdeenshire	97	97	42.2	39.4	16.7%	18.0%
Angus	93	94	46.9	42.4	19.7%	23.7%
Argyll and Bute	93	103	45.1	41.4	18.1%	21.1%
Dumfries and Galloway	90	92	48.0	43.8	21.3%	24.9%
East Ayrshire	92	91	42.8	40.0	16.8%	18.7%
Highland	93	93	44.8	41.3	18.9%	20.6%
Moray	96	95	44.3	40.6	18.3%	20.7%
Orkney Islands	88	87	45.0	44.0	21.0%	22.0%
Perth and Kinross	91	92	45.0	42.8	20.3%	21.1%
Scottish Borders	91	94	46.9	43.9	21.5%	23.3%
Shetland Islands	97	105	36.5	38.5	16.9%	23.3%
South Ayrshire	92	91	43.7	39.4	16.4%	19.3%
Stirling	91	91	44.3	41.9	18.1%	19.7%
<b>Average</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>44.5</b>	<b>41.4</b>	<b>18.7%</b>	<b>20.6%</b>

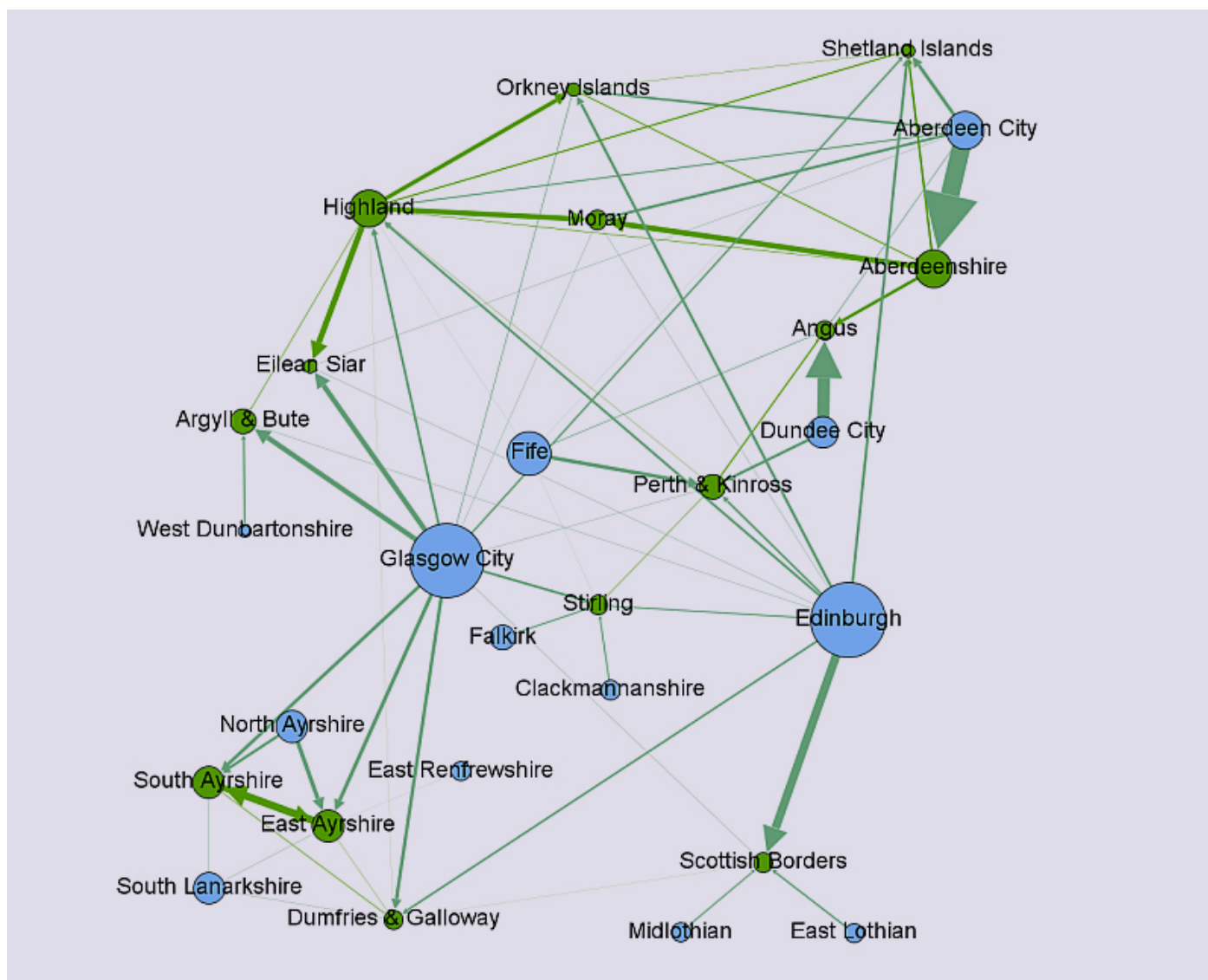
## Scotland's Migration Networks

Generally, across most rural LAs, there are fewer people living in small settlements of less than 1,000 and this is largely due to what were previously small settlements of less than 1,000 people growing to over 1,000 (bracket creep). While higher than expected natural population increase over the past several years helps explain why rural Scotland's population has grown faster than predicted in many areas, natural population increase is unlikely to become a positive demographic force for rural Scotland any time in the foreseeable future. Migration is usually cited as a more important factor in rural population growth and while there were about 20,000 births and 20,000 deaths in rural Scotland in 2011/12, there were nearly 100,000 migration events where either the destination and / or the origin were locations in Scotland's rural LAs.

Using the average annual estimated LA to LA migration flows for 2006-2011, the 'typical pattern' perspective of recent migration behaviours was analysed. Figure 5 shows the 'social geography' of rural Scotland that arises from rural LA in-migration relationships that have been analysed using Social Network Analysis (SNA). The rural LAs are coloured green with urban LAs blue. The size of each LA 'node' represents its importance in the total network based on the number of migrants it gives and receives and the diversity of connections it has with other LAs. The green arrows indicate rural to rural migration relationships and blue arrows indicate urban to rural in-migration relationships. The size of the arrow gives an indication of the importance of the relationship to the receiving LA. To make the SNA layout manageable, only relationships which accounted for more than 5% of the in-migration to a rural LA are portrayed.

As discussed in 2010 and 2012 editions of *Rural Scotland in Focus* Reports, rural in-migrants tend to be older (working or retirees) or very young (children of middle age migrants). Figure 5 shows that Aberdeen city is a very important source of in-migrants to Aberdeenshire, and also has migrants departing to Shetland, Moray, Orkney with weak migration links to Highland and Angus. Dundee provides the majority of in-migrants to Angus, with Aberdeenshire and Perth and Kinross also sources of Angus' in migrants. The Borders has a strong reliance on Edinburgh City for migrants, with weaker reliance on West Lothian, East Lothian and Glasgow. Dumfries and Galloway has in-migration linkages to Glasgow and Edinburgh and also has relationships with South Lanarkshire, East Ayrshire and South Ayrshire. East Ayrshire and South Ayrshire have close migration linkages, with both also relying on Glasgow and North Ayrshire for migrants. Moray has strong linkages to its neighbouring rural LAs, Highland and Aberdeenshire. Highland LA is an important source of migrants for Eilean Siar and Orkney with Eilean Siar also having strong linkages to Glasgow. Argyll and Bute has the strongest in-migration relationship with Glasgow but also relies on migrants from West Dunbartonshire and Highland.

**Figure 5: Social Network Analysis of in-migration to rural Local Authorities from within Scotland, average 2006-2011**



are really important sources of in-migration, there is a lot of rural-to-rural migration as well, with a third of all moves being from one rural LA to another. Moray (54%), the Orkney Islands (49%) and Eilean Siar (44%) had very high proportions of in-migrants from rural LAs. The Highlands, Aberdeenshire and the Ayrshires are the biggest generators of rural-to-rural migration. The structures of migration networks in the north and in the south are quite different to one another. The southern structures resemble what are known as 'nested networks':

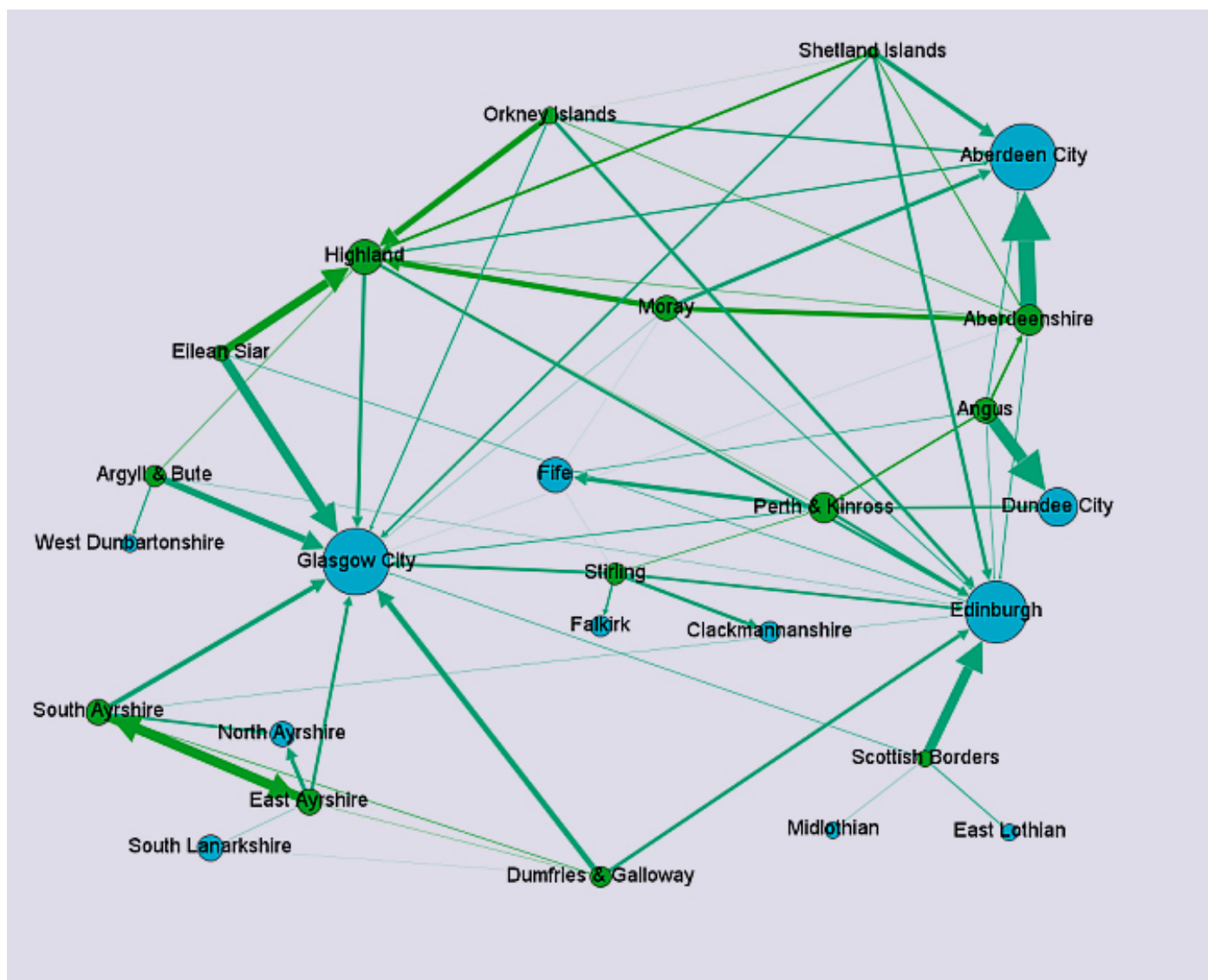
- The Scottish Borders has its own small regional network in the South East with only a small link across to Glasgow to disturb the self-contained feel of that network. Likewise, the Ayrshires and Dumfries and Galloway form their own small regional network as does Stirling with its surrounding areas.
- In contrast, the sub-network across the North (Highlands, Orkney, Shetland, Moray), and (to a lesser extent) Aberdeenshire and Eilean Siar, is more complex and densely interconnected.

There is a lot of human capital exchange between the rural north, while the south is much more city-oriented meaning that rural development in the north is far less likely than southern rural development to be a flow-on from urban development.

As discussed in 2010 and 2012 editions of *Rural Scotland in Focus*, rural outmigration is often young people migrating to urban areas for education or employment (see Chapter 2 for a detailed discussion). Figure 6 shows the Social Network Analysis of out-migration from Scotland's rural LAs revealing the inter-LA linkages and their relative importance as proportion of total out migrations (size of arrow). Out-migrants from Eilean Siar largely migrate to Glasgow and Highland, with only minor linkages to Edinburgh. The majority of Borders out-migrants move to Edinburgh with some smaller movements to Midlothian and East Lothian. Aberdeenshire's out-migrants largely remain within the North East, with Aberdeen City being the most important destination, followed by Moray, although there are also links to Highlands, Shetland, Orkney and Edinburgh. Most out-migrants from Argyll and Bute move to Glasgow with less important links to Edinburgh, the Highlands and West Dunbartonshire. East and South Ayrshire are very inter-connected (as described above) and Dundee City is a very common destination for migrants from Angus.

The destination of 30% of all out-migrants from rural LAs is other rural LAs ranging from 51% in Moray and 48% in Orkney to only 22% in Stirling and 23% in the Borders. Generally the more distant from major conurbations the greater the rural-to-rural movements, although Ayrshire does appear to be an exception to this generalisation.

**Figure 6: Social Network Analysis of out-migration from rural local authorities, average 2006-2011**



Overall the networks are as complex one way as the other (there are 72 substantial connections for in-migration and 73 for out-migration). It may have been expected to find more concentrated out-migration (the stereotype is that everyone leaves rural to go urban) but there is a lot of rural to rural exchange, particularly in the north but also within Ayrshire. Nevertheless, there does appear to be stronger one-to-one relationships between rural origins and urban destinations for many rural LAs, whereas the in-migration spread for each rural LA is somewhat more dispersed. This simply reflects where young adults from rural areas go to for work or studies (e.g. Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen City soak up more of the migrants than they generate – see Chapter 2). In general, the ‘complex and diverse’ north and ‘relatively predictable south’ pattern appears in both in and out migration Social Network Analyses, but there are some exceptions:

- Angus is part of a more complex sub network for out-migration than for in-migration;
- Perth and Kinross is part of a more complex sub network for out-migration than for in-migration;
- Eilean Siar is part of a more complex sub-network for in-migration than for out-migration;
- Aberdeenshire is part of a more complex sub-network for in-migration than for out-migration.

Overall, in- and out-migration networks resemble one another, but there are differences, and these may be important in shaping the development of human capital. These networks may affect: prospects for return migration to rural areas (see Chapter 2); the potential to attract amenity migrants; where rural teachers, doctors, etc. might be recruited from, and formation and maintenance of social networks between rural and urban communities and consequently the attention to, and understanding of rural issues by, urban dwellers.

### Economic Activity

It is well documented that self-employment is higher in rural areas and Table 6 shows results from the 2011 census when the proportion of economically active people working for themselves in remote rural areas was nearly double (14.8%) the national average (7.5%). The rate of self-employment was also higher in accessible rural areas (11.6%), and small towns than in Scotland’s urban areas. This higher self employment explains the lower proportion of people engaged in full-time employment in remote rural areas (35.9% compared to national average of 39.6%). There is a slightly higher reliance on part-time employment in remote rural areas (14.4%) and further scrutiny of the data shows that this is influenced by a higher incidence of female part-time work in these areas, perhaps related to tourism activities. Unemployment levels were lowest in accessible rural areas (3.3%) and remote rural areas (3.4%) with urban areas having 5.2% unemployment.

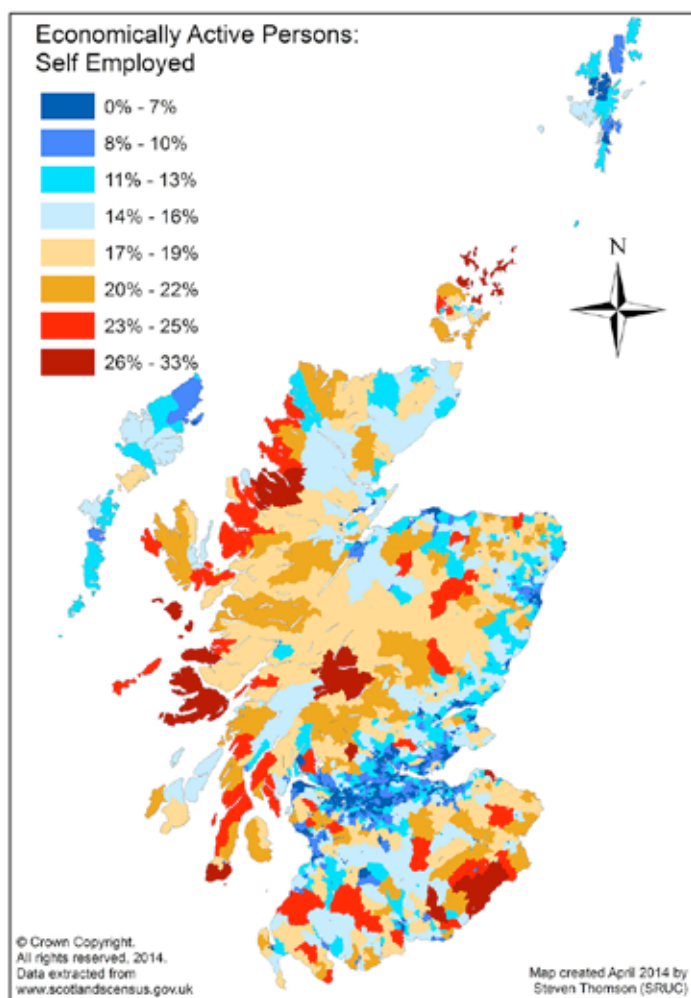
**Table 6: Number and proportion of economically active people by employment category, 2011**

Rural Urban	Self-employed		Unemployed		Employee: Full-time		Employee: Part-time	
Large Urban Areas	96,813	6.2%	80,739	5.2%	614,665	39.2%	187,991	12.0%
Other Urban Areas	72,834	6.0%	62,446	5.2%	491,801	40.7%	170,774	14.1%
Accessible Small Towns	24,188	7.4%	15,659	4.8%	131,355	40.2%	46,293	14.2%
Remote Small Towns	11,701	8.0%	6,407	4.4%	56,482	38.8%	23,162	15.9%
Accessible Rural Areas	54,772	11.6%	15,676	3.3%	188,557	40.1%	65,221	13.9%
Remote Rural Areas	37,385	14.8%	8,487	3.4%	90,556	35.9%	36,375	14.4%
Scotland	297,693	7.5%	189,414	4.8%	1,573,416	39.6%	529,816	13.3%

Whilst it is convenient to categorise by the Scottish Government six fold rural urban classification, Figure 7 shows that there were very wide ranging levels of self-employment across rural Scotland in 2011. It is noticeable that there are generally lower low levels of self-employment in the Outer Hebrides and Shetland, in many of the east coast areas between Perth and Peterhead and also in the east coast areas of Highland region. In contrast, there were very high levels of self-employment in Wester Ross coastal communities, the Small Isles, Mull and Ardamurchran peninsula, in the Borders around Hawick and Jedburgh and parts of the Campbeltown peninsula. Similar disparities in the levels of part-time and full-time employment across rural areas also exist with, for example, very high levels of part-time employment in much of Shetland and in areas around Dingwall and Evanton, North Connell, etc. This reiterates the considerable diversity within rural Scotland, even within administrative regions, an issue explored fully in Chapter 3.



**Figure 7: Proportion of economically active people that are self employed 2011**



Beyond human health and social work activities (about 14% of employees) wholesale and retail trade, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles, construction, agriculture forestry and fishing and accommodation and food services were very important sources of employment in rural Scotland in 2011 as shown in Table 7. In remote rural Scotland wholesale and retail trade etc. accounted for 12% of all employees with 13.6% of accessible rural employees engaged in the sector. Whilst these figures are indeed lower than the national average it remains a significant employer of the rural workforce. The construction sector is also very important employing 9.8% of the remote rural workforce and 8.9% of the accessible rural workforce and as both are higher than the national average (as are small towns) it means that these areas are perhaps at higher risk from the construction downturn experienced since the recession (especially as new build house completions continue to fall as discussed earlier). Remote (8.7%) and accessible (5.6%) rural areas, unsurprisingly, have a higher reliance on primary sector employment compared to the national average of 2%. Whilst remote rural areas (9.1%) and remote small towns (7.8%) have higher than average reliance on employment in accommodation and food services (tourism) sectors it is noteworthy that accessible rural areas (5.4%) and accessible small towns (5.4%) have lower than average reliance on these sectors for employment, perhaps a result of lower reliance on tourism for these economies.

**Table 7: Number and proportion of employees by sector, 2011**

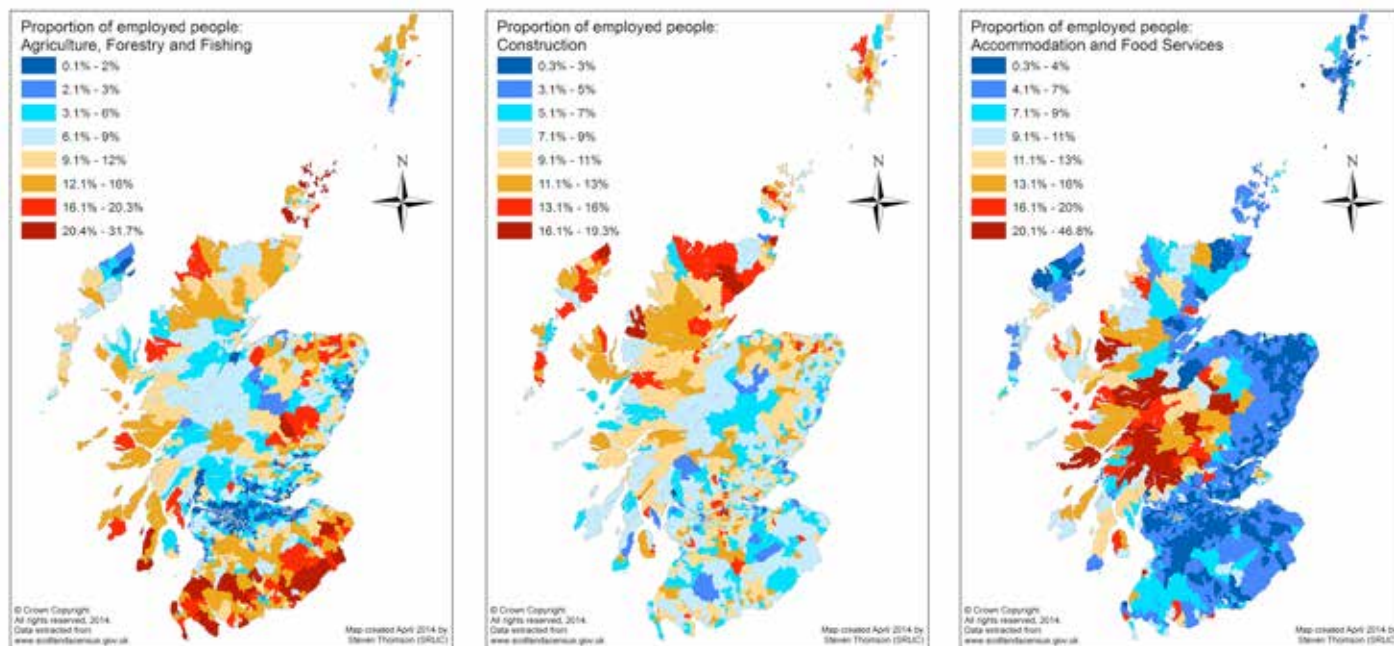
Rural / Urban	Agriculture, forestry & fishing		Construction		Accommodation & food service activities		Wholesale & retail trade, repair of motor vehicles & motorcycles	
Large Urban Areas	3,057	0.3%	64,762	6.7%	66,103	6.9%	141,986	14.8%
Other Urban Areas	8,495	1.1%	62,082	8.1%	42,463	5.5%	124,964	16.3%
Accessible Small Towns	3,586	1.7%	19,273	9.2%	11,306	5.4%	31,462	15.1%
Remote Small Towns	2,791	3.0%	9,326	9.9%	7,315	7.8%	14,717	15.7%
Accessible Rural Areas	17,754	5.6%	28,378	8.9%	15,749	4.9%	43,302	13.6%
Remote Rural Areas	14,579	8.7%	16,522	9.8%	15,239	9.1%	20,191	12.0%
Scotland	50,262	2.0%	200,343	8.0%	158,175	6.3%	376,622	15.0%

As with self-employment there is considerable regional and local variation in sectoral employment levels. Figure 8 shows how there are very wide regional variations in sectoral employment with the south of Scotland, Orkney, Campbeltown peninsula, Bute and parts of the North East having particularly high reliance on agriculture, forestry and fishing sectors. Many of these regions are at highest risk from the 2015 CAP reform package which will see a redistribution of support payments away from these more intensively farmed, productive regions to less intensively farmed regions. Redistribution of support payments from these regions may therefore have knock-on effects on employment as farmers restructure their activities. Consequences of the regionalisation of CAP<sup>11</sup> and its potential to lower support payments (especially for intensively farmed areas) could be most significantly felt in these economies with high reliance on primary sector employment. The north of Scotland, Shetland and Western Isles appear to have greater reliance on the construction sector meaning these areas are likely to have felt the recession and its immediate impact on construction projects the greatest. Those areas may, however, have had greater resilience to the recession and local construction projects may have continued, or alternatively there has simply been less scope for these employees to transfer their skills to other sectors.

Perhaps the most striking regional dimension to sectoral employment is that of the accommodation and food service sector where there is a very obvious region stretching from Argyll through Stirling to the Cairngorms and up to Wester Ross and Skye where there is a high reliance on tourism sector. These areas are the ones most vulnerable to downturns in the tourism sector and the vagaries of exchange rates and world politics. As it happens, in many areas the recession has actually led to increased domestic tourism as Scottish (and UK) citizens opted more for "staycations" rather than choosing to holiday abroad.

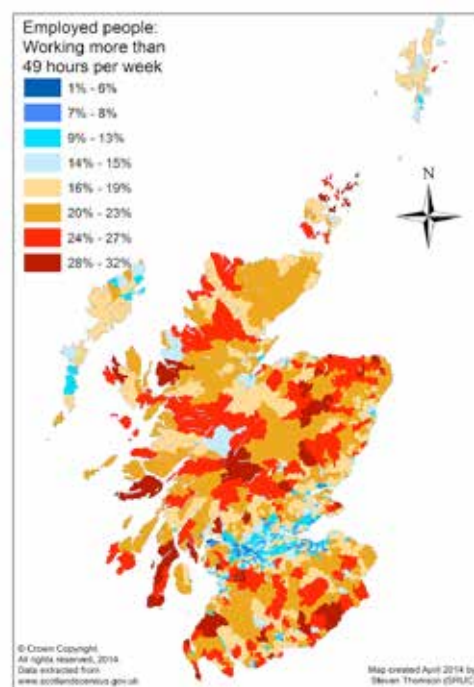


**Figure 8: Proportion of employees engaged in agriculture, forestry fishing, construction and accommodation and food service sectors 2011**



It is perhaps also worth noting that many of these sectors of employment important to rural areas of Scotland require manual activity (primary sector and construction) or working anti-social hours (tourism). Figure 9 reveals that indeed across most of rural Scotland there is a much higher proportion of employees working on average more than 49 hours per week when compared to urban areas. When male employment is considered in isolation the difference and rates are considerably higher. This high level of required labour may impact on social activities reducing the opportunities for recreation for these workers.

**Figure 9 Proportion of employees working more than 49 hours per week 2011**



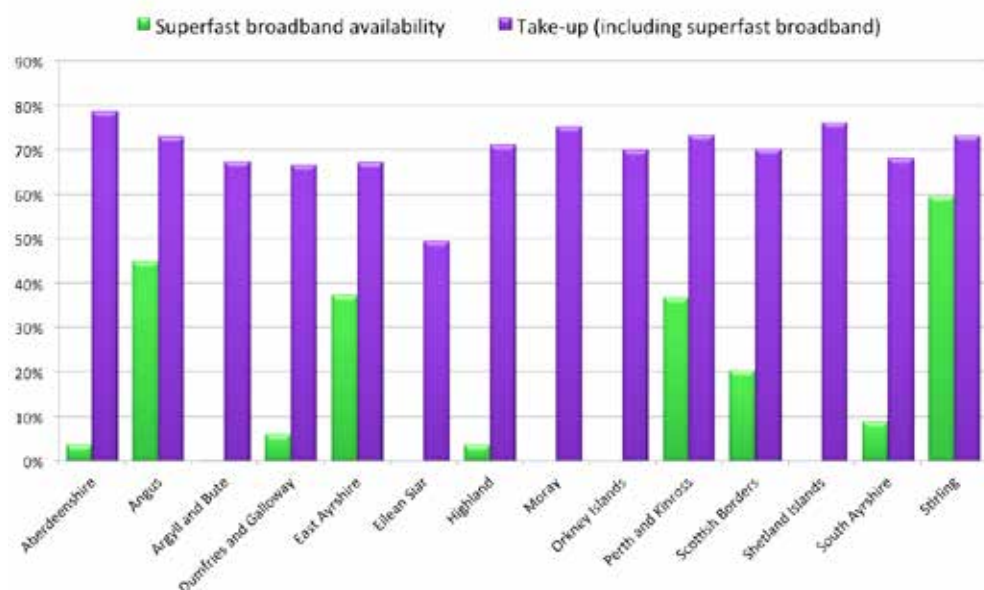
## High Speed Broadband

In the 2012 *Rural Scotland in Focus* report, the value of high speed broadband internet for rural Scotland was documented, and the relatively low levels of broadband availability and take-up in rural Scotland were highlighted. Since that report was written, there has been substantial political attention given to, and investment in, provision of high speed broadband for rural Scotland. Initiatives include Community Broadband Scotland<sup>12</sup>, and the Digital Scotland Superfast Broadband project<sup>13</sup>. The Scottish Government's vision is for Scotland to be a world leader in digital participation by individuals and businesses by 2020<sup>14</sup>.

Ofcom<sup>15</sup>, the independent regulator and competition authority for communications industries in the UK, maintains a database of statistics relating to broadband access and take-up in LAs across the UK. In 2011, an average of 57% of buildings in UK LAs had access to broadband. The average in rural Scotland LAs was about 20%. By 2013, the UK average had increased to 69%, but the average in Scotland's rural LAs remained about 20%. Across the UK, over one quarter of addresses (residential and business) which had access to high-speed broadband had taken up access, compared with 17% of addresses in rural Scotland which had access. This is despite overall take-up of internet (including superfast broadband) being around 70% for both the UK in total and for rural Scotland. Figure 10 shows the percentage of addresses that had taken up any form of internet service in 2013, and the percentage of addresses that had access to high speed broadband services. What is interesting is that take-up is no higher in the rural LAs which have superfast broadband availability. This might mean that there are other barriers (like cost, convenience, and the type of packages available) to take-up, or that demand is high irrespective of the level of service available.



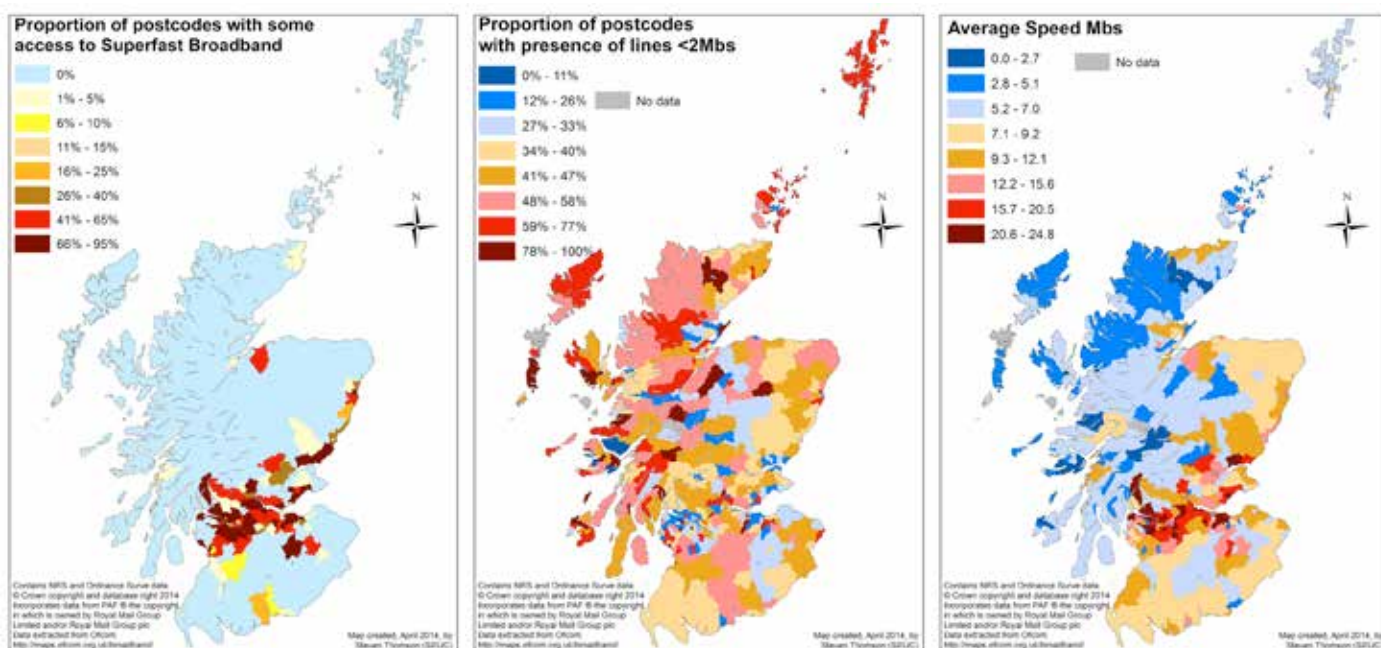
**Figure 10: Availability of superfast broadband and take-up of internet services in Scotland's rural Local Authorities 2013** <sup>16</sup>



The Ofcom data on fixed broadband provision for the UK is available at postcode level <sup>17</sup> based on data provided by SamKnows Limited <sup>18</sup>. SamKnows have a panel of residential broadband users with internet monitoring equipment installed. In order to map this panel, sample average figures for all postcodes within a postcode district (e.g. PH20) were extracted. Ofcom acknowledges <sup>19</sup> that despite connection speeds increasing at a faster rate in rural areas of the UK compared to urban “the impact of increased superfast take-up on average rural broadband speeds has been less pronounced, because fewer consumers have upgraded to these services due to the lower availability of fibre and cable services

in rural areas”. For each postcode a binary (yes, no) code was available for whether the postcode had access to superfast broadband <sup>20</sup> and whether it had lines with speeds of less than 2 Mbits per second. Figure 11 shows that the vast majority of rural Scotland has no access to superfast broadband and scrutiny of BT OpenReach data <sup>21</sup> revealed that at the time of writing there were only 41 exchanges in rural LAs with superfast broadband fibre installed. Figure 11 also shows that a high proportion of the postcodes in the SamKnows databases had some lines with speeds of less than 2Mbs. This poor connectivity was generally higher in the more peripheral rural areas of Scotland (although care must be taken in interpreting this map as it is only a small sample of the households, and any household in a postcode with connection speed less than 2Mbs means it is included in this category, even if others have higher connection speeds). For the average speed there were some postcodes where there was no data on internet speeds because (a) there were no recorded premises in the database, (b) there were insufficient premises (less than 3) to protect anonymity, (c) there was insufficient data on broadband connections to protect anonymity, or (d) there was no data available (e.g. the largest Internet Service Providers do not service the area or there is no broadband connection). Bearing that in mind, Figure 11 shows the average broadband speed of the SamKnows panel members for each postcode aggregated to postcode district. Again there is a clear rural-urban divide with average connection speeds generally the lowest in the North and West, although areas of Lanarkshire and the Borders, despite being relatively accessible to the Central Belt, also have low average connectivity rates.

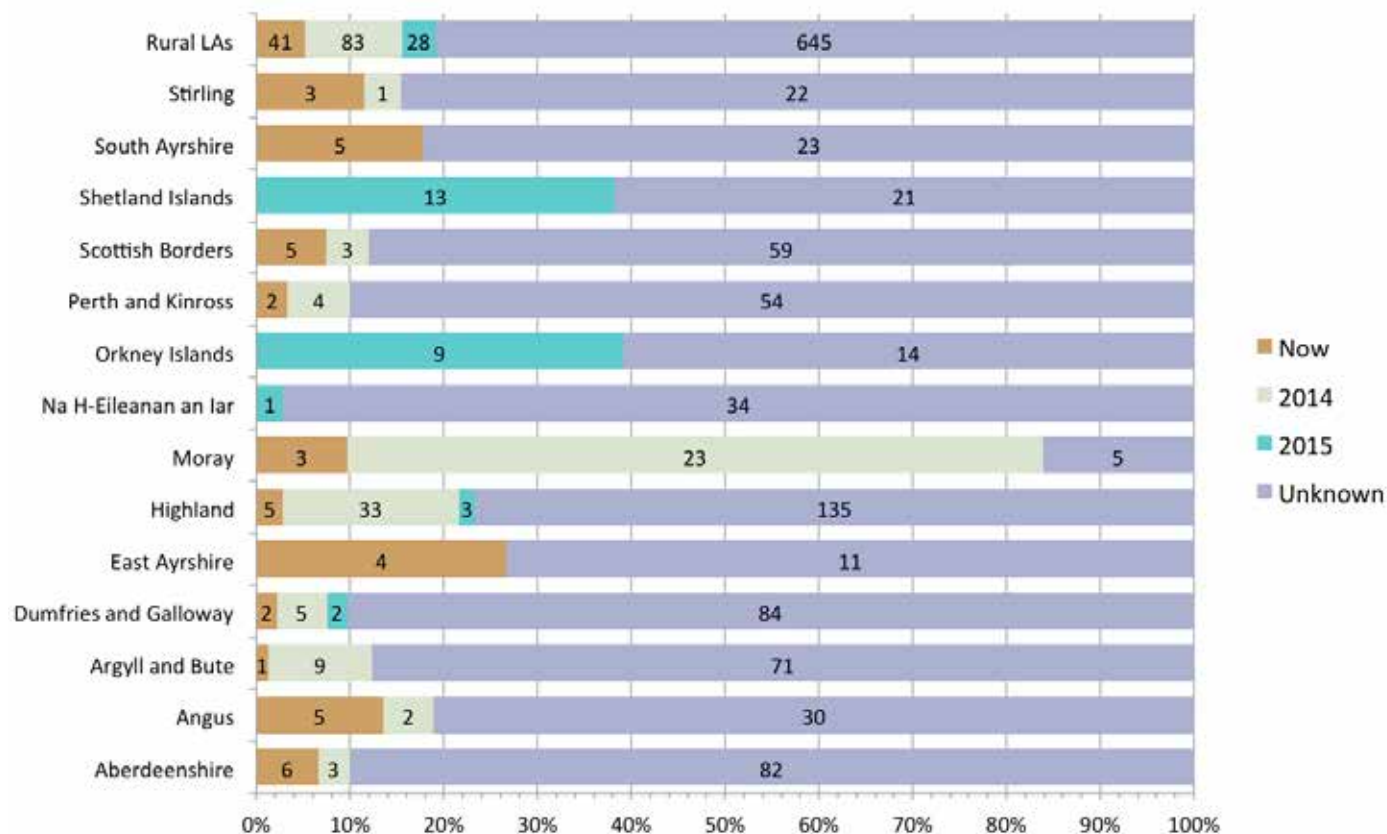
**Figure 11: Average postcode internet connection speeds, access to superfast broadband and speeds of less than 2Mbs 2013**



The Royal Society of Edinburgh <sup>22</sup> through their “Spreading the Benefits of Digital Participation” report call for universal digital inclusion rights, discussing how digital exclusion is linked to deprivation. They argue digital technologies are transformative and that rural areas have greater needs for internet access, as greater value is placed on it across Scotland’s small towns and rural areas compared to urban areas and point to the emergence of “digital refugees” who may leave remote rural areas in search of improved connectivity.

Figure 12<sup>23</sup> shows the progress to date and planned future upgrading of rural LA exchanges to superfast broadband as Government and private sector commitment to investing in these services starts to come to fruition. From these figures, it is evident that much of the current focus is in Moray and the Highlands (45 upgraded exchanges expected in 2014) with greater emphasis on completing the upgrades of exchanges in Orkney (9) and Shetland (13) in 2015. The current planned programme means that by the end of 2015 there will be 152 exchanges (from a total of 797) in rural LAs with superfast broadband capabilities. It is noticeable that to date, much of the work has been ongoing in the Highlands and Islands and this is a direct result of the £146 million fibre broadband project being led by Highlands and Islands Enterprise and delivered by BT (who predict by 2017 84% of homes and businesses in the region will have fibre broadband). A £264 million partnership, led by the Scottish Government, was announced in July 2013 to improve the broadband infrastructure in the rest of Scotland. It is estimated that with these two programmes, coupled with commercial investment, 85% of Scottish properties will have access to fibre broadband by the end of 2015 and around 95% by the end of 2017<sup>24</sup>. However, Figure 12 shows there is considerable progress to be made in updating the infrastructure for this ambition to be achieved (other than in Moray where by 2016 over 90% of the exchanges are anticipated to have been upgraded).

**Figure 12: Current and future provision of superfast broadband in rural Local Authority exchanges**



The key points that we made in regards to superfast broadband issues in rural Scotland in the 2012 *Rural Scotland in Focus* report remain pertinent in 2014. While recent developments are welcome, rural Scotland is beginning its entry into the digital society and the digital economy from a very low starting point, and there will be substantial challenges in including rural Scotland in the Scottish Government's vision for the country to be a world leading digital nation by the end of this decade.



## Conclusions

The downturn in the construction sector, and in particular private sector housing, since the recession is well documented<sup>25</sup>. Whilst the decline in private sector new builds between 2008 and 2013 was smaller in rural LAs (49%) compared to urban LAs (59%) the construction sector in urban LAs areas benefited from higher (4.5%) housing association new build completions whilst the rural LAs saw long term and dramatic decline (68%) in housing association completions. With only 20.6% house completions from housing associations in rural local authorities in 2013 (compared to 26.8% in urban LAs) it is important that public sector monies for social housing are spread evenly to ensure the rural construction sector receives some much needed stimulus and ensure long term housing needs are met, particularly the provision of affordable housing in the right locations, as recognised by the Scottish Government as a priority in Our Rural Future<sup>26</sup>.

Between the 2001 and 2011 census years there was considerable growth in many small settlements across the rural LAs of Scotland. Future expansion of some of these small settlements requires careful planning, particularly with regard to service provision and the pressures these new residents may place on the local infrastructure. Despite the general growth there were a number of settlements that were exposed to declining populations and understanding the causal factors will be important if these small settlements are not to be put at risk of further decline. There are a proportion of settlements with aged populations which may require changing service needs, and attracting younger families to these settlements may be a challenge in the future. The impact of defence sector policies on settlements was evident from the analysis and it is important where there are major employment changes (private or public) that full impact assessments are conducted and support given to assessing future opportunities (e.g. the Moray Task Force<sup>27</sup>).

There is greater human capital exchange in the rural LAs of the north compared to the southern rural LAs which are much more city oriented. This has implications in terms of development being more likely to flow from urban areas in the South through, for example part of the urban workforce choosing to relocate in rural LAs, bring with them urban derived incomes. In the north, there may be greater return migration to rural areas post urban education and employment (particularly to raise families) and the migration networks may be important in recruitment of essential professionals, such as doctors, dentists, teachers, etc. Greater understanding of these migration networks by age groupings may improve LAs understanding of population dynamics and the likelihood of future changes occurring.

There were considerably higher levels of self employment in rural areas and whilst this may be seen as a positive sign of entrepreneurship, there have been concerns<sup>28</sup> raised since the start of the recession that some of these people perhaps do not have a choice in becoming self employed, rather they do it out of necessity to avoid having to sign on. Stephen Boyd, STUC assistant secretary, told Holyrood's Economy Committee in 2013 that *"The evidence suggests people are not making an enthusiastic choice to start working for themselves. They're trying to scratch a living doing what they previously did as employed individuals. They tend to be earning less. They tend to be working less hours, paying less tax"*<sup>29</sup>. The importance of primary sector, construction sector and accommodation and food sector employment has very strong regional variations across rural Scotland and current and future impacts to these sectors (e.g. the recession and construction sector, CAP reform and primary sector, exchange rates and tourism sector) may have major impacts in these local economies. Ensuring these economies have diversified portfolios of employment in the future should be increasingly important to ensure that downturn in a single sector does not have significant adverse impacts on the economic prospects of the area.

The Scottish Government is committed to improving broadband access to rural areas<sup>30</sup> and considerable private and public investment is already ongoing to introduce superfast broadband to rural homes and businesses. Internet connectivity remains poor for many rural dwellers and the prospect of significantly improved services may reduce some people choosing to migrate from rural areas in search of adequate connectivity (for social and work reasons). There are likely to be other barriers to the take-up of broadband (like cost, convenience, attitudes, skills, and the type of packages available) in many rural areas and the challenge for the Scottish Government will be to ensure that rural Scotland is fully included in its vision for the country to be a world leading digital nation by the end of this decade given the low digital starting point many of our remote rural locations have.



## 2. Young People Contributing to a Vibrant Rural Scotland

Jane Atterton and Ellie Brodie

### Key points

1. Overall, Scotland's rural population is ageing as young people leave and older people move in. Sitting behind this general trend is considerable variation in migration patterns across the 17-30 age range and across Scotland's rural areas.
2. Exploring youth migration patterns at Local Authority level demonstrates these variations both geographically and by age group but also reveals four general area 'types':
  - Positive net-migration of 'older young people' aged 26 and 30 (e.g. Aberdeenshire and Perth and Kinross)
  - High population churn (high in- and out-migration) amongst young people of all ages (e.g. Stirling)
  - Low population churn (i.e. low in- and out-migration) amongst young people of all ages (e.g. East Ayrshire)
  - Negative net-migration of 'younger young people' aged 18 and 21 (e.g. Western Isles, Orkney).
3. Migration patterns amongst young people matter. While some young people have access to resources and capacity which give them a choice about where to live, others do not, and may be at greater risk of exclusion if they remain in their rural locality. In-migrants and return migrants bring a range of benefits to the communities to which they move and population growth is part of the Scottish Government's Economic Strategy.
4. Similar factors may push young people to leave rural Scotland as those which may result in them being socially excluded: poor employment and education opportunities; a lack of (affordable) housing; poor transport provision and leisure opportunities; and negative perceptions and stereotypes.
5. Scottish Government policies place considerable importance on improving the health and wellbeing of young people and their participation in the labour market. In terms of rural areas, emphasis is placed on building sustainable communities and improving the opportunities for young people who choose to remain in rural Scotland.
6. A number of policy messages emerge from this section, including the need for:
  - tailored and flexible policies to meet the individualised nature of young people's decision to migrate out of rural areas;
  - continued support to improve young peoples' participation in the labour market;
  - joined-up, holistic and cross-sectoral interventions that recognise the interplay between the issues, e.g. between transport and employment;
  - empowering and engaging young people across a range of activities in their communities;
  - facilitating the creation of rural communities with balanced demographic profiles through encouraging and supporting return migrants (of any age) to Scotland's rural communities.



## Introduction

In recent years the number of people migrating into rural Scotland has been higher than the number of people migrating out, leading to overall population growth. However, there are considerable geographical differences in migration patterns, with remote areas generally experiencing lower levels of in-migration than accessible rural areas, and differences across age groups, with young people leaving rural Scotland while older people move in.

There is a large amount of existing evidence focusing on two particular aspects of the lives of young people in rural Scotland. First, the reasons why young people leave rural Scotland in significant numbers and, second, the factors that may push young people to become socially excluded. Our review of this literature reveals that, although the importance of different factors will vary between individuals, the primary drivers for both processes are the same, with lack of access to varied employment and education opportunities and (affordable) housing, and poor and costly transport provision, being the key issues which can lead to young people becoming excluded or leaving. The difference, however, can perhaps be viewed in terms of the varying resources and capacities that young people have access to in making their choice to stay or to leave in response to these challenges.



These issues are explored in this chapter, alongside data on the distribution and migration patterns of young people of different ages across rural Scotland. This analysis clearly demonstrates the varying distribution of young people at local level across rural Scotland, the different geographies of youth out-migration and the variations in migration patterns across young people of different ages.

Through a series of case studies and a discussion of current policies to support young people and create more resilient rural communities, we argue that rather than seeking to retain young people in rural Scotland - a policy goal which we suggest is simplistic, unrealistic and undesirable - a more sophisticated and appropriate policy response is needed. Such a policy response would support young people to live well, whether in rural or urban Scotland, by equipping them with the necessary opportunities, choices, skills and knowledge to make informed decisions about their future.

Policies to attract return migrants, including young people who have been away to study or work or older people, are likely to bring benefits for rural communities. For young people who stay in rural Scotland, and for those who leave and then return, we argue that the focus should be on enhancing their opportunities to contribute fully to achieving a vibrant rural Scotland, whether that is in terms of economic, social or cultural activities.

This section focuses on young people aged 17 to 30. However, it is acknowledged that, even amongst a group of young people of the same age, there are considerable differences. Young people in this broad age range are at a crucial point in their lives, completing their education and deciding what to do with their future, they are finding their roles as adults and building relationships and social skills<sup>1</sup>. Their migrating or staying experiences will vary according to a range of factors, including the characteristics of their area and their own social background, gender, family circumstances, resources, attitudes, preferences and ambitions.

The Chapter begins by mapping the distribution across Scotland of young people in four age ranges (0-16, 17-21, 22-25 and 26-30) to illustrate how the demographic profiles of different rural and urban areas vary. It then reviews existing literature on the reasons for youth out-migration and on the factors which may lead to young people becoming excluded. We then present Local Authority (LA) level data on migration flows of young people at four specific ages: 18, 21, 26 and 30. Based on the existing body of literature which explains the migration patterns of rural young people, we then present selected socio-economic data to suggest possible reasons for four migration patterns 'types' that we observe in the LA data. The Chapter concludes by drawing on case studies and a review of policies to make suggestions about policy responses to addressing the challenges of the migratory patterns of young people in Scotland.

## The geographical distribution of young people across Scotland

**Table 1: The distribution of young people aged 0-30 years old using the six-fold urban-rural classification 2011**

Rural-Urban	% of total population				Total people
	0-16	17-21	22-26	27-30	
1 Large Urban	17.4	7.9	8.6	6.5	2,052,263
2 Other Urban	19.1	6.5	6.3	4.9	1,622,338
3 Accessible Small Towns	19.4	5.8	5.4	4.3	443,601
4 Remote Small Towns	18.4	5.7	5.7	4.4	200,766
5 Accessible Rural Areas	20.0	5.3	4.5	3.7	635,006
6 Remote Rural Areas	18.4	4.7	4.2	3.4	341,429
Total	18.5	6.7	6.7	5.2	5,295,403

Source: Scotland's Census 2011, National Records of Scotland.

Table 1 clearly demonstrates that, although (particularly accessible) rural areas and small towns on average have relatively high proportions of children aged 0-16, they have much lower proportions of people aged 17-21, 22-26 and 27-30 than Scotland's urban centres. The decline in the proportions of young people through the classification from urban to rural areas is particularly marked for the 22-26 age group.

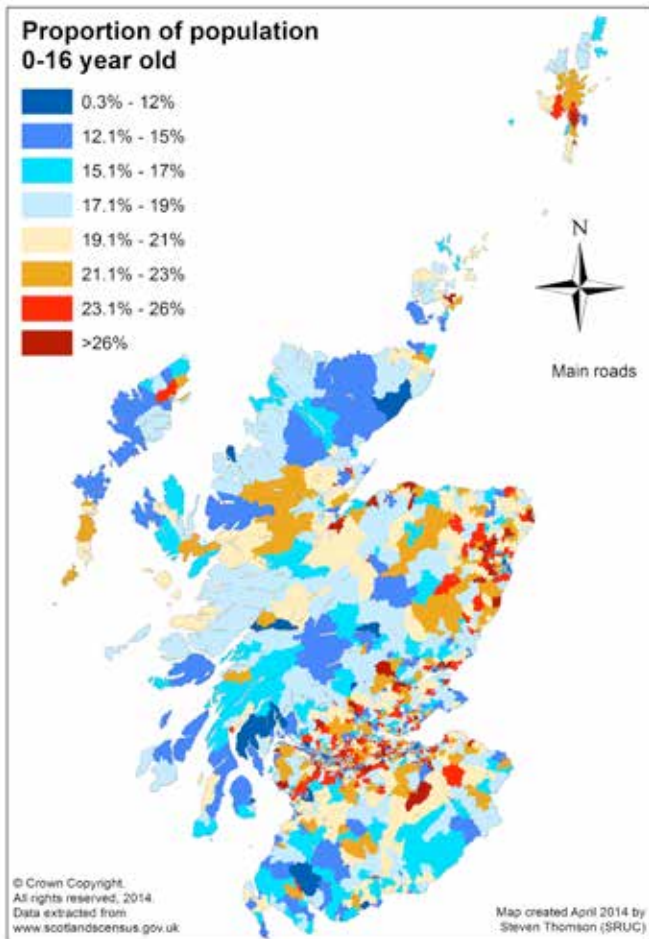


Figure 1

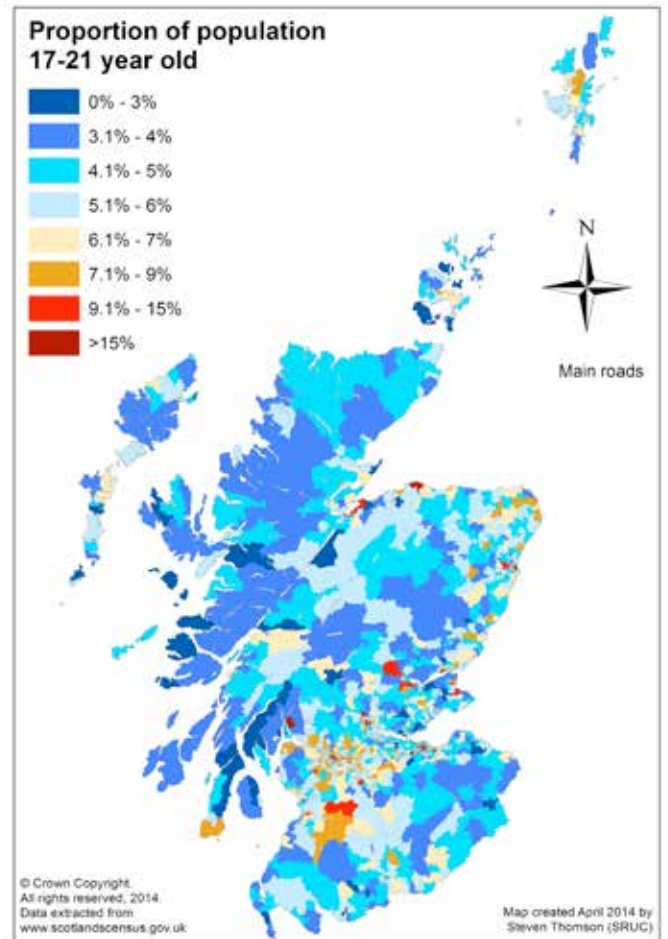


Figure 2

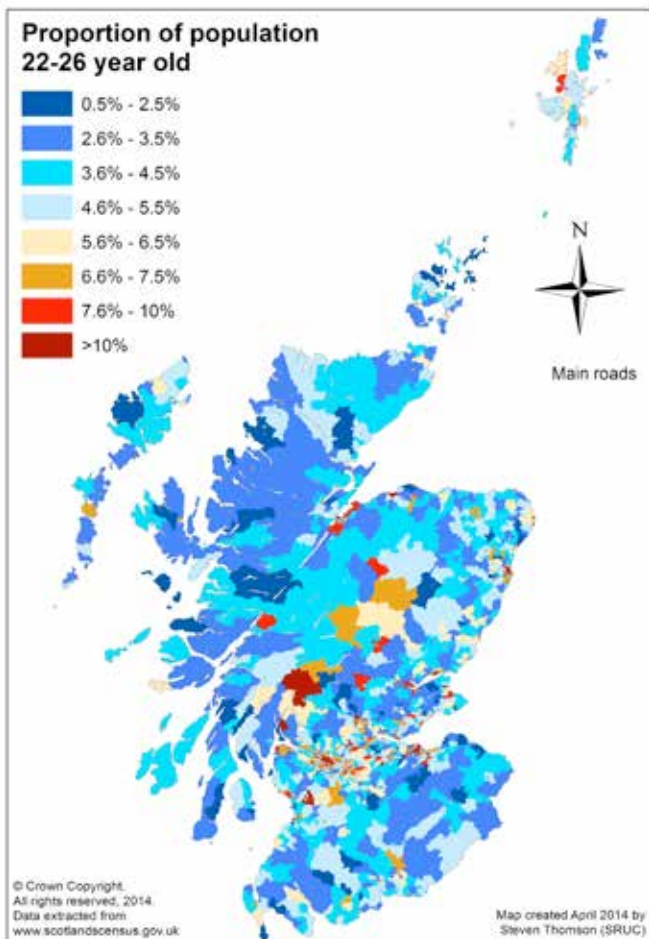


Figure 3

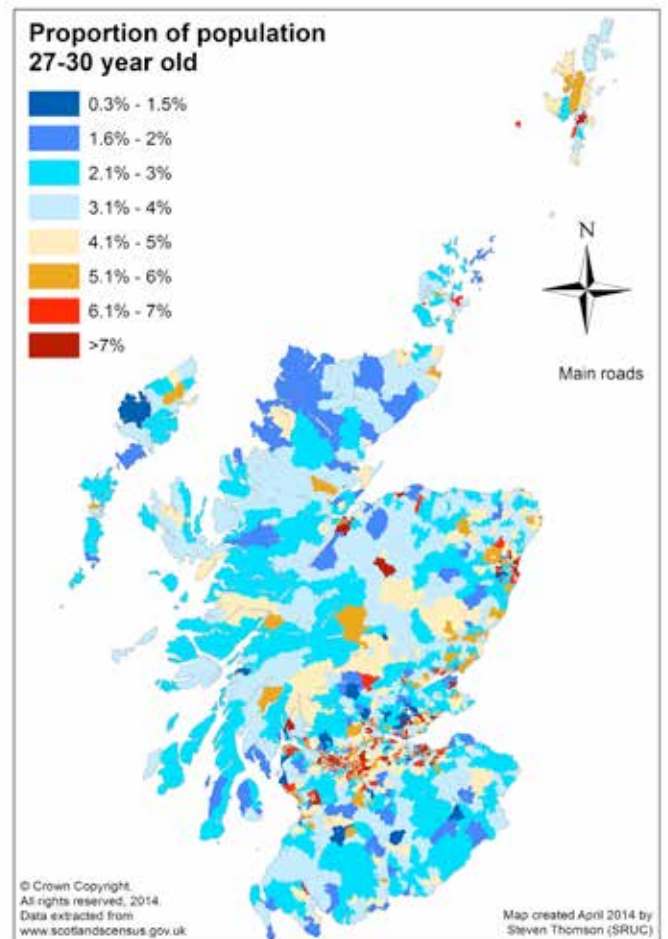


Figure 4

Figures 1-4 show the proportions of people aged 0-16, 17-21, 22-25 and 26-30 in the population of all datazones across rural and urban Scotland. These age bands have been chosen to reflect stages of the lifecourse (recognising that these will vary across individuals), from childhood, to entering training or further/higher education, to finishing education and entering the job market, to moving up the career ladder and starting, or preparing to start, a family.

The different distributions of these age groups are clear from the maps, with rural areas across Scotland demonstrating a good deal of variation, but particularly low proportions of people aged 17-21 and 22-26. Figure 1 suggests a generally high proportion of people aged 0-16 in accessible rural areas, in the main in the 'commuting belts' surrounding Scotland's urban centres, while many remote rural areas in Highland, the west coast and in the South of Scotland demonstrate much lower proportions. At local level, parts of Orkney and Shetland for example demonstrate higher proportions of people aged 0-16 years old.

Figures 2 and 3 demonstrate the low proportions of people aged 17-21 and 22-26 in much of rural Scotland, again with the exception of some accessible rural areas around Scotland's urban centres and localities in Stirling, Argyll and Bute and Perth and Kinross. In Figure 4 the picture is slightly different for rural Scotland with more rural datazones demonstrating higher proportions of people in the 26-30 age category (i.e. between 4 and 6% of their populations), including in Shetland, Orkney, Moray, Aberdeenshire and South Ayrshire.

Having illustrated the variations in the proportions of young people across the 17-30 age range in the population of localities across Scotland, we now turn to reviewing the literature on young peoples' migration behaviour in rural Scotland and on the factors that may push those that stay into exclusion. This review identifies key socio-economic characteristics which may help to explain the migration patterns observed across Scotland's rural LA areas.

## The reasons for youth out-migration and the social exclusion of young people

There is a significant body of literature, from Scotland and the UK as well as internationally, which explores the reasons why young people leave rural areas<sup>2</sup>, and the factors that lead to them becoming excluded should they stay in rural areas. At a time when young people are making important decisions about their future, there is a high likelihood that they will move away to pursue education or employment route/s, and a real danger that if they stay local, they may become excluded from the labour market or education opportunities, or indeed from local community activity more broadly. This part of the Chapter discusses the key findings of this literature, structured according to a number of key themes: employment and education; access to housing, transport and services, and perceptions, attitudes and stereotypes.

### Employment and Education Opportunities

A young person's decision to move away from home in rural Scotland may be due to a complex set of circumstances and factors relating to themselves as individuals as well as their family and the wider local community. Despite the individualised nature of the decision to move away, most of the existing evidence emphasises a particularly strong association between the out-migration of young people from rural areas, and a desire to take advantage of higher education opportunities and to find graduate employment or 'good jobs'<sup>3</sup>. This is particularly the case for young women who are oriented to further and higher education in higher numbers than young men. These opportunities are generally far more readily available in urban areas, and the cost of public and private transport to commute to them if an individual remains in rural Scotland can be prohibitive. Young people in urban areas also face challenges when it comes to participating in the labour market with secure, well-paid employment or on adequate training schemes, particularly when economic conditions are difficult. However, research suggests that there is a specific rural dimension to this issue



with young people in rural areas facing particular (and often long-term) barriers to accessing education and employment<sup>4</sup>, including inadequate transport infrastructure, poor access to careers advice, employment and training support, adequate benefits and youth services, and the nature of the rural business population, with a dominance of micro businesses and one-person enterprises where training and career progression opportunities are limited (also referenced in Chapter 3 on rural poverty and disadvantage).

A detailed study of young people in the Highlands and Islands in 2009<sup>5</sup>, for example, found that young peoples' concerns were largely around the (poor) economic opportunities that they perceived to be available in the region – including a lack of well-paid employment choices and limited opportunities for career progression - and the lack of opportunities to access further and higher education in their local areas. In this study, 86% of school leavers who planned to move to other parts of Scotland from the Highlands and Islands expected to do so to enter higher or further education, making this the prime motivator for leaving the region.

Individuals may therefore be faced with a stark and far from easy choice to leave their home rural area to access (better) education and employment opportunities or to remain in the local labour market. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation's Action in Rural Areas programme found that: 'young people from rural areas become integrated into one of two quite separate labour markets – the national (distant, well-paid with career opportunities) and the local (poorly paid, insecure, unrewarding and with fewer prospects). Education, and of course, social class, are elements which allow some people to access national job opportunities, in the same way as those from urban areas. But for those whose educational credentials trap them within local labour markets, further education and training are much less available than for their counterparts in towns, and their life-chances are reduced'<sup>6</sup>.



For those who cannot leave to access new opportunities, the risk is that they become reliant on low qualified, low paid, insecure and often part-time or seasonal jobs locally with limited progression opportunities, leaving them at risk of exclusion. A poor employment situation, including having periods out of work, has negative implications for an individual's (and their family's) wellbeing and quality of life as well as placing additional burdens on the welfare system. Moreover, the opportunities for young people to upgrade skills and take up training (including apprenticeships) may be more limited in rural Scotland. This is because employment and training support and advice providers face barriers in delivering programmes, due to transport limitations and the small numbers of customers and businesses, and due to the small size of rural businesses, making it harder for employers to release young people to attend college or training. Higher costs for providers may translate into more limited, lower quality, more expensive provision for users, particularly when budgets are becoming tighter <sup>7</sup>.

Evidence also suggests that there is a lower take up of benefits amongst rural (young) people due to a lack of understanding of benefits entitlements and the perceived complexity of claiming by those in seasonal or irregular employment. A further factor which discourages rural individuals from claiming benefits is the stigma that can be attached to this situation in rural areas, and the difficulty of remaining anonymous when populations are small. (The public nature of rural life and stigma associated with benefits or certain services is also reflected in Chapter 3).

Studies have explored the characteristics of 'stayers' and migrants, the factors at play in their decision-making processes, and the 'impacts' of migration on those who leave. 'Stayers' usually tend to be from local families with strong local connections, while migrants tend to be from families with a history of migration, extended family networks and a higher level of education <sup>8</sup>. Among those with similar academic ability, migrants are in better economic positions at age 23 than those who have stayed in their local rural area <sup>9</sup>. By this age, 'stayers' were found to have had much more labour market experience and to be further ahead in terms of family formation (or conversely to still be staying with their parents), but also to have experienced unemployment, be relying on low paid, low qualified work and less likely to have undertaken training. Many young people reported feeling discontent and trapped, as they have low transferable skills, and lack the training and skills to compete for jobs elsewhere. Many migrants indicated in this study that they would like to return but the local labour market fails to attract them back once they have gained educational qualifications. Often those who do return are from local families with strong local networks.

A lack of appropriate education and employment opportunities therefore represents a key structural barrier facing young people encouraging many to leave or resulting in the exclusion of at least some who remain locally. However, as we explore below, a set of factors often work in combination to lead to one of these two outcomes.

### Access to (affordable) housing

In addition to a shortage of education and employment opportunities, a shortage of housing, particularly affordable housing, is also often seen as a push factor encouraging young people to leave rural Scotland, or a factor which leads to young people becoming excluded. It may also be an important factor in discouraging young people and young families from returning to rural areas.

The supply of rental and owner occupied housing for all age groups is more constrained in rural Scotland (for a variety of reasons, including high numbers of vacant and second homes <sup>10</sup> and fluctuations in the number of public and private sector housing completions, as described in Chapter 1 of this report) resulting in higher average prices for both types of housing and putting it out of the reach of many local people. The enduring disparity in women's and men's earnings means that it is generally harder for women to purchase their own home, especially in rural areas where housing affordability is particularly poor (see Chapter 3). Families tend to be prioritised for LA and social housing, which may lead to reduced availability for young single people and couples. Young people may also lack a pool of peers with which to take on shared accommodation in rural areas, and there is a much lower level of provision for the homeless in rural areas <sup>11</sup>. Young people may find themselves staying temporarily with family and friends <sup>12</sup> or relying on caravans or short-term lets <sup>13</sup>.

In Highlands & Islands Enterprise's (HIE's) 2009 study of young people in the Highlands and Islands, a lack of housing was of particular concern for older young people who were seeking to settle down in a career or family <sup>14</sup>. Our *Rural Scotland in Focus* 2010 and 2012 reports discussed the combined challenges faced in some rural localities in Scotland where house prices are high and the supply of housing is low, often due to a low number of houses being built combined with high levels of second or holiday home ownership and empty homes.

### Access to affordable, reliable transport provision

Poor and expensive transport infrastructure, both public and private, is a key factor which can lead to the exclusion of young people from the education system and/or the labour market. The report of the Scottish Youth Parliament's (SYP's) October 2010 session organised to discuss the Scottish Government's *Speak up for Rural Scotland* report <sup>15</sup> highlighted transport for young people - and particularly the lack of affordable and regular public transport - as being a major concern across rural Scotland, not just from rural areas to nearby big cities, but also between neighbouring towns. This ongoing concern regarding transport as a critical short-term issue to resolve was echoed during discussion at a recent meeting of the Transport, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee of the Scottish Youth Parliament.





## Scottish Youth Parliament - Transport, Environment and Rural Affairs Subject Committee Meeting March 2014



On 22nd and 23rd March 2014, the Scottish Youth Parliament held its National Sitting in Stirling. The Parliament's Transport, Environment and Rural Affairs Subject Committee convened at this meeting, with approximately 12 Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs) in attendance. One of the co-authors of this chapter attended the Committee's meeting and discussed with Members the issues facing young people in rural Scotland to inform this section of the 2014 Rural Scotland in Focus report. The key issues discussed were:

- The persistence of the challenges facing young people in rural Scotland and a sense in which rural issues generally tend to be neglected at national level.
- Committee members agreed that transport is the key short-term issue facing young people in rural Scotland, particularly its cost, timing and (limited) frequency, the difficulties in travelling between key rural settlements (as well as in travelling from rural areas to urban centres to access different services at different times of day) and the lack of integration of different public transport services. All of these factors make it difficult for young people to access employment, education and leisure activities which impacts negatively on their quality of life.
- Thinking more long-term, key issues for young people are around access to (affordable housing) and good quality jobs to encourage them to stay in, or to return to, rural Scotland. The MSYPs agreed that these factors are critical in leading to high levels of out-migration amongst young people from parts of rural Scotland.
- The MSYPs in attendance at the Committee discussed the importance of cultural and family ties in encouraging young people to stay in or return to rural Scotland, even on a temporary basis. The 'Up Helly Aa Festival' in Shetland was mentioned as an important cultural event which attracts many young people back to the Islands. The Festival is a great opportunity for Shetland's young people to return, meet up and to celebrate the history and culture of the Islands.
- Committee members acknowledged that some developments had to some extent eased the challenges that young people face, including increased local higher education provision in rural Scotland (for example, through the Crichton Campus in Dumfries) and improved broadband provision in some rural areas which makes home working a more attractive option for some young people.

For more information on the SYP please see: [www.syp.org.uk](http://www.syp.org.uk)

Or contact Gareth Brown, Public Affairs Co-ordinator, SYP at: [gareth.b@syp.org.uk](mailto:gareth.b@syp.org.uk)

Evidence suggests that young people in rural areas are more dependent than their urban counterparts on public transport, particularly for accessing education and training<sup>16</sup>, but rural public transport tends to be more costly and have poorer availability. (See also Chapter 3). One alternative for those who are old enough is private car ownership but this can be high cost, in terms of driving lessons, purchasing the car itself, running costs, fuel and insurance. For those in low paid employment (which is particularly prevalent in rural areas) or in training schemes, both options may be unaffordable. Community transport offers another alternative, but this is often not appropriate for transporting young people to work or education (running during the day for example rather than at travel to work times) so their take-up of these services is often low.

### Access to services

A lack of leisure and entertainment activities in many rural areas can also contribute to young peoples' exclusion, or to them deciding to leave. Evidence suggests that young women are more likely to participate in cultural activities than boys, making them more likely to experience and become discontented with available facilities and transport options in rural areas, therefore contributing to the higher rates of out-migration amongst young females. The Scottish Youth Parliament in 2010 highlighted that services for teenagers may be particularly lacking in rural areas, with local community centres sometimes unwilling to support evening events for young people for example<sup>17</sup>, but also a high degree of intolerance amongst local people of young people socialising in the local neighbourhood. The latter is often associated with 'blurred boundaries' over what is perceived to be legitimate and criminal behaviour in rural areas. Previous research has suggested that some rural residents feel intimidated by the presence or activities of young people which they feel represent a 'cultural threat' to the 'rural idyll' but are not criminal activities (such as congregating in open spaces)<sup>18</sup>.



These perceptions can be coupled with a lack of awareness amongst young people of the services available to them, or indeed of their own needs. It is often the more excluded young people (those on low incomes or without access to transport, for example) who find it particularly difficult to access services, resulting in further exclusion. Previous studies have found that the engagement of young people in local organisations such as Community Councils is generally very low<sup>19</sup>. Ensuring higher engagement in such activities may become even more of a challenge as the population ages and more focus is placed on ensuring the needs of increasing numbers of older people are met. This may lead to a perception amongst young people that local services are becoming less and less targeted at their needs resulting in further disengagement.

### Perceptions, attitudes and stereotypes

HIE's work in 2009<sup>20</sup> found that young people were generally proud to be associated with the Highlands and Islands region (regardless of whether or not they still live there), and this is mirrored in other studies of young people in rural Scotland. However, some young people do not feel attachment to their local area, often due to negative assumptions, perceptions and stereotypes. These may contribute to an individual's decision to leave, or to a situation where they find themselves excluded. Migration decisions may be based on an assumption that to 'get on in life, you need to leave'<sup>21</sup>. This is possibly founded on a stereotypical assertion that leaving a rural area is evidence of someone seeking to make the most of themselves and being open to change, while staying is evidence of arrested development, lack of ambition and closed attitudes. There is often the expectation that more able or ambitious young people will leave the local area in order to pursue higher education or careers, while those who remain are the 'no-hopers' with lower drive and ambition<sup>22</sup>. Those who are expected to leave tend to be those young people whose parents have higher levels of education, giving them access to more support from family members in their decision-making.

Other factors, such as a lack of attachment to the local area, feeling undervalued by the local community, and negative stereotypes and perceptions, all contribute to out-migration decisions by young people.

Such attitudes are often caught up with the perceptions and realities of class and social status, including a presumption of the greater worth of formal qualifications over locally learned skills and of the devaluing of 'slower' rural places in comparison to complex, dynamic and sophisticated urban places<sup>23</sup>. While the role and success of institutions like the University of the Highlands and Islands and rural campuses such as the Crichton Campus in Dumfries will clearly depend on the quality of the education and the student development experience they provide, it will also depend on being able to overcome such negative presumptions and attitudes.

It can be particularly difficult for young people who have a history of violence, substance abuse, crime or exclusion from the labour market to get involved and engage locally. These individuals may be particularly visible in rural areas, and therefore may find themselves stigmatised, or in contrast, particularly invisible meaning they are not in receipt of necessary, specialist support (Chapter 3 discusses the challenges of specialist support in rural Scotland). Stigmatisation may be long-term and can affect all aspects of an individual's life, including their access to employment opportunities and leisure activities. In rural areas where personal networks and word-of-mouth are particularly important in recruitment and finding out information about job vacancies, this may be a particular challenge<sup>24</sup>. Being (or feeling) excluded can negatively impact on an individual's confidence and lead to them becoming more reluctant to access the services and benefits potentially available to them – resulting in further exclusion<sup>25</sup>.

Other groups are also at higher risk of exclusion, including LGBT youth. Their invisibility, combined with homophobia (perceived and real) and a lack of support services, may act as push factors in encouraging migration or in leading to exclusion<sup>26</sup>. As explored in previous research, some young people may feel that they can only achieve their own potential and self-expression in urban areas<sup>27</sup>.

Studies have also focused on gender differences in out-migration rates, highlighting the higher rates of out-migration amongst young women in many remote rural areas<sup>28</sup>. In some studies, this has been attributed to the constraints of living in a close-knit and controlling community, which may be felt more strongly by young women, while other factors include a higher likelihood of pursuing higher education opportunities or of experiencing housing unaffordability.

Having reviewed the evidence to explain why young people leave rural Scotland and why they may become excluded, two things are particularly clear. First, that many factors combine to encourage a young person to leave or to result in them becoming excluded; they rarely work in isolation. Second, that there is a great deal of similarity in the push factors (either working separately or in combination) for both leaving and staying. So why might one young person stay locally and become excluded (either by choice or without being able to choose) while another is able to exert a choice to leave their local area to seek better opportunities? While there will be 'external' factors which affect this transition (such as the migration and education experience of an individual's parents, or the degree to which he/she is facing negative stereotypes in their local area), the young person's own resources (including their human and social capital) and capacity will be crucial here.

For some young people facing poor quality employment options with limited opportunities for further training or a labour market characterised by high long-term unemployment, the only option will be to stay and take up low wage employment or to rely on benefits. These young people might be described as being 'resource-poor' and they are at risk of becoming excluded from the labour market, and potentially therefore from society more broadly.

## The geographical and age variations in youth migration across rural Scotland

Having reviewed the literature on the reasons why young people tend to migrate out of rural areas, we turn to an analysis of data for Scotland's rural Local Authorities (LAs) to explore youth migration patterns.

The *Rural Scotland in Focus* 2010 and 2012 reports highlighted local level variations in population change across rural Scotland. In our 2012 report, for example, we noted that the average rate of population change predicted across rural LAs by 2035 is 10.1% (marginally lower than in urban LAs), but at individual LA level, the rates of change vary from over 30% in Perth and Kinross and East Lothian to more than 11% decline in Eilean Siar. For many rural LAs, positive population change will happen as a result of in-migration. Chapter 1 explores this in depth.

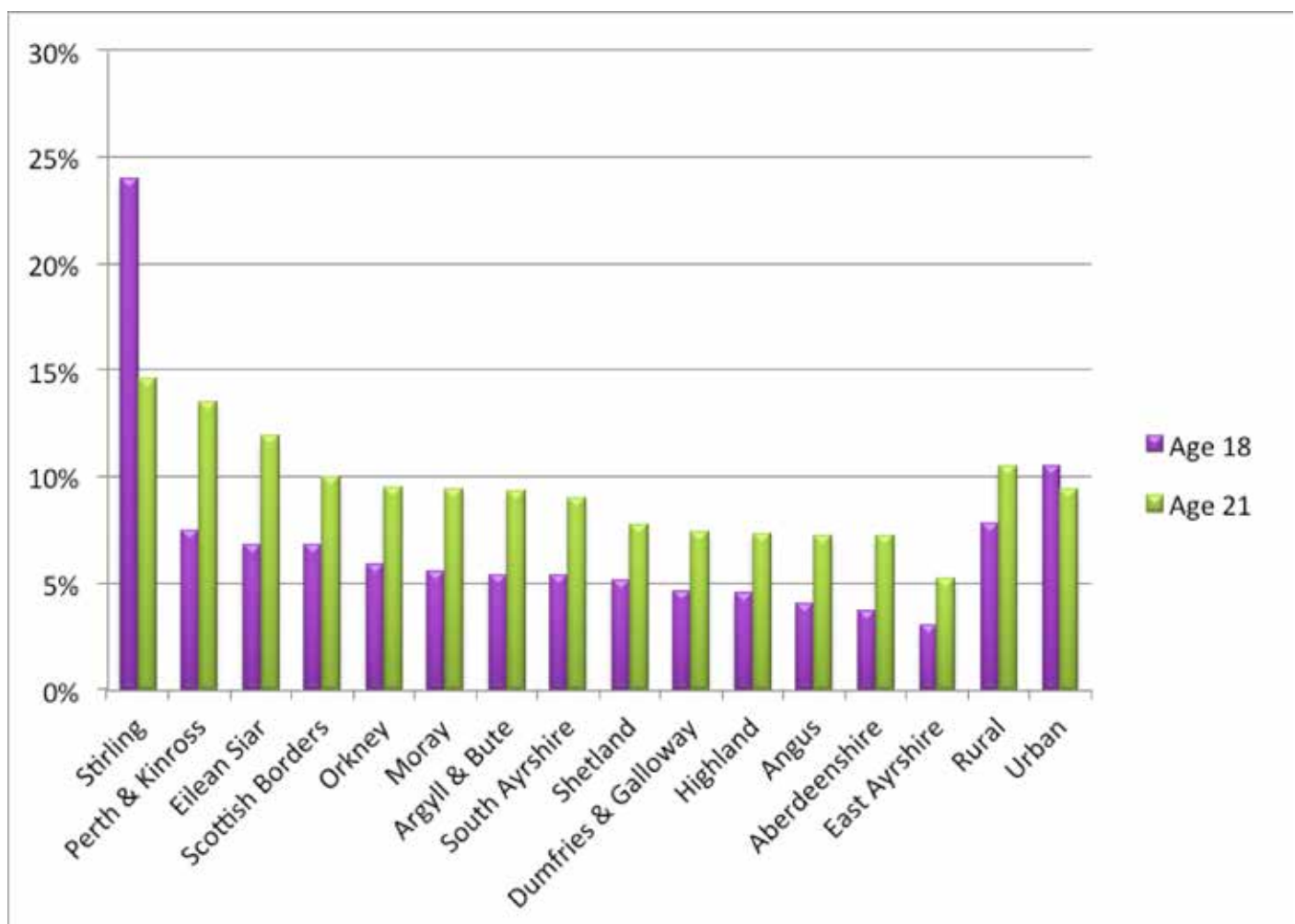
As well as geographical variations in migration patterns, there are also considerable differences in the migration patterns observed across different age groups. For a long time, and similar to most other OECD countries, young people have been leaving rural Scotland, and particularly remote rural Scotland. As a result of people in older age groups moving in in larger numbers (i.e. positive net in-migration), the overall rural population in Scotland is growing, but it is also ageing.

Previous research has revealed that the peak ages for out-migration from rural Scotland tend to be the late teens to the early-20s, reflecting moves out of the parental home to attend higher education or take up employment<sup>29</sup>, but then migration behaviour changes. Recognising these transitions, in this section we explore in-, out- and net-migration data at LA level for four specific ages: 18, 21, 26 and 30 – to explore how migration patterns change over these stages of the lifecycle. The data is based on the number of in-migrants in a specific age group as a percentage of the total population of that age group in the LA area. This analysis deals with percentages, but it is important to note that the total population and the numbers of migrants vary considerably between rural LA areas.

### 18 and 21 year olds: in-, out- and net-migration

Figure 5 shows that **Stirling** has the highest percentage of 18 year olds (24%) and 21 year olds (14.6%) migrating in as a percentage of the total population in these age groups. It is the only rural LA area where the proportion of 18 year olds moving in is higher than the proportion of 21 year olds (reflecting the average pattern for urban rather than rural LAs). After **Stirling**, **Perth and Kinross**, **Eilean Siar** and the **Scottish Borders** have the highest levels of in-migration amongst 18 and 21 year olds. **East Ayrshire** has the lowest in-migration of 18 and 21 year olds as a percentage of individuals in that age group.

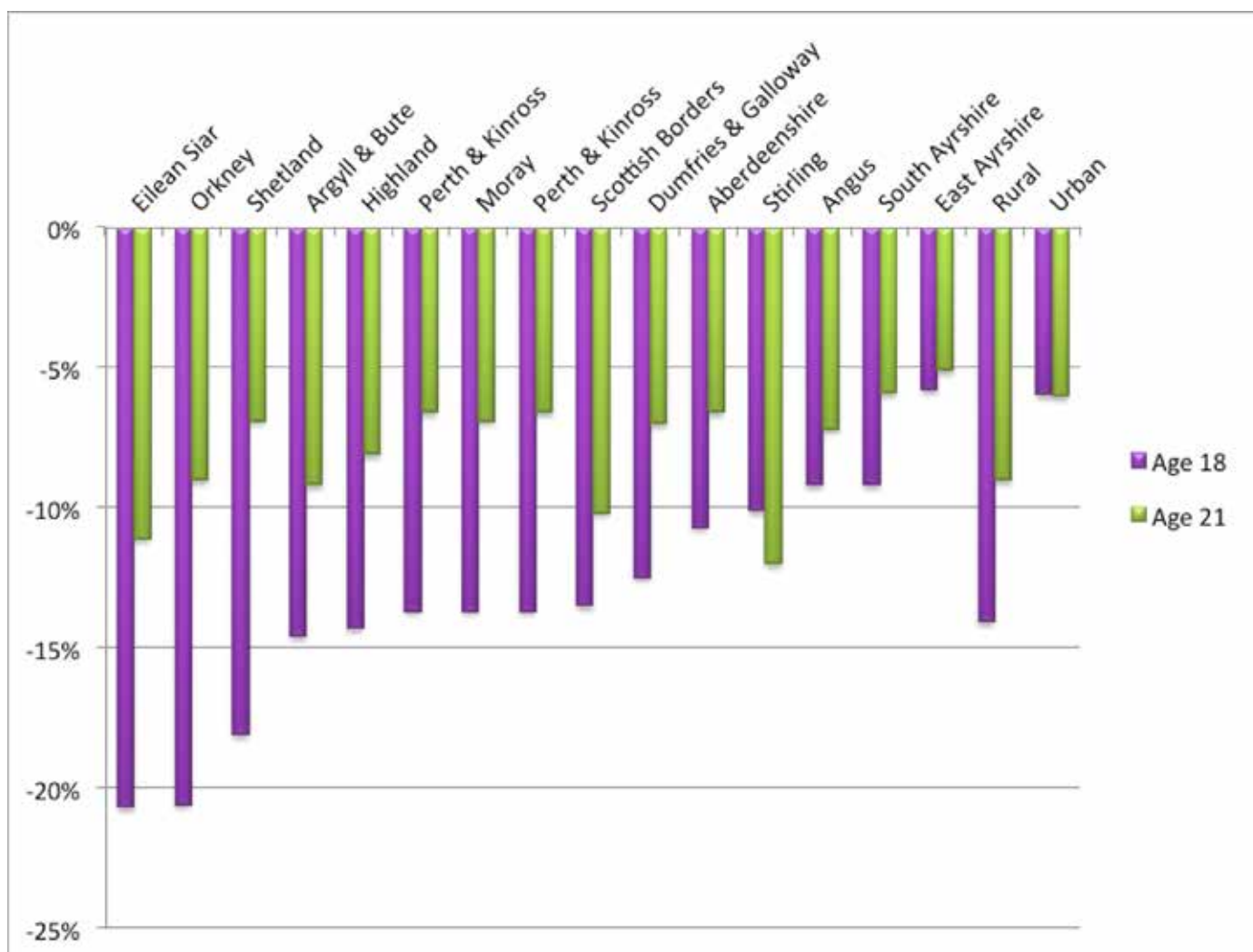
**Figure 5: Average in-migration of 18 and 21 year olds as a percentage of population by LA area 2009 - 2011**



Source: In, out and net migration, by Council area and single year of age, 2009-2011 average. National Records of Scotland (NRS)

Figure 6 demonstrates that the picture is markedly different for out-migration. Here the particular importance of out-migration amongst 18 year olds is clear. **Stirling** is the only rural LA area where the proportion of 21 year olds leaving (-12%, the highest proportion of all rural LAs) is higher than the proportion of 18 year olds. **Eilean Siar**, **Orkney** and **Shetland** have the highest proportion of 18 year olds (as a percentage of population in this age group) migrating out. **East Ayrshire** and **South Ayrshire** have the lowest percentage of out-migrants aged 18 and 21 years, with **East Ayrshire** being particularly close to the urban average (-5.8% and -6.0% respectively) for the out-migration of 18 year olds. **Eilean Siar** (-11.1%) and the **Scottish Borders** (-10.2%) also have high levels of out-migration amongst 21 year olds.

**Figure 6: Average out-migration of 18 and 21 year olds as a percentage of population by LA area 2009 - 2011**



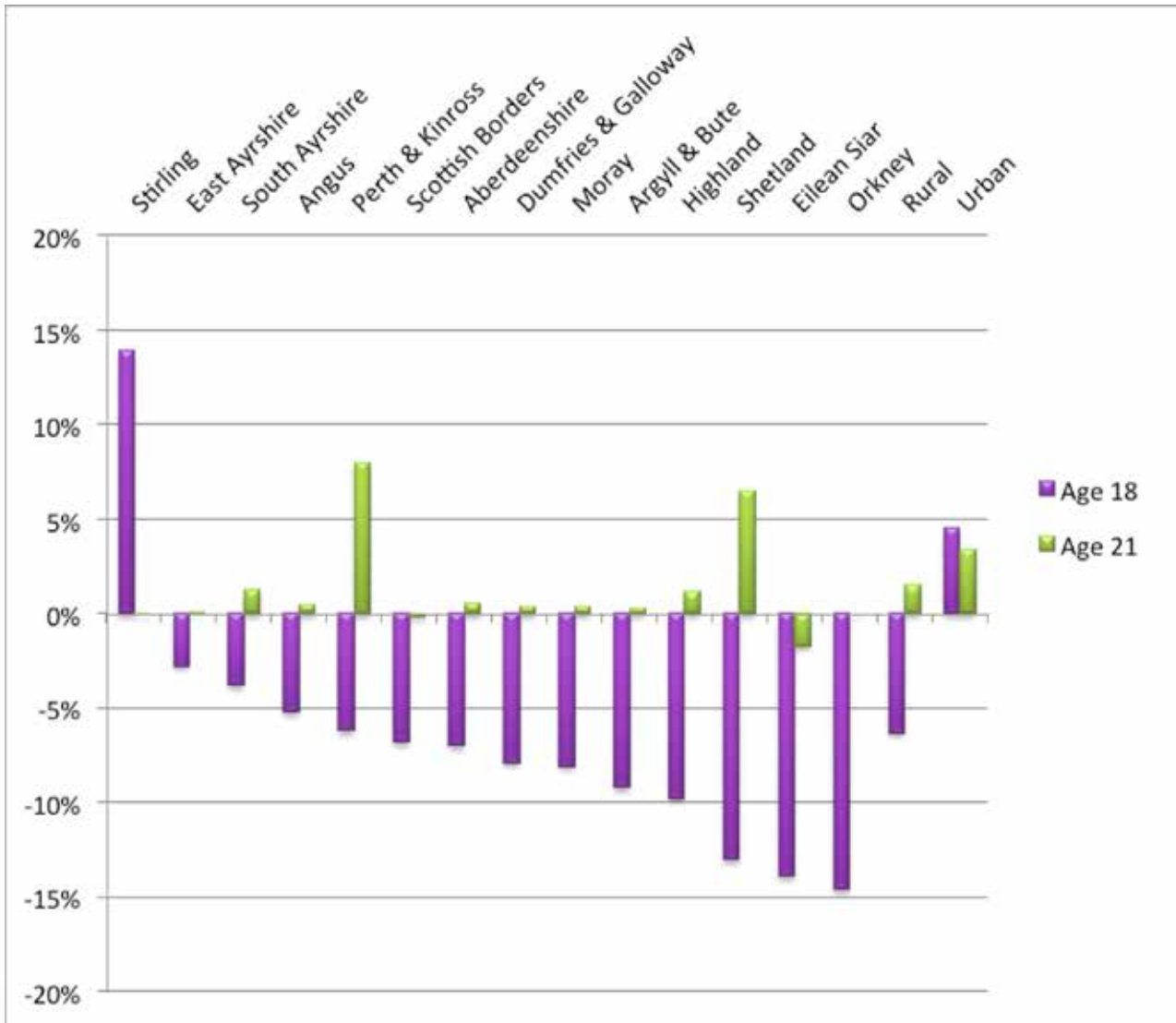
Source: In, out and net migration, by Council area and single year of age, 2009-2011 average. National Records of Scotland (NRS)

Figure 7 shows that the only rural LA to have more 18 year olds coming in than leaving as a percentage of the local population is **Stirling** (13.9% net-migration). The three Island LA areas, along with **Highland** and **Argyll and Bute**, show the opposite picture, i.e. substantially more 18 year olds leaving the Islands than coming in (from -13% to -14.9%).

A number of rural LAs have positive net-migration of 21 year olds, notably **Perth and Kinross** (8%) and **Shetland** (6.5%), but also **Highland**, **South Ayrshire** and **Aberdeenshire**. In contrast, some rural LAs demonstrate relatively small net losses of 21 year olds, including **Eilean Siar** (-1.7%) and the **Scottish Borders**. **East Ayrshire** and **South Ayrshire** demonstrate relatively small net-migration levels, suggesting the two areas have relatively stable populations of 18 and 21 year olds.



Figure 7: Average net-migration of 18 and 21 year olds as a percentage of population by LA area 2009 - 2011



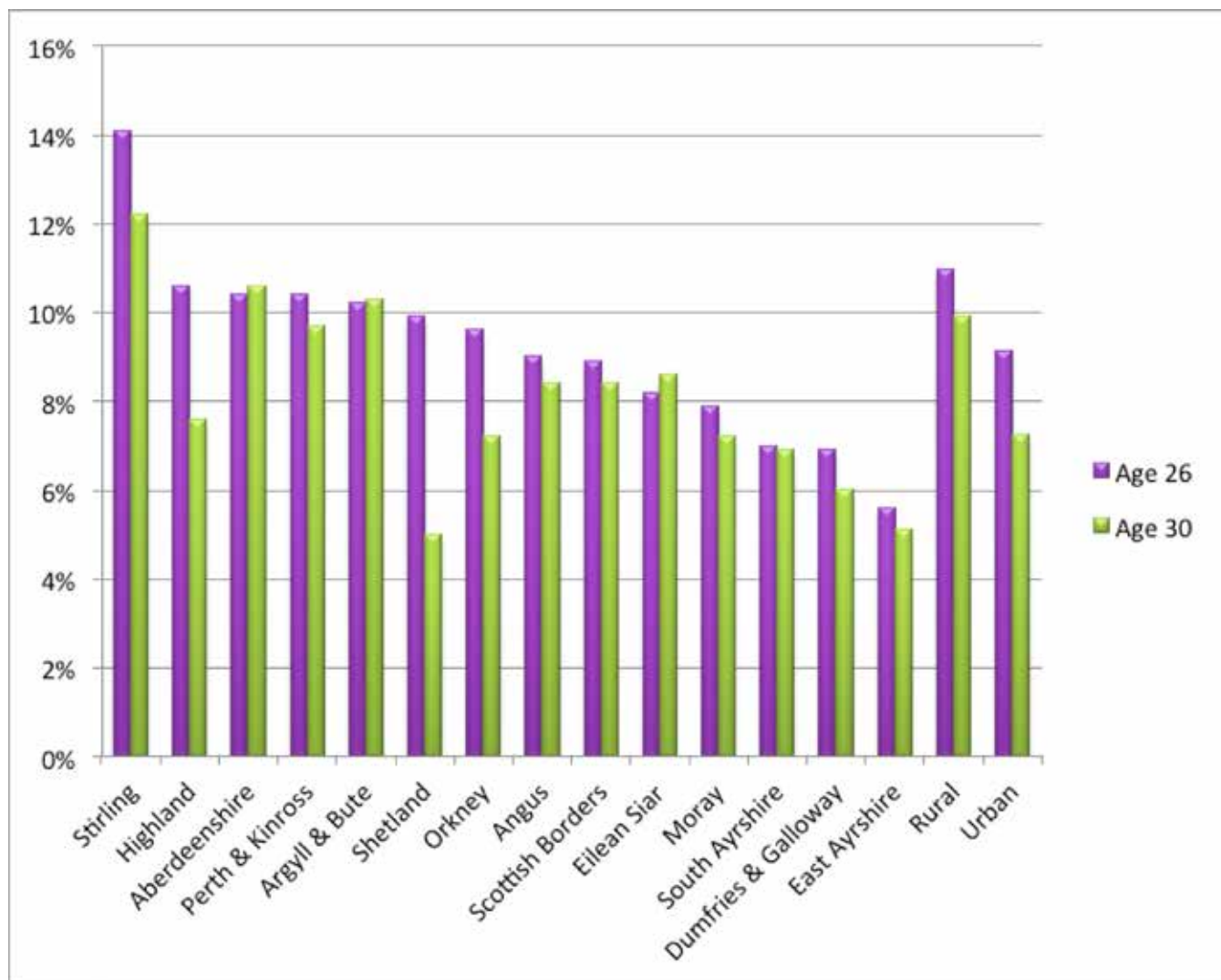
Source: In, out and net migration, by Council area and single year of age, 2009-2011 average. National Records of Scotland (NRS)



## 26 and 30 year olds: in-, out- and net-migration

Figure 8 shows in-migration levels for 26 and 30 year olds, again as a proportion of the total population in each age group for all rural LAs. Reflecting the pattern for 18 and 21 year olds, **Stirling** again has the highest in-migration of 26 and 30 year olds (14.1% and 12.2% respectively) as a proportion of the population in each of those age groups. **Highland, Aberdeenshire, Perth and Kinross** and **Argyll and Bute** all have between 10.2% and 10.6% in-migrants as a percentage of 26 year olds in the area. While **Perth and Kinross** also had a high proportion of 18 and 21 year old in-migrants, the pattern for **Aberdeenshire** and **Highland** shown here is markedly different to that for the younger age ranges (where **Aberdeenshire** had the second lowest percentage of 18 and 21 year old in migrants as a percentage of its population, and **Highland** the fourth lowest). Mirroring the pattern for 18 and 21 year olds, **East Ayrshire** has the lowest percentage of in-migration of 26 year olds (5.6%).

**Figure 8: Average in-migration of 26 and 30 year olds as a percentage of population by LA area 2009 - 2011**



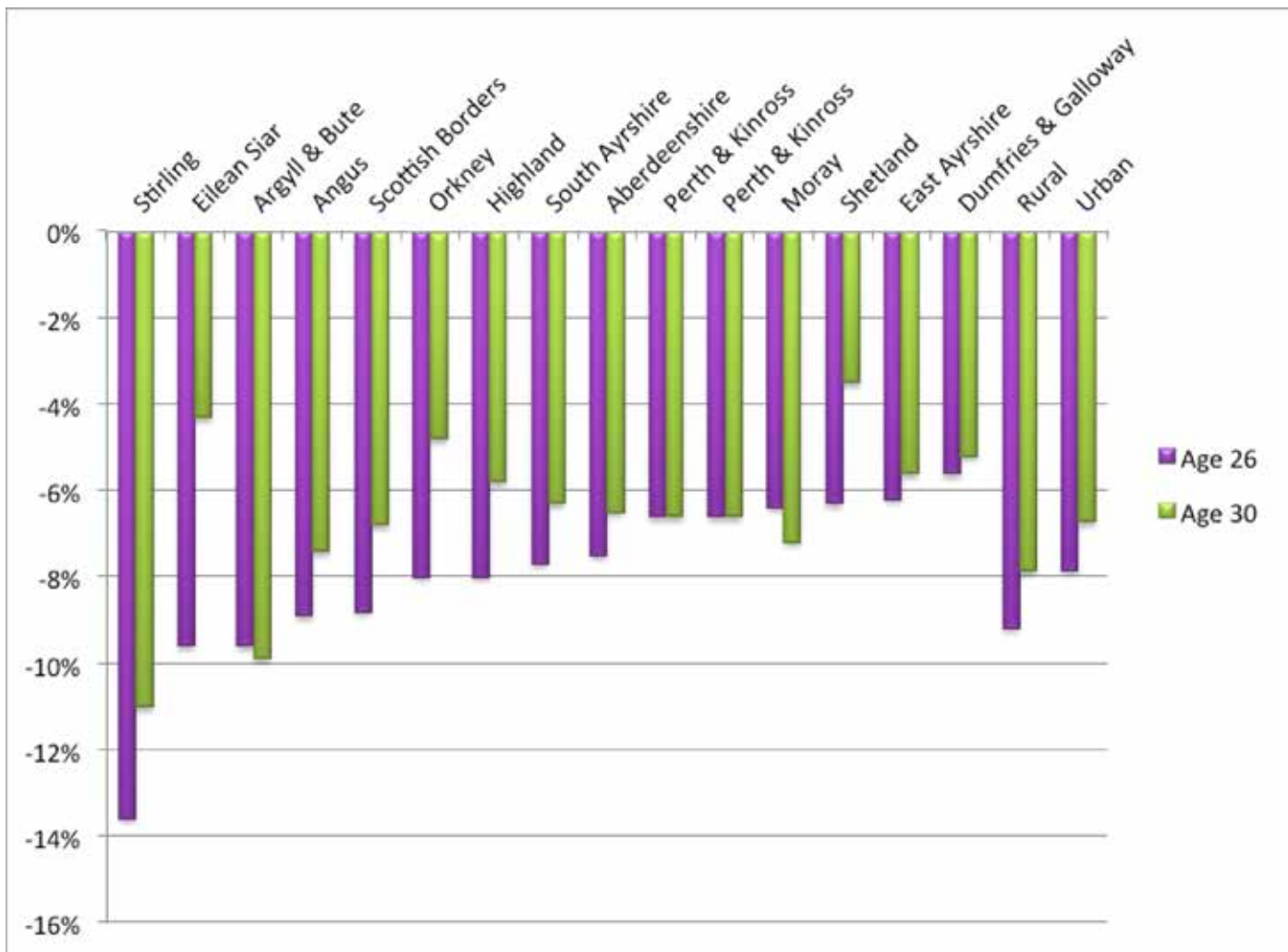
Source: In, out and net migration, by Council area and single year of age, 2009-2011 average. National Records of Scotland (NRS)

After **Stirling**, **Aberdeenshire** also has a high proportion of in-migrants amongst its population aged 30 (10.6%), followed by **Argyll** and **Bute** (10.3%). **Shetland**, **East Ayrshire** and **Dumfries & Galloway** have the lowest levels of in-migration as a percentage of the population of 30 year olds. For most rural LA areas, the percentage of 26 year olds moving in is higher than the percentage of 30 year olds moving in as a proportion of the population in each of these age groups. This is also reflected in the average rural data, while the reverse is true of urban LAs. The exceptions, where the proportion of 30 year olds moving in is higher than 26 year olds, are **Aberdeenshire**, **Argyll and Bute** and **Eilean Siar**. **Shetland** has the largest difference in the in-migration levels of the two age groups.

Turning to out-migration, Figure 9 shows that again Stirling has the highest percentage of both 26 and 30 year old out migrants (-13.6% and -11.0% respectively). **Eilean Siar**, **Argyll** and **Bute**, **Angus** and the **Scottish Borders** have a comparatively high proportion of out migrants in the 26 year age group (8.8 – 9.6%). **Dumfries & Galloway** and **East Ayrshire** have the lowest percentages of out-migration of 26 year olds.

After **Stirling**, **Argyll** and **Bute** (-9.9%), **Angus** (-7.4%), **Moray** (-7.2%) and the **Scottish Borders** (-6.8%) have comparatively high proportions of out-migrants in the 30 year old age group. **Orkney**, **Shetland** and **Eilean Siar** have low levels of out-migration of 30 year olds when compared to the out-migration of 26 year olds.

Figure 9: Average out-migration of 26 and 30 year olds as a percentage of population by LA area 2009 - 2011



Source: In, out and net migration, by Council area and single year of age, 2009-2011 average. National Records of Scotland (NRS)

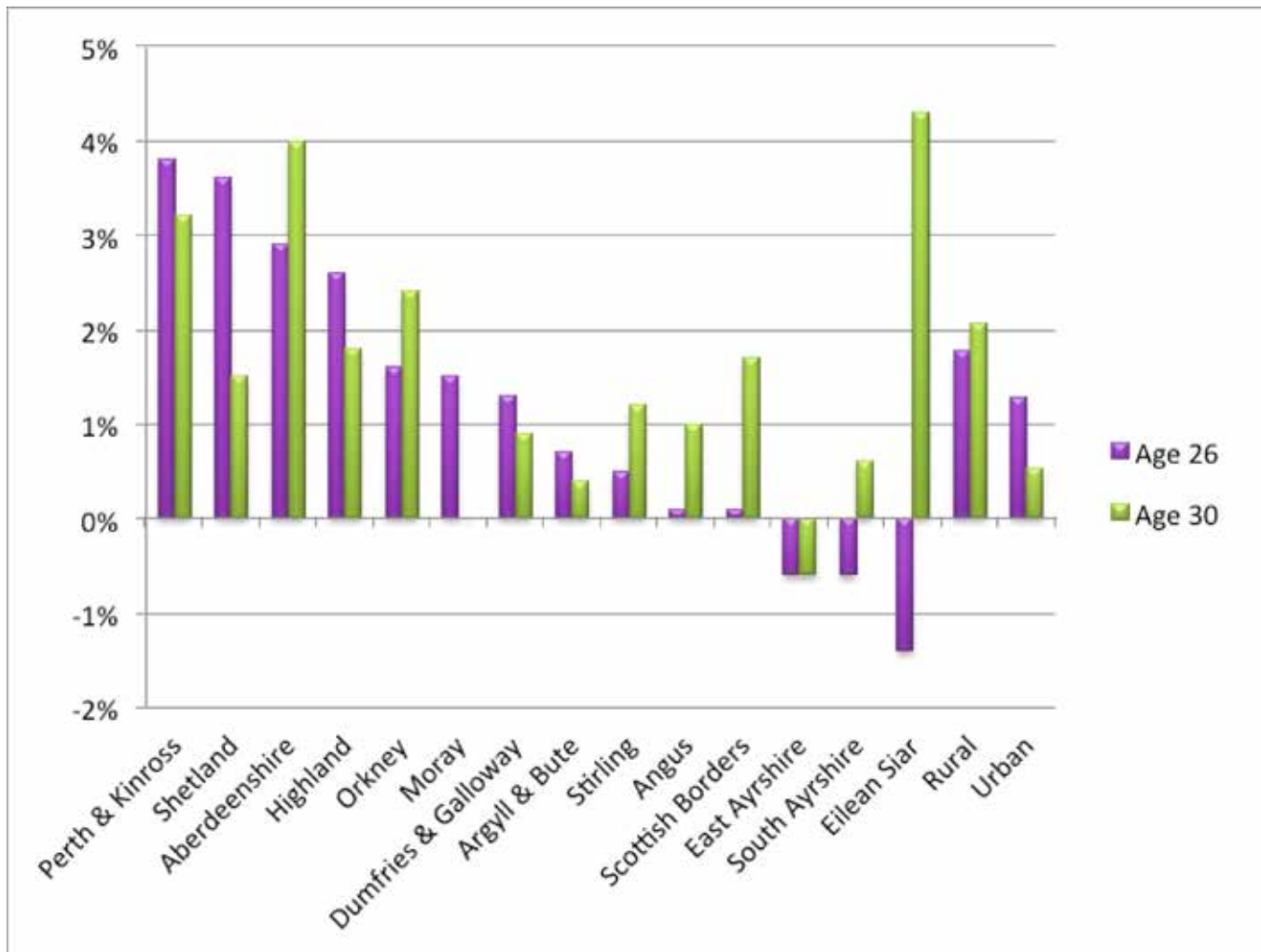
While Figure 7 showing the average net-migration of 18 and 21 year olds was largely negative, Figure 10 showing the net-migration of 26 and 30 year olds is, on the whole, positive. **Perth** and **Kinross** (3.8%), **Shetland** (3.6%) and **Aberdeenshire** (2.9%) have the highest net-migration of 26 year olds, while **Eilean Siar** (-1.4%), **South Ayrshire** (-0.6%) and **East Ayrshire** (-0.6%) have the lowest net-migration for this age group.

In terms of 30 year olds, **Eilean Siar** and **Aberdeenshire** have the highest net-migration levels (4.3% and 4% respectively), although it is important to remember that the actual numbers making up these percentages will be different given the very different population sizes of the two LA areas. Again, **East Ayrshire** (-0.6%) and **South Ayrshire**, alongside **Moray** (0%) and **Argyll and Bute** (0.4%), demonstrate low net-migration levels of 30 year olds.





Figure 10: Average net-migration of 26 and 30 year olds as a percentage of population by LA area 2009 - 2011



Source: In, out and net migration, by Council area and single year of age, 2009-2011 average. National Records of Scotland (NRS)

The key conclusions from this data analysis can be summarised by age group as:

- 18 year olds:
  - In-migration: **Stirling** has by far the highest percentage of 18 year olds moving in of all rural LA areas, while **East Ayrshire** has the lowest; **Stirling** is the only rural LA area to have a higher proportion of 18 year olds than 21 year olds moving in;
  - Out-migration: **Eilean Siar**, **Orkney** and **Shetland** have the highest percentage of 18 year olds moving out, while **East Ayrshire** and **South Ayrshire** have the lowest;
  - Net-migration: for all rural LAs except Stirling, net-migration of 18 year olds is negative, particularly in **Orkney**, **Eilean Siar** and **Shetland**.
- 21 year olds:
  - In-migration: **Stirling**, **Perth** and **Kinross** and **Eilean Siar** have the highest levels of in-migration amongst 21 year olds, while **East Ayrshire** has the lowest;
  - Out-migration: **Stirling**, **Eilean Siar** and the **Scottish Borders** have high levels of out-migration amongst 21 year olds, while levels in **East Ayrshire** and **South Ayrshire** are again lower;
  - Net-migration: **Perth** and **Kinross** and **Shetland** have the largest positive net-migration amongst rural LA areas; **Eilean Siar** has the largest negative net-migration of 21 year olds.
- 26 year olds:
  - In-migration: **Stirling** has the highest percentage of 26 year olds moving in, followed by **Highland** and **Aberdeenshire** (which had amongst the lowest levels of in-migration amongst 18 and 21 year olds); **East Ayrshire** has the lowest percentage of in-migration of 26 year olds.

- Out-migration: **Stirling** again has the highest percentage of 26 year olds moving out, followed by **Eilean Siar** and **Argyll and Bute**; **East Ayrshire** and **South Ayrshire** again have the lowest out-migration in this age group.
- Net-migration: for most rural LA areas, net-migration in this age group is positive, particularly **Perth and Kinross**, **Shetland** and **Aberdeenshire**; **East Ayrshire** and **South Ayrshire** have small, negative net-migration in this age group.
- 30 year olds:
  - In-migration: **Stirling** has the highest percentage in-migration of 30 year olds, followed by **Aberdeenshire** and **Argyll and Bute**. **Shetland**, **East Ayrshire** and **Dumfries & Galloway** have the lowest levels;
  - Out-migration: **Stirling** has the highest percentage of out-migrants amongst 30 year olds, followed by **Argyll and Bute**; **Shetland**, **Orkney** and **Eilean Siar** have the lowest levels of out-migration amongst 30 year olds.
  - Net-migration: most rural LA areas have positive net-migration amongst their 30 year olds, with **Aberdeenshire** and **Perth and Kinross** particularly high; net-migration in this age group is low in **Moray** and **East Ayrshire** and **South Ayrshire**.

## Youth migration patterns and rural Local Authority 'types'

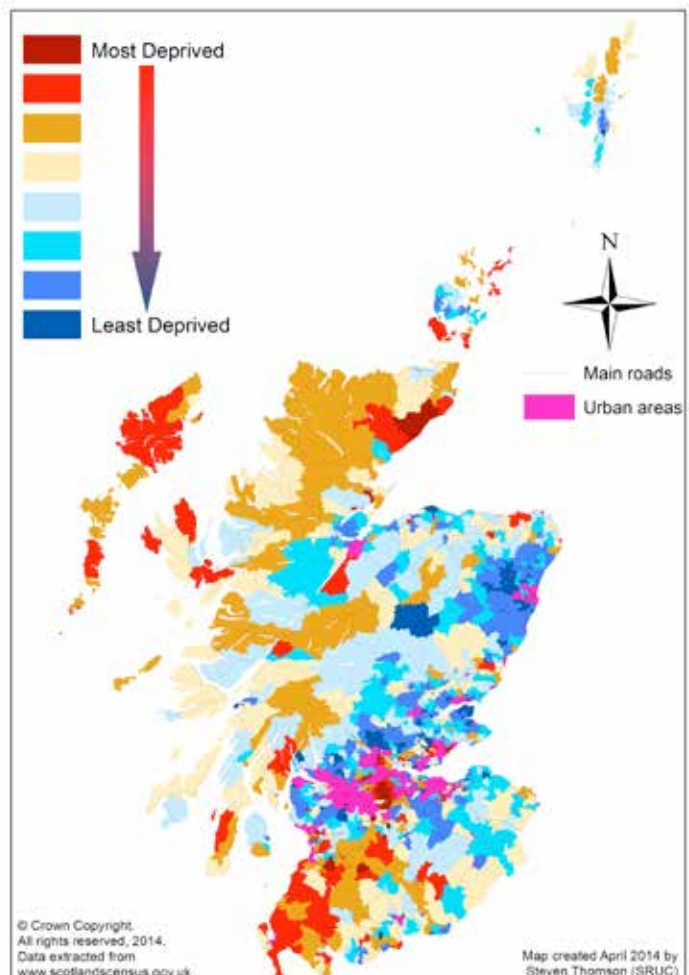
The analysis presented here has demonstrated marked variations across Scotland's rural LAs in terms of the patterns of youth in-, out- and net-migration at different ages. However, it is possible to derive four 'types' of LAs from the data, and to identify LAs that exhibit the different patterns:

- **Positive net-migration of 'older young people' (aged 26 and 30)** – including Aberdeenshire, Perth and Kinross, Shetland and the Western Isles
- **High population churn** (high in- and out- migration) amongst young people (all ages) – including Stirling
- **Low population churn** (low in- and out- migration) amongst young people (all ages) – including East and South Ayrshire
- **Negative net-migration of 'younger young people' (aged 18)** – including the Western Isles, Orkney and Shetland

Based on our review of existing literature earlier in this section which identified key explanatory factors that lead to young people leaving (or indeed returning in later life to) rural Scotland, we now present a range of data to describe the socio-economic characteristics of rural LAs in Scotland. While we cannot determine clear cause and effect, these characteristics help us to understand the migration patterns observed. The data is taken from the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) and from the 2011 Census. The limitations of the SIMD are fully acknowledged, particularly with reference to understanding poverty and deprivation in rural Scotland, and these are discussed in detail in Chapter 3 of this report. We use SIMD in this Chapter to illustrate patterns in rural LAs (overall deprivation ranking, housing deprivation and public transport deprivation). We recognise that the *rural-only SIMD* data were produced by the Scottish Government in recognition of the need to explore SIMD's "rural fit" (see Chapter 3), so it is useful to use it here for the purposes of our discussion.

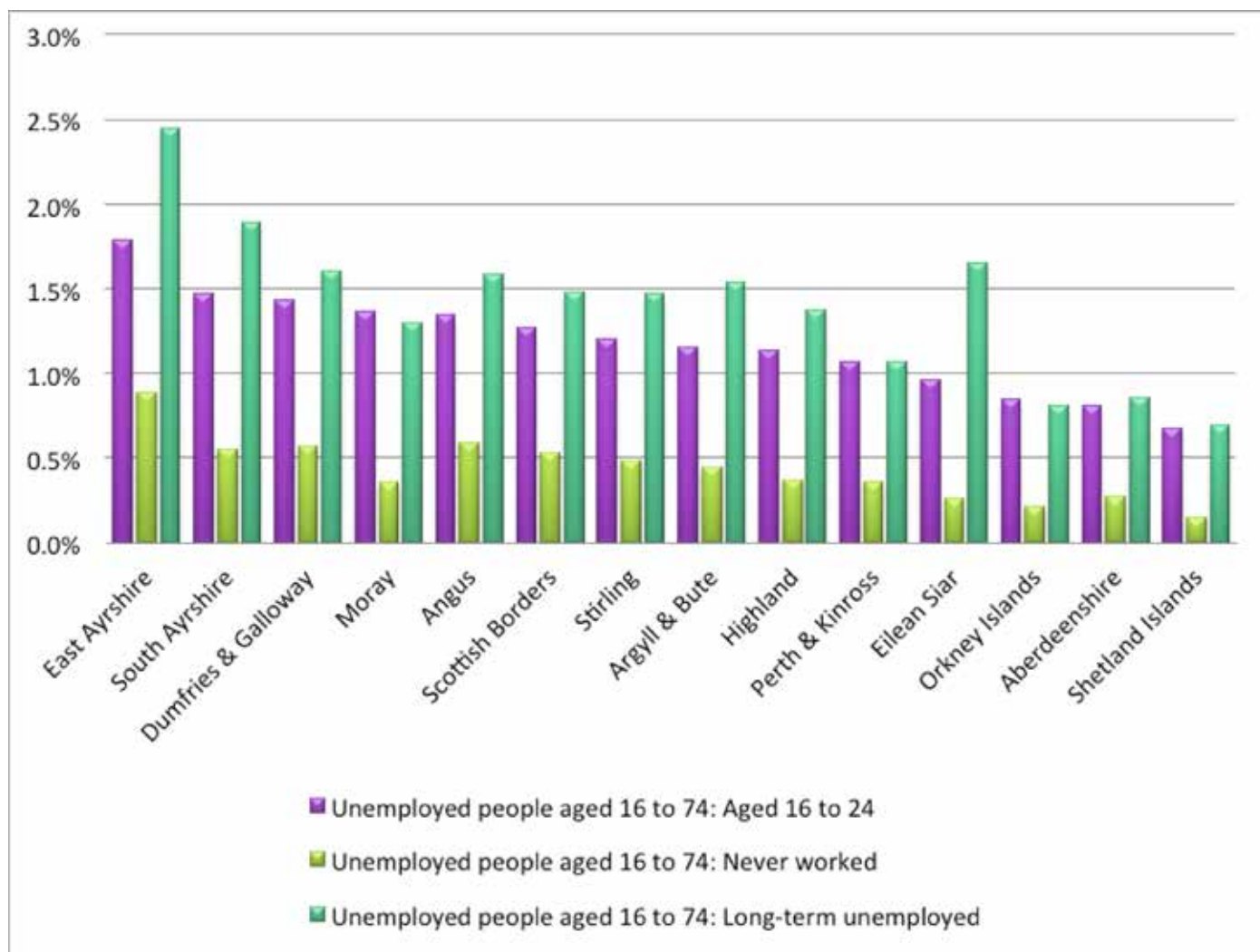
Figure 11, an overall SIMD deprivation ranking map for Scotland (*excluding* urban datazones) highlights the high levels of deprivation in large parts of the South West<sup>30</sup>, the Islands and the Highlands. Large parts of the North East and South East are less deprived, as are rural areas close to the Central Belt.

**Figure 11: SIMD overall deprivation ranking for rural-only datazones**



Focusing on employment characteristics, as Figure 12 shows, unemployment amongst young people aged 16-24 is highest in the three south westerly LAs of East Ayrshire (1.8%), South Ayrshire (1.5%) and Dumfries and Galloway (1.4%), and lowest in Aberdeenshire (0.8%) and across Shetland (0.7%), Orkney (0.8%) and Eilean Siar (1.0%). East Ayrshire has the highest levels of long term unemployment (2.4%).

Figure 12: Unemployment 2011



Source: Scotland's Census 2011, National Records of Scotland.



The nature of employment also varies dramatically across rural Scotland. Figure 13 illustrates the concentrations of people working in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations. We can see that with the exception of the north easterly coast, large parts of Aberdeenshire have high concentrations of managers and professionals, as do the rural areas clustered around the Central Belt and in the Scottish Borders (Figure 13 can be viewed alongside Figure 8 in Chapter 1).

**Figure 13: Percentages of people in higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations 2011**

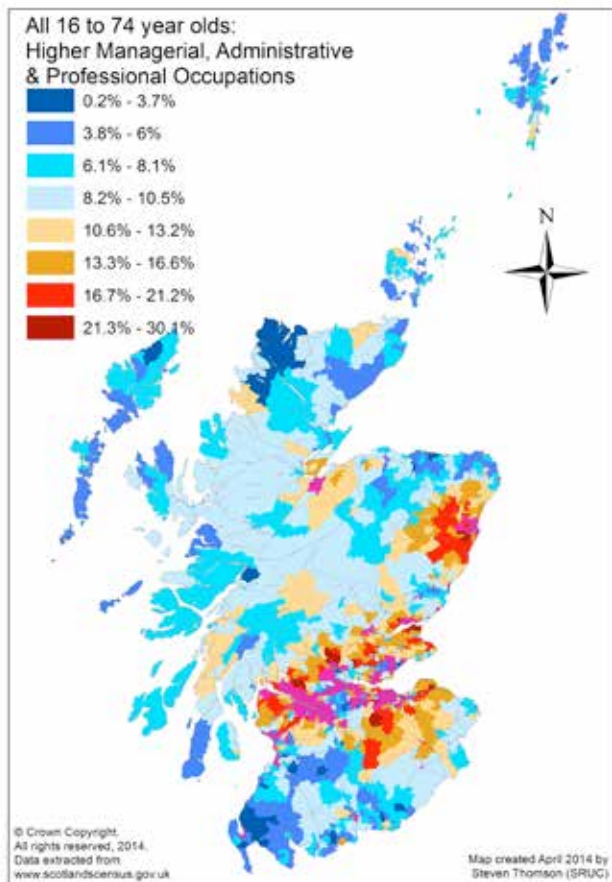
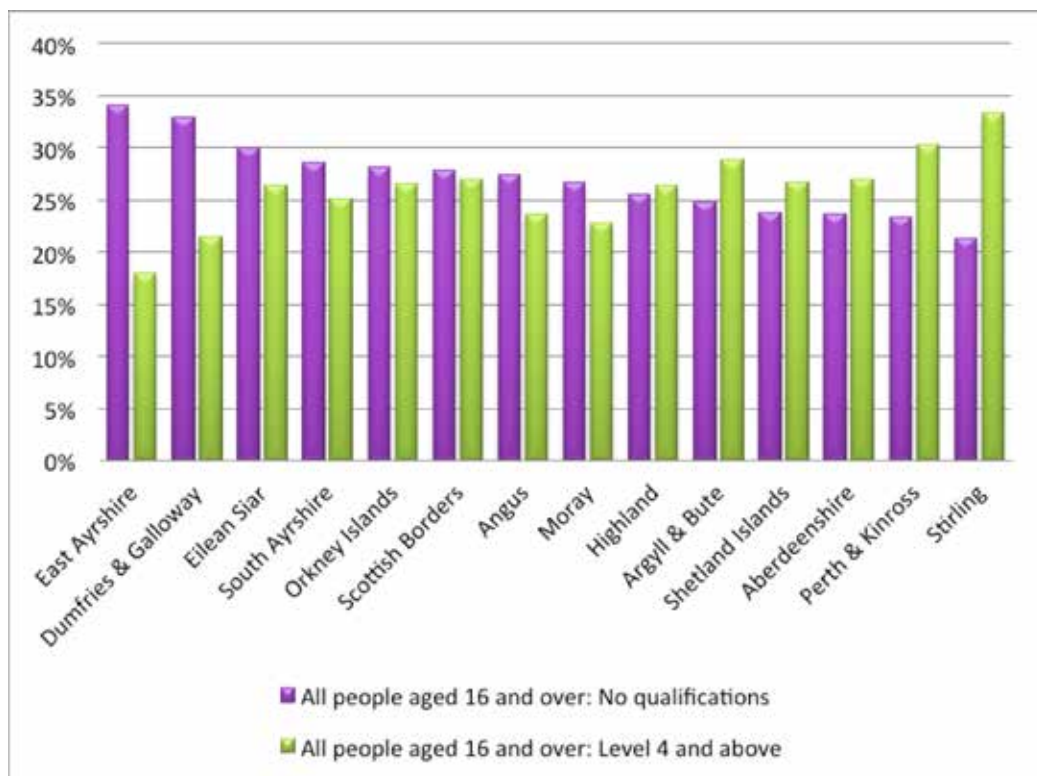


Figure 14 presents the percentages of people across the 14 rural LAs aged 16 or above with no qualifications, and with Level 4 qualifications or above. It shows the high levels of people qualified to Level 4 or above in Stirling (33.3%), Perth and Kinross (30.4%) and Aberdeenshire (27.0%) and high levels of people with no qualifications in East Ayrshire (34.1%), Dumfries and Galloway (32.9%) and Eilean Siar (30%).

**Figure 14: Percentage of people with no qualifications and with Level 4 qualifications and above 2011**



Map and graph source:  
Scotland's Census 2011,  
National Records of Scotland.

When exploring the socio-economic characteristics of rural places, it is also interesting to understand geographic access to services and housing. With regard to geographic access to services, East Ayrshire, South Ayrshire and Stirling have comparatively low levels of deprivation to other rural LAs as Table 2 illustrates.

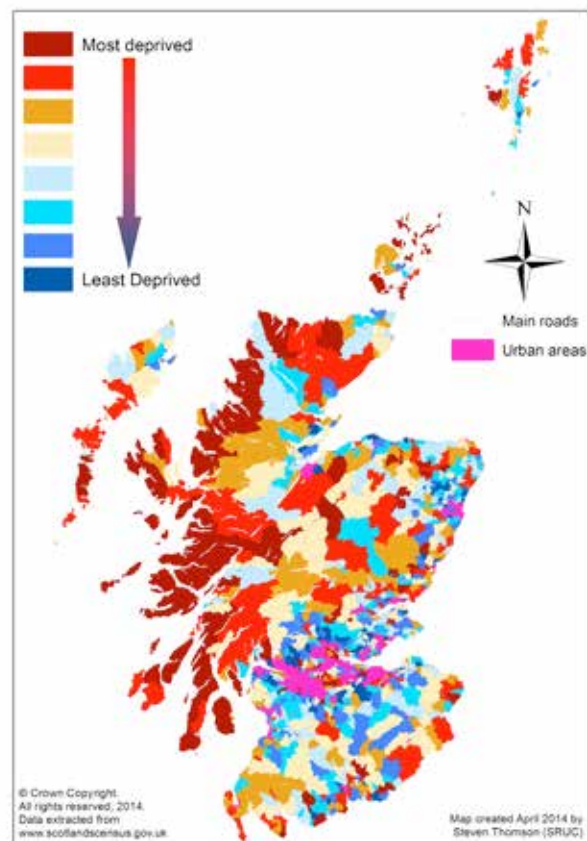
**Table 2: Geographic access deprivation in rural Local Authorities 2012**

	Total number of datazones	Number of datazones in 10% most geographic access deprived in country	Percentage of the LAs' datazones in 10% most geographic deprived in country
Eilean Siar	36	29	81%
Shetland	30	19	63%
Orkney	27	15	56%
Highland	292	102	35%
Aberdeenshire	301	103	34%
Dumfries & Galloway	193	62	32%
Argyll & Bute	122	38	31%
Scottish Borders	130	34	26%
Perth & Kinross	175	38	22%
Moray	116	26	22%
Angus	142	29	20%
Stirling	110	17	15%
South Ayrshire	147	15	10%
East Ayrshire	154	14	9%

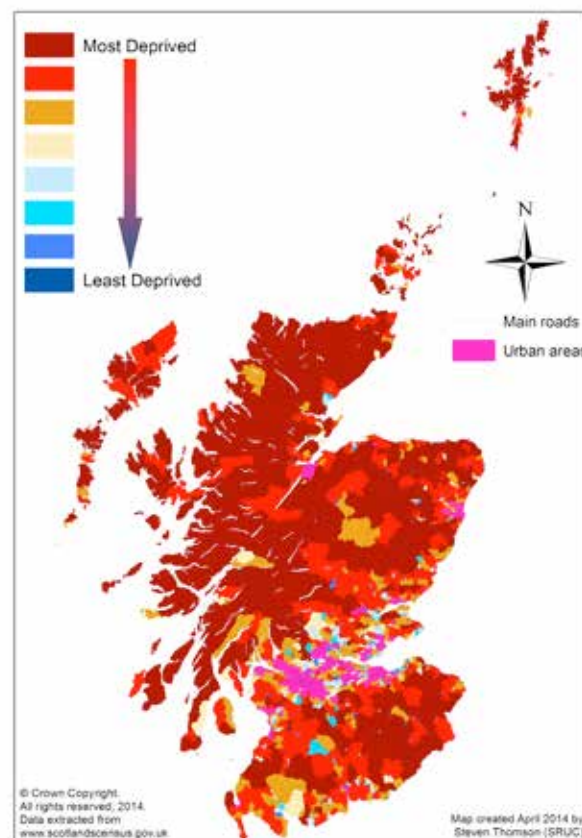
Source: Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics, Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation 2012

Housing presents a mixed and highly localised picture in rural Scotland, as Figure 15 illustrates. Only two rural LAs have any datazones in the 10% most deprived in the country (Stirling has two and Highland has one). Figure 16 illustrates the widespread problem of access to public transport across rural Scotland.

**Figure 15: Housing deprivation**



**Figure 16: Public transport deprivation**



It is clear that there are some patterns emerging, particularly in relation to overall deprivation, employment, education and housing which build up a picture of the characteristics of different parts of rural Scotland and which therefore may help to shed light on the migratory patterns of young people. These characteristics can help to explain our four migration 'types'.

**Type 1: Positive net-migration of 'older young people' (aged 26 and 30)** – including Aberdeenshire, Perth and Kinross, Shetland and the Western Isles.

This 'type' of rural LA is experiencing positive net-migration of 'older young people', who are likely to be already in work, or finished/ finishing education and seeking employment, and perhaps thinking about starting a family. These individuals are likely to be attracted to an area by good quality employment opportunities and low unemployment rates, and the availability of housing. The data has shown that these are features demonstrated by Aberdeenshire, for example, which benefits from its own relatively strong labour market but also its proximity to Aberdeen and its buoyant labour market, underpinned by the North Sea oil industry and expanding sectors such as renewables. Perth and Kinross benefits from its proximity to the employment opportunities available in the Central Belt (with its high proportion of managerial and professional occupations) as well as those within the LA itself. Our *Rural Scotland in Focus 2012* report also demonstrated that this area has experienced high levels of in-migration (30%) by overseas migrants. Chapter 1 of this report has already discussed the marked growth in population in some settlements in both Aberdeenshire and Perth and Kinross.

Both Shetland and the Western Isles also demonstrate that they have attracted back young people in their mid to late 20s. For Shetland, this is perhaps also connected with the area's relatively buoyant labour market (again related to the oil industry), while for the Western Isles, quality of life considerations may be playing a part. Figure 1 in this section would seem to support this argument by demonstrating the relatively high proportions of children aged 0-16 in parts of these two LA areas, which may be associated with moves in of this 'older young people' group.

Ongoing research work in the Cairngorms National Park demonstrates that this area is also experiencing in-migration amongst its population aged approximately 20-60. This is supported by Figures 2 and 3 in this section, where the data shows higher proportions of 22-26 and 27-30 year olds in some localities within the National Park. The area is characterised by a significant decline in the outmigration of people in their late teens in recent years in comparison to previous years, and a shorter dip in net-migration when compared to many other parts of rural Scotland. So, young people are still leaving, but are doing so in smaller numbers and at a smaller range of ages than elsewhere in rural Scotland. This is likely to be due to both supply and demand elements, including a suitable supply of housing for young families, and the Park offering a pleasant environment with employment opportunities – especially in outdoor activity sectors, close to Aviemore<sup>31</sup>.

**Type 2: High population churn** (high in- and out- migration) amongst young people (all ages) – such as Stirling.

These areas demonstrate high levels of both in- and out-migration amongst young people of all ages. Looking across Scotland's rural LAs, Stirling is an example of this type, and it stands somewhat in contrast to most of the other rural LA areas in Scotland.

This suggests that Stirling's population of young people is dynamic, with high levels of 'churn', with young people who are leaving being replaced by young new or return in-migrants. Our *Rural Scotland in Focus 2012* report highlighted how Stirling has also experienced high levels (23%) of overseas in-migrants in recent years. The movement of young people into and out of Stirling at ages 18 and 21 is likely to be heavily influenced by the presence of Stirling University, the dominance of the city of Stirling in the LA area, and also the location of the LA area within relatively easy commuting distance to the Central Belt (particularly Glasgow) for education and employment. Although this area will benefit from the in-migration of new people, it should also be recognised that the high numbers of people leaving suggests that the area might not be able to hold onto its young people in significant numbers.

**Type 3: Low population churn** (low in- and out- migration) amongst young people (all ages) – including East and South Ayrshire.

In contrast to Type 2, these areas demonstrate low levels of in-, out- and net-migration, such as South, and particularly East, Ayrshire. This suggests low levels of 'churn' within the population of young people, with young people not leaving the area to take up opportunities elsewhere, nor significant numbers of young people moving in. This is supported by the SIMD and Census data presented here which demonstrates high overall levels of deprivation and high proportions of people with no qualifications and a challenge with long-term unemployment in East Ayrshire particularly, and a low proportion of people with high qualifications. In this case, low churn might be symptomatic of a situation where young people are unable to make the choice to leave as many lack the necessary resources and capacity (or human capital). This area is also not benefiting from the skills, knowledge and networks that new residents can bring.

This analysis can be linked to Chapter 1 of this report which revealed the close migration linkages between East and South Ayrshire, suggesting that a significant proportion of people who are moving into one of these two LAs are moving from the neighbouring LA area (i.e. from East into South Ayrshire or vice versa), or from Glasgow or North Ayrshire.

**Type 4: Negative net-migration of 'younger young people' (aged 18)** – including the Western Isles, Orkney and Shetland.

This 'type' is perhaps the most traditionally recognised amongst rural LAs across OECD countries – the out-migration of people as they complete secondary school and seek education or employment opportunities that are not available locally. The maps presented in Chapter 1 of this report also highlight the key flows of people from (and to) the Western Isles, Orkney and Shetland, including shifts of people to Scotland's cities for education purposes.

While the opportunities provided by the University of the Highlands and Islands, for example, may have encouraged some young people to stay and undertake their education locally in the areas which demonstrate this pattern (such as the Western Isles, Orkney and Shetland), for many this provision is not attractive enough for them to stay. The Western Isles in particular demonstrates relatively high levels of long-term youth unemployment and a high proportion of people with no qualifications, which may encourage many young people to leave in search of better employment opportunities. Although as recognised in our 'Type 1' description, both the Western Isles and Shetland demonstrate that they are drawing in some 'older young people' to replace those leaving at younger ages.

The four identified migration pattern 'types' have both benefits and disadvantages. Clearly high levels of out-migration amongst 18 year olds may result in an unbalanced demographic profile, depriving rural communities of labour and human capital and reproductive potential<sup>32</sup>. However, as stated at the start of this section, encouraging young people to stay when leaving would be better for them is not a desirable outcome. High out-migration may not necessarily be a problem, and in fact may be beneficial for individuals and their wider communities, providing that areas are, at the same time, attracting people in older age groups to replace them.

While low churn indicates a high degree of population stability, in-migrants and return migrants bring a range of benefits to the communities to which they move and the areas demonstrating low churn will be 'missing out' on these benefits. It may also indicate that an area does not 'produce' large quantities of young people with the skills, knowledge, capacity and confidence to move away to access new opportunities and be part of wider regional, national and global economies. These young people may not have a choice as to where they grow into adulthood.

The critical thing is not that a decision to stay or leave is right or wrong, but that an individual has choices about what to do and is able to make an informed choice about which choice is best for them. This recognition is important, firstly, in how we view young people – we need to see them positively as resourceful and with ideas and aspirations – and secondly, in shaping policy responses to ensure that they are supported in making decisions about their current and future lifecourse.

## Current policies to support the role of young people in a vibrant rural Scotland

This section sets out the current policy context in which young people in rural Scotland are situated. It can broadly be divided into two: firstly, highlighting policies and strategies that are directed specifically at all young people in Scotland; secondly, describing the broader rural policy objectives which relate to young people in the context of rural demographic change and rural community sustainability.

### Policies addressing the opportunities and challenges faced by young people in Scotland

The Scottish Government's National Performance Framework (NPF)<sup>33</sup> underpins delivery of its agenda and overall Purpose of focusing 'government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth'. One of the 16 National Outcomes in the Scottish Government's NPF focuses explicitly on young people: 'Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens'. A number of Indicators enable progress to be measured, including increasing the proportion of young people in education, training or work<sup>34</sup>. The focus is very much on ensuring that young people have access to adequate opportunities to engage in the labour market, and therefore in wider society.

Two key over-arching frameworks are important in the Scottish Government's approach towards children and young people. One is 'Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC)', an approach which is focused on promoting coordinated actions by all services to improve life chances. The second is the Curriculum for Excellence, which is a key vehicle for improving the life chances of children and young people and for reducing health inequalities. The Curriculum for Excellence<sup>35</sup> places considerable importance on pupils developing skills for learning, life and work as well as obtaining qualifications. A significant piece of legislation which was passed by the Scottish Parliament in February 2014 is the Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill. Amongst other things, the Bill includes provisions about the rights of children and young people and about services and support in relation to children and young people.

In 2013, the Scottish Government published 'Supporting Young People's Health and Wellbeing'<sup>36</sup> and in its Foreword, Sir Harry Burns, Scotland's former Chief Medical Officer, reiterates how youth – 'the second decade of life' – is critical to the development of future health behaviours. He states that 'Youth is typically defined as a transitional and risky stage between childhood and adulthood. It is a period of experimentation, of biological and psychological change, and one which spans key transitions. It is a period of considerable change and we must support young people to negotiate their way through what is an increasingly complex world'.

The document notes that policies that aim to improve young peoples' health and wellbeing, and therefore reduce the gap between the health of the best-off and worst-off young people in Scotland, span many Scottish Government Directorates, with no one Directorate responsible for policy development relating to children and young people's health and wellbeing. It offers a useful summary of the various policies relating to young people in a single document.

Perhaps the most significant focus of the Scottish Government's policies on young people is supporting and sustaining employment and reducing youth unemployment. Evidence suggests that young people have been the most exposed group in the labour market during the economic downturn. This work is primarily led by Scotland's Cabinet Secretary for Training, Youth and Female Employment. The Scottish Government's Youth Employment Strategy<sup>37</sup> sets out how it is committed to boosting youth employment levels, for example, through providing more training opportunities, Modern Apprenticeships and higher education places. These priorities reflect policy approaches at European level, where emphasis is also placed on young people being given opportunities to develop career management skills to enable them to make appropriate career decisions. The Youth Employment Strategy also sets out the Government's commitment to hold Action Forums on Youth Employment, including in rural locations, and recognises the need to



link policies seeking to improve skills and opportunities in particular sectors, such as farming, energy and food and drink, with generic youth employment and skills policies.

As set out in its Programme for Government 2013-14, the Scottish Government is committed to supporting young people into work, and ensuring that those who are out of work are able to access services to support them into work. The Scottish Government's 'Working for Growth – An Employability Framework for Scotland'<sup>38</sup>, published in September 2012, aims to support those who are out of work to get back into work, particularly at a time of difficult (although improving) economic conditions. The Scottish Employability Forum supports delivery of the Framework.

The Scottish Government is also investing in its 'Making Young People Your Business' campaign in 2013-14 which asks employers to invest in young people through offering jobs or work experience. There is a particular focus on working with small businesses, through the Youth Employment Scotland wage incentive programme, which provides financial incentives to small businesses to create up to 10,000 jobs for young people. Also for those 16-19 year olds not in work, education or training, the Opportunities for All initiative offers a learning or training opportunity. The Scottish Government has committed to provide 25,000 new Modern Apprenticeship opportunities in each year of the Parliament, ensuring that these include higher-level technical and professional apprenticeships, developed in response to employer demand, and is also seeking to raise the number of young people who attend full-time courses at college. National youth apprenticeship schemes may require some slight tailoring in rural locations to ensure that they meet the needs of students (who may face higher transport costs to access their placement in a rural business, for example) and also of host businesses (which tend to be micro or even one person businesses). SRUC's Elmwood campus works closely with rural food and drink businesses close to the campus to secure placements for its students.



### SRUC Elmwood Campus Hospitality Courses

SRUC's Elmwood Campus Hospitality Department runs Further Education courses across a range of subjects including professional cookery, food hygiene and food and beverage service.



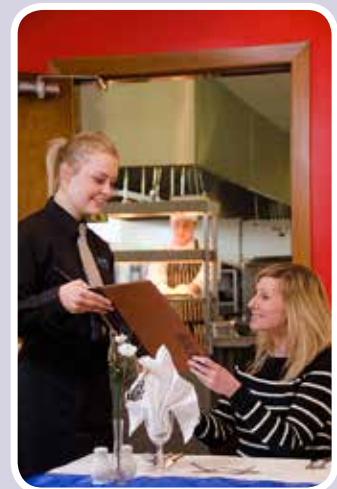
These courses are run in close collaboration with the food and drink industry, including many private sector companies located close to the Elmwood campus in Fife. These businesses are generally small or micro enterprises and the approaches that Elmwood's staff and students take recognise the challenges – and the opportunities - that this poses. For example, many small businesses are not in a position to develop their product ranges as they lack the expertise and resources to do so. Elmwood has been successful in securing assistance from the Scottish Funding Council's Interface Innovation Voucher Scheme to use their knowledge and skills to work with these businesses in developing new food and drink products.

The hospitality and catering team at Elmwood has provided support to deliver the Fife Food Network's 'Food from Fife' initiative. Students have helped at a number of high profile consumer events (such as the Good Food Show and the St Andrews Food and Drink Festival) and innovative business development workshops. Elmwood has also supported that delivery of a 'Profit on a Plate' food tourism workshop for local B&Bs, chefs and restaurant owners.

Working closely with these small businesses has enabled many students to see how business ideas develop and grow into the manufacture and sale of a successful food and drink product, and the challenges and opportunities that arise in this process, particularly for micro businesses based in rural areas. The businesses themselves benefit from the real practical know how of Elmwood's staff and students and the facilities available on the Campus.

The Campus at Elmwood is therefore closely tied into the work of food and drink businesses in the local rural economy, with students emerging from their training with specialist knowledge of the sector, but also the challenges and opportunities of working in a rural area.

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In recognition of the importance of youth work in improving the life chances of young people, the Scottish Government, YouthLink Scotland and Education Scotland launched a new five-year National Youth Work Strategy in April 2014 to set out key goals for youth work. The Strategy also sets out to involve young people more fully in government policy<sup>39</sup>. It is perhaps also worth noting that the September referendum will be the first occasion in the UK when 16 and 17 year olds have been eligible to vote in a national poll, giving them an important say in shaping the future of Scotland<sup>40</sup>.

There are also a number of specific funding programmes, run by the Scottish Government and others, which explicitly seek to target young people. The Climate Challenge Fund, for example, has been refreshed this year to help applications from disadvantaged



communities and young people, as well as continuing to support the whole system approach for young people at risk. In April 2014, it was announced that an additional £2 million had been made available specifically for youth projects through the Big Lottery Fund's Investing in Communities scheme. This included a grant of just over £1 million for a social enterprise in Dumfries and Galloway which aims to provide work experience for young people with learning disabilities or special needs <sup>41</sup>.

While much of the policy and programme context for supporting young people does not have an explicit spatial reference (i.e. it applies equally to both rural and urban areas), as discussed in our review of the existing evidence earlier in this section, there are instances where the rural context provides particular opportunities and challenges for young people. In recognition of this, for example, ProjectScotland (Scotland's youth volunteering agency) has recently been awarded Scottish Government funding specifically to expand its work with young people in rural areas to increase their chances of finding work. The agency offers 16 to 30 year olds full-time structured volunteering opportunities with charities working in a variety of sectors across Scotland <sup>42</sup>.

Another organisation which specifically recognises the needs and challenges faced by young people in rural Scotland is Youth Scotland, Scotland's largest youth work organisation, which has a particular presence in Scotland's rural areas.



## Youth Scotland



Youth Scotland has been in existence since the 1930s when it was established to provide positive social activities for Scotland's inner city servant girls who were very often feeling isolated from their rural homes, families and friends. We've come some way since then! Youth Scotland is the largest youth work organisation in Scotland and delivers quality youth work programmes, information, resources, training and support to community-based youth work. We're celebrating our anniversary this year with the strap line of "80 years of Opening Doors for Young People" and we now have a membership in excess of 1,200 groups, with 60,841 young people and 7,396 youth workers, the majority of whom are voluntary.

In addition, we annually support over 5,000 young people per year to gain recognition for their volunteering achievements through Awards that are credit rated by the Scottish Qualifications Authority. The Youth Scotland membership is diverse, ranging from small rural youth groups to large urban projects. The common goal that we all share is better outcomes for young people.

The purpose of youth work is a little more defined now than it was in 1933! It still retains at its core, the need for building confidence and self-esteem, making informed decisions and developing the ability to manage personal and social relationships. Youth Scotland's membership of 1,200 youth groups provides a full reach across every local authority in Scotland, but more importantly has a much greater presence in rural areas. This should not come as a great surprise as the provision of other social opportunities increases proportionally for young people with urbanisation. The degree of skew toward rural representation is however quite marked. It won't come as a surprise to Shetlanders that there are more than 24 youth groups in the Islands, while the Western Isles boasts 31 youth groups. More than half of Youth Scotland's membership comes from remote rural areas, accessible rural areas, remote small towns or accessible small towns.

The delivery of Youth Scotland's services reflects the predominance of rural groups in our membership and our core value of equality by operating a principle that we offer a service that should be as easy to access regardless of where a youth group is located in Scotland. This means that when we are seeking funding for delivery of youth work opportunities or youth worker training, we take account of the need for Youth Scotland staff to travel to those groups, or we seek a budget for those groups to be able to travel to participate.

Sometimes the solution can be much more creative than funding travelling. Grant programmes can provide solutions that are devised locally to meet youth led local needs. Our CashBack for Communities Small Grants Scheme provides funding of up to £2,000 and favours youth groups that have historically had the least access to funding. National participation projects have operated through postal participation meaning that central belt urban groups have no advantage over the furthest flung rural group.

At the time of writing, our Youth Active team are delivering training in Shetland and an Involvement Training residential course supporting young people to develop their leadership skills is being planned for delivery in Scaladale Outdoor Centre on the Isle of Harris.

It is clear to Youth Scotland that the services that we have to offer are a lifeline to the most rural of Scotland's young people who have the same aspirations as their urban counterparts. We're very proud to be delivering opportunities for Scotland's young people, for the voluntary, sessional and part time youth workers that support them and to grow the capacity of the communities in which they are delivered.

For more information, please see: [www.youthscotland.org.uk](http://www.youthscotland.org.uk)

Or you can contact: [office@youthscotland.org.uk](mailto:office@youthscotland.org.uk) or Tel. 0131 554 2561

## Rural policy objectives relating to young people

As noted earlier, the evidence demonstrates that youth out-migration has long been a challenge for rural Scotland, as it is for the rural areas of most OECD countries. This is reflected in a long-held concern relating to young people in the Scottish Government's rural policies and strategies, which have tended to focus on increasing the opportunities available to young people, with the aim of improving the choices available to them.

The Scottish Executive's flagship strategy, 'Rural Scotland: A New Approach' (2000), was focused on four broad themes, including 'Breaking down barriers - to ensure that all of our rural citizens have the opportunity to fulfil their potential, providing social justice for all, and ensuring that our young people are not forced to leave their communities to get on'. In measuring their progress against these themes in 2003 (in 'Rural Scotland: Taking Stock' <sup>43</sup>), the Scottish Government highlighted several actions that have particularly focused on improving the lives of young people, including the expansion of higher education opportunities in the South West of Scotland through the Crichton Campus and in the north and west through the University of the Highlands and Islands. These developments increase the local education possibilities for young people, so that they are not forced to leave to access them elsewhere.

'Rural Scotland Better Still Naturally' <sup>44</sup>, produced four years later in 2007, identified priorities still requiring action including engaging with young people to better understand the drivers of their locational choices and the importance and lack of availability of appropriate affordable housing.

In 2010, the Rural Development Council's consultation document 'Speak up for Rural Scotland' <sup>45</sup> recognised that 'young people will often leave the communities in which they have been raised and it is right that they should have the opportunity to gain experience in the wider world. But a thriving, resilient community will attract others, who are looking for a different quality of life, and will create opportunities that encourage people to return, bringing with them acquired skills and experience'. This document therefore represents a slight shift in emphasis, recognising that young people will still leave but highlighting the critical importance of return migration for building resilient rural communities. The consultation document also recognises the importance of high speed broadband infrastructure to meet the expectations and of young people in the digital society <sup>46</sup>.

The Scottish Government's response to Speak up for Rural Scotland, Our Rural Future <sup>47</sup>, published in 2011, emphasises the need for young people to have the opportunity to build careers and prosperous futures in the area where they grew up. This is consistent with the NPF and again reflects a concern about improving the choices for young people. The consultation response again notes the importance of broadband for educational purposes and of affordable housing, particularly for attracting young families and creating growing, thriving rural communities.

Speak up for Rural Scotland emphasised the need for flexibility in training opportunities to provide the skills needed by rural employers and to support future economic opportunities in important rural sectors, including tourism, land management and renewable energy development. In its response, the Scottish Government acknowledged that learning provision should meet the particular needs of rural communities through a range of flexible delivery mechanisms that take account of rurality and include practical subjects relevant to rural economies. Through the Curriculum for Excellence, the Government noted that rural schools and colleges will attach more importance to the development of entrepreneurial skills. The Government also noted its work on skills to strengthen the engagement between learning providers, Sector Skills Councils, employers and learning providers to respond more effectively to them.

The Scottish Government's overall aims in terms of rural Scotland are to promote development in rural areas and create a dynamic rural Scotland with active, empowered communities, which are growing in confidence and diversity. Indeed, in terms of national economic goals, the Scottish Government's Economic Strategy <sup>48</sup> explicitly endorses the importance of population growth to achieve its overall purpose, and sets national, regional and local level population growth targets for Scotland.

Young people have a critical role to play in creating and sustaining the Scottish Government's vision for economic growth and positive rural communities. However, in recognition that many young people will leave rural communities – and rightly so – attracting return migrants is critically important. Thus, when seeking to achieve the Scottish Government's aim of securing sustainable, resilient rural communities, the two policy strands discussed here are important. First, young people specific policy interventions around employment, education, housing and raising levels of engagement for example, and ensuring that these take into account the specific circumstances of rural young people. And, second, broader policies and strategies to maintain the in-migration of people into rural communities to counterbalance the out-migration of the young.

The final part of this section draws together these policy strands together to make some suggestions for future policy and practice approaches to supporting young people to fully contribute to creating a more vibrant and resilient rural Scotland.



## Supporting young people to help create a vibrant, sustainable rural Scotland

This Chapter of our 2014 *Rural Scotland in Focus* report has highlighted the challenges facing young people in rural Scotland when it comes to accessing adequate employment, education, housing and services, and overcoming negative perceptions and stereotypes. It has demonstrated that many of these are persistent and long-standing, despite considerable policy and practice efforts to alleviate them.

The final part of this section discusses some key ways in which young people living in rural Scotland may be better supported in making appropriate life choices whether that involves staying, and avoiding the very real risk of becoming excluded, or leaving. It also reflects on appropriate ways in which people may be encouraged to move back to rural Scotland or indeed to rural Scotland as new migrants in later life. This move may be made as young adults with (or with the potential of having) a young family, or as older people.

### Tailored, flexible policies

Young people are diverse and those at the same age growing up in the same locations will be facing different opportunities and challenges and will have different capacities and resources to respond to those opportunities and challenges by staying in their home area or by leaving. The same factors – education, employment, transport, housing and perceptions and stereotypes – will combine differently for different individuals resulting in different outcomes.

Data on the proportions of young people in the population and on migration patterns reveals the variations across rural Scotland: between accessible and remote; north and south; east and west, and between localities within LAs. Despite the masking of individual level factors in data amalgamated at LA level and at datazone-level, the need to inform place-based policy responses makes data analysis still useful and informative.



In this section we have identified four 'types' of migration patterns as illustrated by different rural LAs which can help to provide the evidence base for appropriate policy responses. For example, appropriate policy responses in LAs where 'younger young people' are leaving in large numbers (such as in the Western Isles) are likely to be different when compared to areas where 'older young people' are moving in to replace them (such as Aberdeenshire). Policy responses in areas where few young people are leaving and moving in (low churn, such as East Ayrshire) are likely to be different to those in areas where large numbers are moving in and out and the population is mobile (high churn, such as Stirling).

Thus, as we have argued when analysing the characteristics of rural Scotland (in all of our *Rural Scotland in Focus* reports), tailoring and flexibility is required. This is particularly the case when budgets are tight to ensure funding is spent in the most efficient and effective ways in different places. Involving those who will be affected by policy and practice approaches in decisions about how they are shaped is critical to ensuring that they are appropriate and fully supported.

### Supporting young people into employment

The data and literature presented here has demonstrated the importance of good quality employment and education opportunities in encouraging young people to stay in rural Scotland, or at least providing them with the choice to stay. UK data on youth employment and unemployment demonstrates that young people have found the recent economic conditions especially challenging in terms of their participation in the labour market, therefore the Scottish Government's particular policy focus on this issue is appropriate. Scotland's Cabinet Secretary for Training, Youth and Female Employment extends the responsibilities of the post of Minister for Youth Employment and brings the post into the Scottish Cabinet. A key part of the post will be implementing proposals put forward by the Wood Commission for 'Developing Scotland's Young Workforce' which are designed to improve young peoples' transition into employment<sup>49</sup>.

For rural Scotland, policy interventions need to focus on increasing local, well paid opportunities to enter the labour market, in both existing and new sectors, as well as support to set up new business ventures, such as improved broadband provision (for a review of the current picture in terms of broadband see Chapter 1 of this report), ensuring the availability of appropriate and affordable business premises and maintaining a planning system which allows for, if not positively encourages, new economic development in the countryside (see Chapter 4 of this report for a full discussion of the need for an integrated, positive planning system in Scotland). Promoting a more diverse, vibrant countryside will help to counter the widely held perception that 'to get on in life, you have to get out of rural areas'. It will also help to encourage people of all ages who wish to remain economically active to move back to rural areas, thus counterbalancing out-migration, helping to boost services, further diversifying the local economy and creating a positive upward growth spiral.

There are a number of local scale initiatives which are supporting young people into employment across rural Scotland. The Barnados Works scheme which has been running in the Cairngorms and been expanded to other parts of rural Scotland, is a good example.



## Employment placements in the Cairngorms National Park

Barnardo's Works is a service provided by charity Barnardo's Scotland that supports young people from deprived communities to secure independent, sustainable employment. The service provides a four step programme that partners with employers to get young people aged 16-24 into work.

**Barnardo's Works**  
engage ■ train ■ qualify ■ employ

The service has operated for over 10 years in Scotland and in 2010 piloted the programme in the Cairngorms National Park, the first time it had run Barnardo's Works in a rural setting. The charity recognised that some young people in the Cairngorms experienced barriers to employment due to being unable to access the same training opportunities available to young people in cities or towns, and that there was a skills shortage in the Cairngorms due to an ageing workforce in many rural sectors.

The Barnardo's Works project aimed to enable young people to access independent employment by gaining work experience, skills and relevant training. Specific issues that were relevant to the Cairngorms context were factored into the service delivery, such as seasonal employment, self employment and the needs of small and micro businesses and traditional occupations.

Barnardo's Works Project Workers set up placements with suitable employers, such as the Cairngorms Ski Lift operator, farms, saw mills, and a Site of Special Scientific Interest through Scottish Natural Heritage. Young people were usually referred to Barnardo's Works through Skills Development Scotland and the Job Centre, and their wages for a 25 hour week were paid through the (former) Future Jobs Fund.

Young people and employers received monthly support from their Project Worker and some young people were given relevant training, such as LANTRA quad bike, tractor and forklift training. Project Workers helped tackle the transport and logistical barriers that young people faced in accessing the placement and provided flexible support wherever possible, for example through giving lifts to trainees. Some were also supported with particular personal challenges such as alcohol dependency through local organisations.

The young people taking part in the scheme were given the opportunity to meet other young people, grow their social circle and increase their confidence by realising they were not alone in experiencing employment difficulties. Barnardo's Works enabled the young people participating in the scheme to gain skills and experience that helped with their employment prospects, as well as providing them with a job. Of the 17 trainees in the pilot phase, 12 moved into sustained employment straight after the programme, with many staying in the same post. Others were supported by the Project Workers with CV writing and job searches in order to find other employment. This support continued for as long as they wanted and needed it.

The support provided by Barnardo's Works helped employers see the benefits of taking on young people whom they may not have otherwise considered, and they benefited through having trainee's salaries paid through the Future Jobs Fund.

Since the pilot phase the service has moved from a model of rural skills to rural employability for a number of reasons. First, the employability model better suits the needs of a diverse range of young people as some young people were better suited to other sectors (e.g. health and social care, retail). Secondly, rural employers often only have a small core team and relied on contractors/ seasonal employees which meant that it was a big step for them to employ young people without additional incentives such as ongoing help with training or salary costs. Also, employers working in rural skills often required young people to have their own transport and driving licence which was a huge barrier for young people on limited incomes to overcome, but which was not so important in other rural sectors providing employment opportunities for young people. Finally, the funding was much reduced after the pilot phase, which reduced the amount available for skills training in areas such as manual handling.

Through adopting an employability approach the service has continued to grow and Barnardo's Works supports young people in rural communities across Aberdeenshire, Perth and Kinross as well as through their sister service that covers the Highlands and Moray. The service links with a range of services, including social care, childcare, retail, hospitality, construction and local estates and other employers in the rural skills sector and around 70 per cent of the young people taking part move into employment.

For more information see Cairngorms LEADER Evaluation 2008 – 2013 for the full Barnardo's Works case study upon which much of this example is based and [http://www.barnardos.org.uk/barnardo-s-works-cairngorm/scotland\\_service\\_view.htm?id=176458479](http://www.barnardos.org.uk/barnardo-s-works-cairngorm/scotland_service_view.htm?id=176458479)

National scale policies and programmes must take account of the particular characteristics of the rural labour market to ensure that rural young people have the same access to employment schemes and apprenticeships as those living in urban areas. This may mean, for example, recognising that most rural businesses are small and therefore may require particular arrangements for taking on apprenticeships, or recognising the higher transport costs likely to be faced by rural young people when taking on work placements, for which pay may be low. The Scottish Government must therefore take into account the specific needs of young people living in these areas – a kind of ‘young people proofing’ - to ensure that they are not disadvantaged in comparison to their urban counterparts.



Rurally-based institutions (such as the University of the Highlands and Islands), rural campuses of urban-based institutions (such as the Crichton Campus in Dumfries or Heriot-Watt University presence in Galashiels) and campuses of organisations that have both a rural and an urban presence (such as Scotland’s Rural College) have a critical role to play in helping to improve the supply of local education and training provision across rural Scotland. The Crichton Campus in Dumfries, for example, provides an ‘education and business hub’ for Dumfries and Galloway, providing students with the opportunity to study in a rural location and bringing wider economic and social benefits to the region in which it is located including retaining young people for the duration for their studies, some of whom may then stay in the region.

However, while improving employment and education prospects is important in giving young people a choice as to whether to remain locally and work, or a route to escape/avoid exclusion, it is not enough. Interventions focused on this policy domain need to be aligned with others targeting other issues, as described next.

### **The need for holistic, cross-sectoral working and a joined-up approach**

There are many good examples of focused, sectoral interventions to tackle a particular aspect of life in rural areas that young people find challenging (albeit with potentially wider benefits). The Wheels to Work projects are one such example, seeking to improve young people’s access to private transport to access education and employment. The Barnados Works project mentioned earlier focuses on getting young people into employment. However, the review of data and literature presented earlier in this chapter revealed the interconnectedness of many factors when individuals are deciding whether to stay in rural Scotland or to leave. This is well described by Shucksmith in his review of social exclusion in rural areas, where he discusses the interplay between transport, employment and housing (explored in Chapter 3). “Young people in rural areas, earning low wages, must have a car to get to work, but this together with the shortage of affordable housing, leaves them unable to afford to live independently. There is also an initial problem of needing a job in order to afford a car, which they need to secure a job.”<sup>50</sup>

Moreover, providing jobs and education opportunities, and improving access to them, is critical but without an adequate supply of affordable housing to buy or rent, young people will not be able to live locally to take advantage of them<sup>51</sup>. In addition, improving wider service provision, such as broadband and leisure services, is also important.

A need for joint working across policy domains and multiple stakeholders, particularly when budgets for interventions are tight, is frequently referred to when discussing policy implications for rural Scotland, and addressing the challenges facing young people is no exception. Scotland has a Minister for Children and Young People (Aileen Campbell MSP) as well as the Cabinet Secretary post with a portfolio including youth employment (created in April, 2014), which should help to facilitate joint working at the top level in Government. However, this joint working also needs to take place between policy staff working within the Scottish Government, as highlighted by Scotland’s Chief Medical Officer in 2013 in ‘Supporting Young People’s Health and Wellbeing’<sup>52</sup>.

Joined-up strategies at local level require the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in design and delivery, including young people themselves<sup>53</sup>. This may be achieved by ‘tapping into’ existing networks or groups, such as the Scottish Youth Parliament, Young Farmers or other youth groups. This engagement must be sustained in the long-term and must engage everyone from the outset of activities.

Two examples of collaborative partnership-based approaches were initiated in the ‘Stayin Alive’ project.



## Stayin Alive in Glendale and Langholm

In 2013, SRUC's Rural Policy Centre worked with the Glendale Gateway Trust (GGT) and the Langholm Initiative (LI) to explore the reasons why young people leave Glendale in North Northumberland and Langholm in eastern Dumfries and Galloway. The project sought to identify and initiate tangible actions to encourage young people to stay in or return to the two communities.



Young people in **Glendale** reported that the key issues affecting them included limited work, training, transport, affordable housing, leisure and participation opportunities. Outside the main town in Glendale (Wooler) young people reported feeling particularly isolated, but they also reported that the area has many positive aspects too, including a sense of safety, friendliness and community spirit. A key disadvantage of the Glendale area is that, while young people are educated locally up to age 13/14, they are then dispersed to high schools outwith the area for the remainder of their education which disrupts their social networks and contributes to a sense of local disengagement.

Led by GGT – but working closely with local young people themselves - a number of new initiatives have been put in place to improve the local opportunities for young people, including:

- addressing affordable housing provision (GGT itself owns and manages some local housing units), particularly for young single people;
- encouraging closer links between businesses, training providers, schools and colleges to improve young peoples' awareness of opportunities, to better link skills needs and training provision, and to increase young peoples' awareness of the potential to set up new enterprises;
- creating more local leisure activities, including a film club, and providing more accessible information about activities that are available (including perhaps through a 'digital platform');
- exploring ways to supplement public transport provision with community transport, particularly linked to evening events and activities;
- engage young people more centrally in local community activities, including events taking place in the Cheviot Centre, the main community facility in Wooler.



The parallel work in **Langholm** also identified some of the key challenges facing young people in the local area, including limited employment opportunities (partly due to the economic downturn and remote rural location of the area), leisure activities and transport provision, and problems of social isolation (masked by a positive picture of greater community engagement and cohesion in rural areas overall). Local employers also highlighted challenges relating to staff recruitment, skills shortages and training needs. Evidence suggested that the out-migration of young people was beginning to negatively affect the sustainability of local assets, including village halls, shops and other services.

The Langholm Enterprise Academy Partnership was set up to deliver a coordinated programme of community entrepreneurship to tackle some of these challenges, alongside an Employers Forum involving Langholm Academy, local employers and community representatives. Enterprise and employability issues are critical, but the activities of the Partnership extend wider than this. A key underlying principle is that there should be an alliance between the school and the community (to create a whole community solution) and that the local educational institution has a critical role to play locally as an 'agent of change'. Local partners are working towards Langholm Academy becoming a Community Enterprise Hub, to focus on improving local skill levels, developing programmes to support local businesses and developing links with other education institutions, including outside the region.

The aim is to establish a facility to provide high quality entrepreneurship training across the local community, including entrepreneurship programmes to enhance the skills of young people, practical courses (e.g. on construction skills, creative digital media and energy), work placements, and a number of specific projects, for



example, focusing on tackling skills and unemployment and offering complementary business support. The facility can be accessed by people from across the community, including young unemployed, those looking to up-skill and employers looking to improve specific skills for members of their workforce.

As the two communities exhibit some similarities but are also quite different (not least in terms of the structure of local education provision), the Stayin Alive project demonstrates the need to ensure that the approaches taken to tackling the challenges relating to youth out-migration in different places are tailored to the particular local challenges and opportunities. The project has also confirmed the inter-related nature of the issues facing young people, and the need to take an integrated approach to tackling them. For this to happen, it is important that all local stakeholders, including education and training providers, young people themselves, private sector employers, and community groups work collaboratively.

More information on the Stayin Alive project can be found here:

<http://www.sruc.ac.uk/stayinalive>, including the final reports produced by both communities.

More information on the Glendale Gateway Trust is available here:

<http://www.wooler.org.uk/glendale-gateway-trust> and on the Langholm Initiative is available here

<http://www.langholm-online.co.uk/pages/content.asp?PageID=156>



In Glendale, North Northumberland a variety of local actors have come together, coordinated by the Glendale Gateway Trust (GGT, the local development trust) to improve the local evidence base on youth migration patterns and to propose a range of responses, including setting up a local film club, engaging young people more fully in the work of the GGT, and expanding local affordable housing provision.

In Dumfries and Galloway, the Langholm Enterprise Academy Partnership has been set up, involving local employers, representatives of the local school (Langholm Academy), young people, and other community representatives. The aim is that the school becomes a 'critical agent of change' as a Community Enterprise Hub, to improve local skill levels, develop programmes to support local businesses and establish links with other education institutions, including outside the region. This approach is based on taking a 'whole community approach' and creating a strong alliance between the school and the wider community. Again, such an initiative may bring future benefits, in terms of creating a positive development dynamic which helps to draw in new migrants in future.

### **Empowering, engaging and supporting young people in rural Scotland**

Encouraging employers and training providers to engage with young people is an important part of improving their potential for participating in the labour market. However, more broadly, ensuring that young people are fully engaged in other activities in their local community, including social and cultural festivals and events (such as the Up Helly Aa Festival in Shetland mentioned by members of the Scottish Youth Parliament), will help to increase their sense of pride in the place where they live and will give them access to additional skills and other benefits including raising their self-confidence (i.e. will improve their human and social capital). Groups such as Young Farmers play a valuable role in engaging young people in their local communities, and not only those from farming backgrounds<sup>54</sup>.

Young people have been crucial in the success of the Muckle Toon Adventure Festival in Langholm, Dumfries and Galloway. The event has brought direct and indirect benefits to those involved, as well as to the wider local community, in terms of current residents, and the potential to draw in new residents in future.



## The Muckle Toon Adventure Festival, Langholm, Dumfries and Galloway



The Muckle Toon Adventure Festival (MTAF) ran for the first time in 2013. The decision to run the Festival was prompted by a number of developments, including the risk that the Langholm Walking Festival (which had run for 12 years) would not happen in 2013 due to the retirement of the chairman and principal organiser. The MTAF also built on recommendations in a CADISPA (Conservation and Development in Sparsely Populated Areas) Trust report undertaken in Langholm and Eskdale in 2012-13 which recommended that, to improve the future prospects for Langholm, the community should develop a strategy (shaped by local people) and related amenities to market the area as a tourist destination, and that it should continue to develop closer links with the local estate, Buccleuch Estates.

The MTAF has been designed with a number of objectives, including:

- To provide high quality sporting events in a rural location;
- To maximise the potential of the natural environment for recreational sport;
- To build links with local clubs and ensure sustainability;
- To create opportunities for the growth of local businesses;
- To promote volunteering and healthy lifestyles through exercise.

The MTAF works in partnership with community businesses and organisations to provide an economic stimulus and raise the profile of Langholm as a tourist destination.

In 2013, the Festival attracted over 800 participants across various activities, with 68% of surveyed participants coming from outside the region, and a significant amount of money spent in the local economy on accommodation and food. Experience from 2013 demonstrated that participation in the event brought major benefits to community confidence after a difficult economic time locally caused by job losses in major employers.

The enthusiasm and commitment of young people have been critical to the success of MTAF, acting as Directors and volunteers to help with the preparation, planning and marshalling of events, guided walks and other Festival activities. The strength of community spirit is evident in creating a highly effective and energised group that transcends throughout all age groups.

The success of the 2013 event, both in terms of local support and visitor numbers, prompted the decision to hold a second MTAF in May 2014. The organisers invested in local volunteers calling them 'Muckle Makers' and providing branded t-shirts. This helped to generate a strong sense of pride, responsibility and being part of an enthusiastic team. The 2014 event included mountain bike and running marathons, 10k runs and bike time trials, guided walks, childrens' activities and film screenings.

In future, the organisers plan to expand beyond a one weekend Festival and introduce other events throughout the year.

For more information on the MTAF please go to: <http://www.muckletoonadventurefestival.co.uk/>

Or you can contact Eve Johnson, Marketing Officer for MTAF at: [eve@mtaf.co.uk](mailto:eve@mtaf.co.uk)





## Enabling young people to make informed choices about their futures

The policy approaches identified so far here are focused on providing better support for young people who decide to remain in rural Scotland. They may also encourage those young people who might otherwise have reluctantly left, to remain in their local area thus helping to contribute to the creation and maintenance of rural communities with more balanced demographic profiles in the context of overall population ageing.

However, it is inevitable that some young people will still leave<sup>55</sup>. Indeed, in previous work in 2009, HIE<sup>56</sup> suggested a six-fold grouping of young people based on their attitudes and the push and pull factors that affect their migration decisions: committed leavers, reluctant leavers, reluctant stayers, committed stayers, potential returners and potential new residents. They argue that effort should be particularly focused on attracting and retaining three groups in particular, reluctant leavers, potential returners and potential new residents.

Much of the international literature on the movement of young people out of rural areas into urban centres argues that stopping this trend is impossible, and indeed, undesirable. For some young people, leaving is undoubtedly the best option. Staying locally may reduce their chances of acquiring new skills, networks and experiences which would benefit them as individuals as well as their wider local communities<sup>57</sup>.

Enabling young people to have choices, and making sure that when making those choices they have access to as much information and advice as possible, is therefore critical. Policies and strategies need to focus on ensuring that these individuals have access to appropriate support, advice and information, from family, friends and professionals: 'policies should be offering real choice to young people rather than be designed simply to retain them in rural communities'<sup>58</sup>.

It is important that young people themselves are involved in decisions about the support and information needed and the mechanisms to provide them, to ensure that this is done in the most appropriate ways. Arguably, the support needs of young people in rural areas are even greater than those in urban areas, due to the potentially more radical nature of changes in their lives, including the need to leave home at a younger age to access education opportunities or the higher likelihood of becoming separated from peers who make different decisions about their future<sup>59</sup>.

## Encouraging return migration to rural communities

The out-migration of young people, indeed people of any age, from rural areas will have a number of negative impacts on these communities, including placing downward pressure on local services such as schools, post offices and shops. Once such services are lost, the risk of further out-migration is increased. This out-migration also represents a loss of labour and human capital - the so-called 'brain drain' - and of reproductive potential in the short-term, as well as a long-term challenge in terms of not being able to replace those individuals who reach retirement age and exit the labour force<sup>60</sup>.

Importantly, however, and as demonstrated in the analysis and LA 'types' presented in this chapter, out-migration trends need to be examined alongside in-migration trends as, although an area might be experiencing high levels of out-migration of people in one age group, it may be attracting replacement individuals in another age group. This is certainly the case for some parts of rural Scotland. For some rural areas, the in-migrants or return migrants who are coming in are in older age groups (which brings both challenges and opportunities) wishing to downsize in terms of their employment or seeking better a quality of life, while for others, the inward trend involves people who are relatively early on in their working lives, perhaps moving in with young families. Attracting back people of any age may be a sign of a 'healthy' rural community, with 'unhealthy' rural communities sending youth away and also failing to attract replacement populations. Perhaps the 'least healthy' rural communities are those that do not send youth away and do not attract people at older ages.



High numbers of in-migrants can bring challenges for rural communities, including raising the demand for housing and therefore house prices, and Chapter 1 of this report has already highlighted the challenges in some rural LAs (including Aberdeenshire and Perth and Kinross) regarding new housing need. However, research has also demonstrated the positive benefits that in-migrants can bring, for example in terms of stimulating demand for local services, or economic benefits in terms of new skills (i.e. human capital), and new business formation and associated employment creation. In-migrants also bring network relationships that may extend beyond the local area giving them access to new knowledge, ideas and information (i.e. social capital) which they can use for the benefit of their new local area <sup>61</sup>.

It would be useful to undertake further research on the scale of return and new migration to different parts of rural Scotland. This research could explore the benefits and disadvantages that result from return migration, the reasons why people return (are they attracted back to areas due to family ties, for example, or are they attracted by quality of life or amenity considerations), and how social networks are formed and maintained between rural and urban communities through migration patterns, in order to inform appropriate policy responses to attracting them in greater numbers.

Specifically in the context of the trend towards an ageing population, some researchers have written about the dangers and undesirability of a 'segregated geography' where cities are occupied primarily by young people, the suburbs by families and the countryside by older people, arguing that this threatens to reinforce geographical, social and generational divides. To avoid this, rural areas need to do more to retain or attract back younger people in order to ensure a balanced population structure <sup>62</sup>.

There may be the opportunity to learn from other countries such as Japan, where there are more positive and proactive approaches taken to ensuring inter-generational contact and even shared living arrangements between older and younger people <sup>63</sup>. Also important is changing our predominantly negative perceptions of demographic ageing in the UK such that the positive benefits that older people can bring are recognised and can be built on. Notwithstanding the potentially increased pressures on local health and social care services as older people reach later life and their health deteriorates, evidence suggests that many older people are highly willing and able volunteers, with some having a considerable amount of disposable income and often wishing to remain economically active.

## Conclusion

This Chapter of *Rural Scotland in Focus 2014* has shown the geographical variations in the distribution of young people across Scotland and highlighted how migration patterns vary across different rural LAs and across young people at different ages. Reviewing the literature on the push factors for out-migration and for young people becoming excluded resulted in a list of explanatory factors which were explored in the context of rural Scotland.

It has argued that the out-migration of young people is not necessarily a 'bad' thing for them, nor for the communities in which they are brought up, providing those communities are attracting people and human capital to replace them. The critical things are to ensure that young people have choices about where they wish to pursue their lives, and to support them to make the right choices for themselves. Fundamentally, equipping rural young people with choices is about the creation and maintenance of sustainable, resilient rural communities which provide employment and education opportunities, housing options and leisure services so that people do not feel that they have to leave to find them, and so that people considering moving into rural Scotland know that these opportunities and services are available to them. This will result in communities with more balanced demographic profiles, which is critical to their sustainability and resilience.

As well as recognising that those young people who wish to leave rural communities should not be prevented from doing so, the Chapter has identified ways in which more young people might be encouraged to stay through enhanced economic and social opportunities and better information and advice provision. It is critically important that those young people who do stay are able to fully participate and engage in the rural communities in which they live. Not only will this help to prevent them from becoming excluded, but it will also ensure that they have a key role to play in the creation and maintenance of sustainable, resilient rural communities in future.



# 3. Rural Poverty and Disadvantage: Falling Between the Cracks?

Sarah Skerratt and Mike Woolvin

## Key points

1. Poverty and disadvantage in rural Scotland have been recognised, for the past 20-30 years, as having particular characteristics. These include: low incomes due to seasonal, short-term employment; fuel poverty due to old housing stock and being off-grid; and difficulties in accessing services (health, social care, employment, training, education, retail).
2. However, the tools for measuring poverty and disadvantage (mainly the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, SIMD) are not designed for rural Scotland. Low population numbers and dispersed settlements mean that poverty exists in isolated pockets rather than in whole neighbourhoods. So poverty and disadvantage in rural Scotland often remain hidden.
3. People in Scotland's rural areas experience poverty and disadvantage in ways where different elements combine with, and build on, each other. For example:
  - a. Accessing doctor's surgeries in remote rural areas is most difficult for those aged over 75. With the ageing rural population, and growing centralisation of services, this difficulty is going to increase.
  - b. Accessing services by private car transport is increasingly necessary. However, 2012 data show that in more than a third of all rural Local Authorities, half of those in the lowest income brackets have no access to a car.
  - c. Rural households in which the highest income householder is aged 60+ are more likely than not to be living in fuel poverty. In the Orkney Islands and Eilean Siar, more than 70% of such households are experiencing fuel poverty.
4. Our new review of national and rural policy shows that rural poverty and disadvantage appear to fall through the gaps. National policy is not sufficiently sensitised to 'rural'. Rural strategies do not consistently highlight poverty or how to address it, since it falls within the 'national remit'. The significance of SIMD in guiding policy further exacerbates this situation.
5. If policy fails to recognise the distinct and variable experience of poverty and disadvantage across rural Scotland, then National Outcomes will be far less achievable at national and local levels, particularly Outcome 7: "We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish Society."
6. Investment is required in generating appropriate tools for understanding and assessing rural poverty and disadvantage in order to direct support in ways which will have most impact. This needs to be coupled with systematic integration of rural poverty into national and/or rural strategies. The cost of making such changes is less than the on-going cost of people in rural Scotland continuing to live in poverty.



## Section 1: Rural poverty and disadvantage - why and what?

### Why focus on rural poverty and disadvantage?

Issues of poverty and disadvantage within Scotland have been a policy focus for a number of decades. Research regarding rural poverty has also – although limited – been ongoing. However, despite there being significant evidence regarding *objective measures* and indicators of poverty, substantial gaps remain in: (i) national approaches to measuring poverty and disadvantage in *rural* areas in a meaningful way, with the result that it remains under-represented; (ii) fully understanding the qualitative *experience* of poverty and disadvantage in rural areas and particularly how issues intersect and build on each other, exacerbating people's experiences. Coupled with this, we argue that there has been a lack of systematic integration of 'rural' dimensions of poverty and disadvantage in national policy in Scotland. In addition, rural-specific strategies do not consistently highlight poverty or how to address it, since it falls within the 'national' remit.

Collectively, these gaps exacerbate disadvantage in rural areas because 'rural poverty and disadvantage' remain under-represented and a myth can persist that those in rural areas are generally comfortable:

“...the popular misconception of prosperous rural areas often conceals poverty, inequality and social exclusion which bear on the lives of a substantial minority of those in rural Britain. It is important that these needs are not forgotten”.<sup>1</sup>

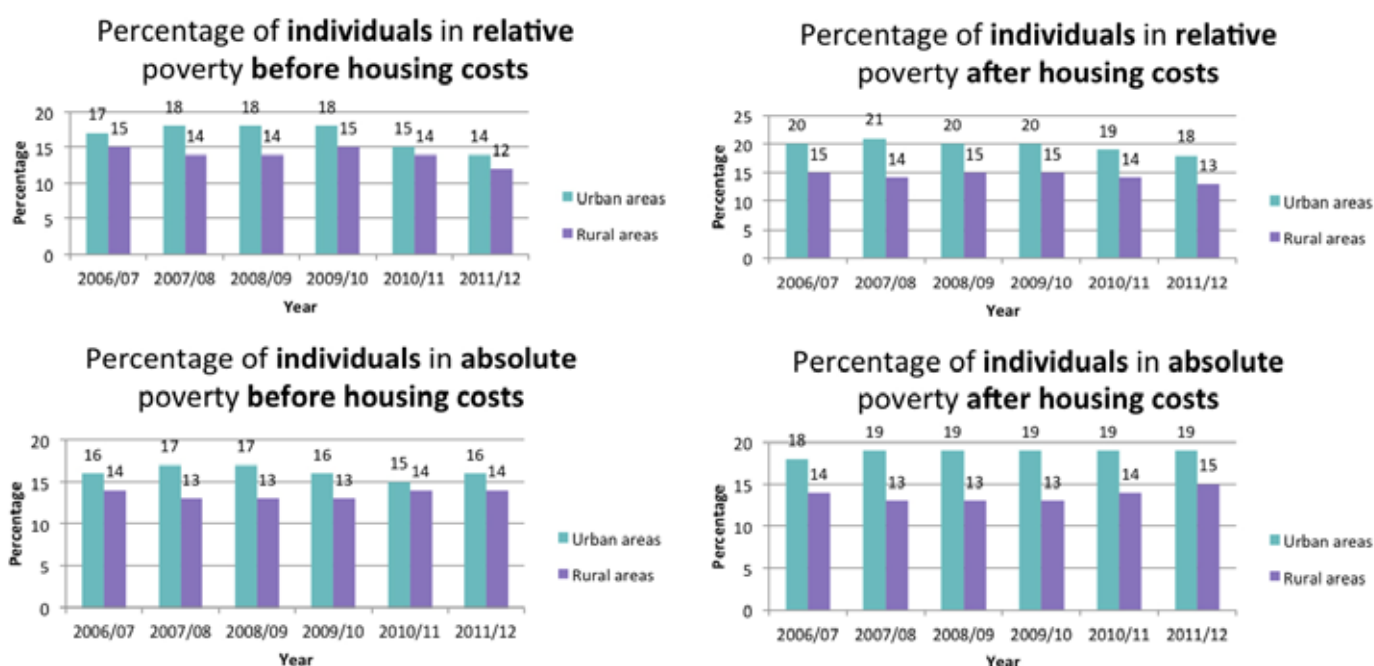
An absence of a thorough understanding and recognition of rural poverty and disadvantage ultimately has the potential to impact negatively on the achievement of the National Objectives of the Scottish Government, including “Wealthier and Fairer” and Healthier”, and on the National Outcomes of the Scottish Government, particularly Outcome 7: *We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish Society*.

These, therefore, provide compelling reasons for a further investigation of poverty and disadvantage in 21st Century rural Scotland.

### Why dig deeper?

One example of the lack of 'fit' with 'rural', and the need to dig beneath the headline statistics, is shown in Figure 1. This summarises analyses undertaken by the Scottish Government of the proportions of rural and urban individuals in relative and absolute poverty before and after housing costs from 2006/7 – 2011/12:

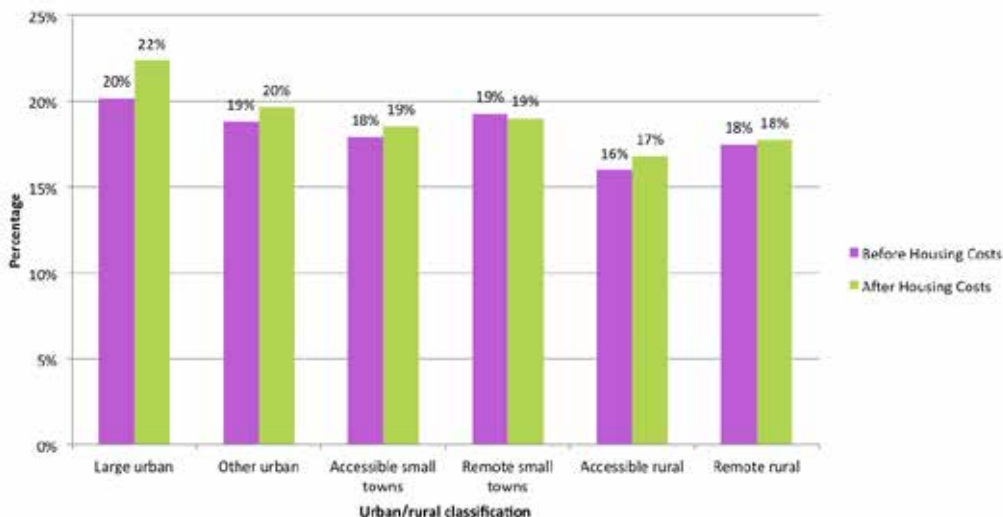
**Figure 1: Percentages of individuals in relative and absolute poverty before and after housing costs (Scotland, 2006/7 – 2011/12).**<sup>2</sup>



It shows that in all years, across the absolute/relative and before/after housing costs, **the proportion of individuals in poverty has been lower in 'rural' as compared with 'urban' Scotland.**

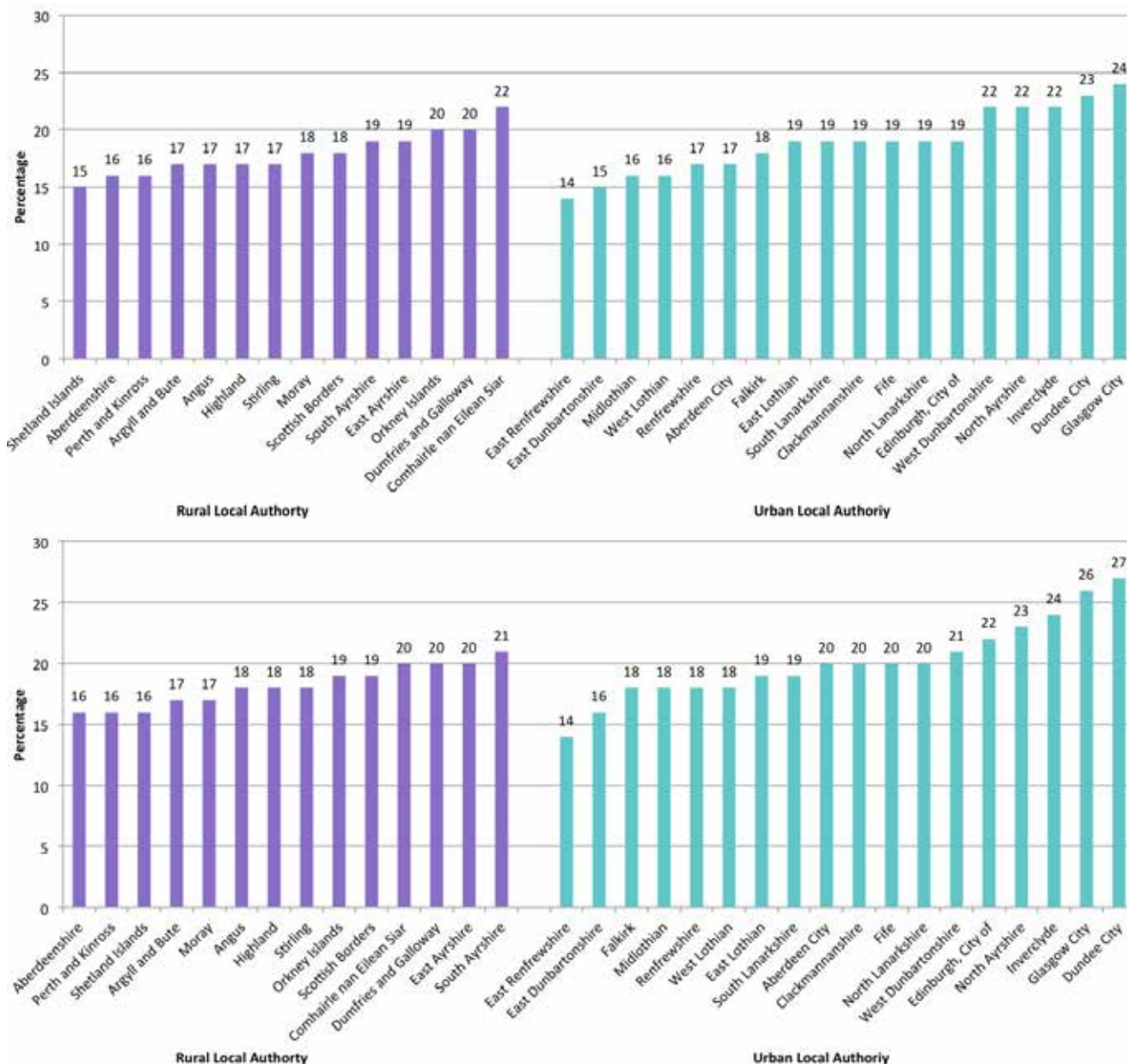
However, once we move beyond simple urban/rural distinctions, and examine the *diversity within* rural areas, a more complex picture emerges. Figure 2 shows the percentage of households in relative poverty before and after housing costs. The data suggest that the **lowest percentages of poor households are in accessible rural areas:**

Figure 2: Estimated percentage of households in different geographical areas which are in relative poverty and absolute poverty before and after housing costs (Scotland, 2008/9).<sup>3</sup>



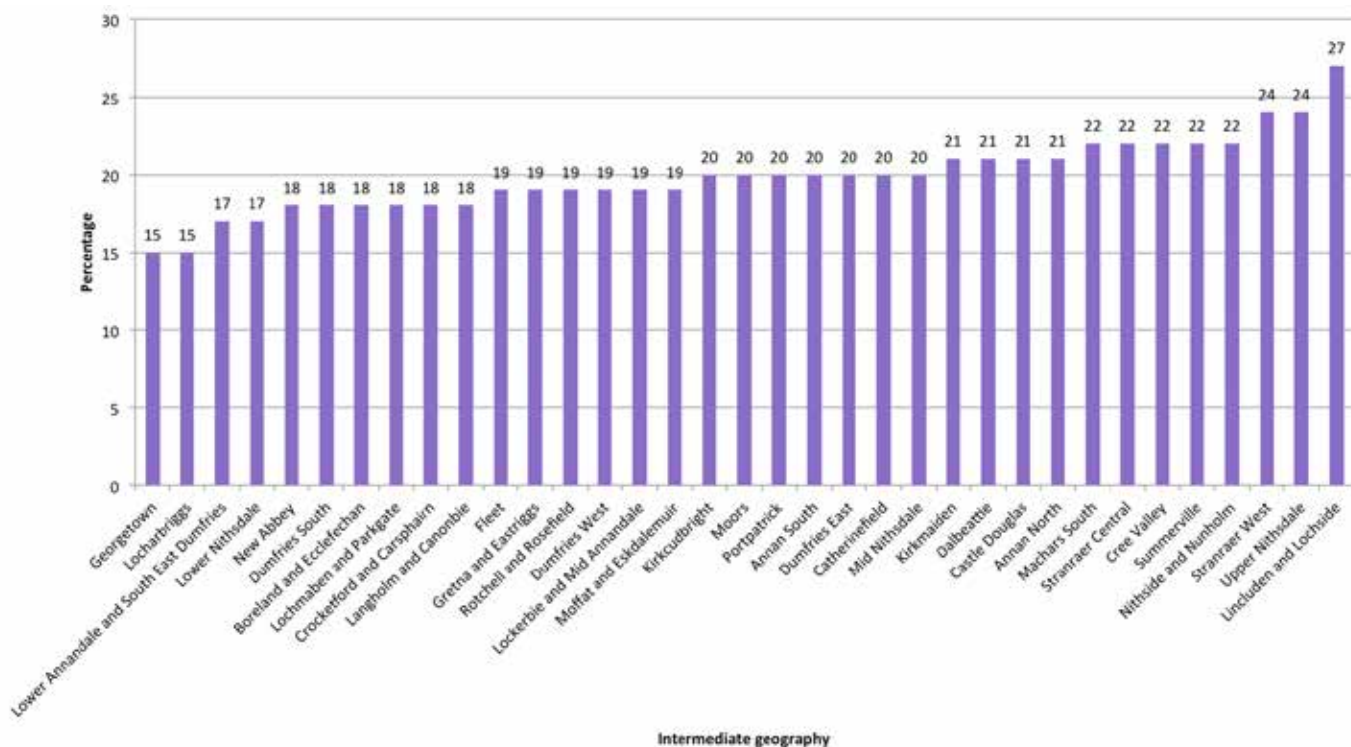
When we then look at geographical variation across Scottish Local Authorities, we see again that the picture is more complex than a simple urban/rural divide (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Estimated percentage of households in relative poverty before and after housing costs by urban/rural Local Authority (Scotland, 2008/9).<sup>4</sup>



And if we then go in a bit further, we can see that, even within a single Local Authority, there is additional variation (Figure 4: example, Dumfries and Galloway):

**Figure 4: Estimated percentage of households in relative poverty before housing costs in Dumfries and Galloway: 2008/2009.** <sup>5</sup>



However, when trying to capture these variations as the picture becomes more local, **one of the key challenges is that people and communities are more dispersed than in urban areas**. Conventional (urban-centric) indicators and approaches make poverty ‘less visible and less easily tractable’ <sup>6</sup>. Some commentators have argued that it is “regrettable when the scale of the urban area deprivation problem (even inadvertently) leads to the dismissing, ignoring, marginalising or downplaying of the significance of the problem of deprivation in rural Scotland” <sup>7</sup>. Coupled with this is the recognition that there are challenges in collecting poverty data which is robust at the household level <sup>8</sup>.

A second, related, criticism is that **inappropriate indicators of poverty and disadvantage are used** <sup>9</sup>. An example is cited by Shucksmith *et al* (1996): “The problem is that rural households came low on overcrowding and second-floor living, and high on car ownership, so, when indicators were combined, rural areas didn’t show up as experiencing disadvantage” <sup>10</sup>. It has also been argued that there is little effort focused on understanding causal explanations between such indicators <sup>11</sup>.

Before discussing the implications of this further, we take a moment to set out how we are defining poverty and disadvantage for the purposes of this chapter.

### What do we mean by poverty and disadvantage?

In policy terms, ‘**poverty**’ is for the most part defined by income poverty (Figures 1-4 above). A household or person is considered poor if their net income is less than 60% of the UK median <sup>12</sup>. The Scottish Government currently uses two main indicators of low income poverty: **relative** <sup>13</sup> and **absolute** <sup>14</sup> poverty. In 2011/12 the relative poverty threshold for a couple with no children was an income of £256 per week. In 2011/12 the absolute poverty threshold for the same couple was an income of £264 per week. Both rates are before housing costs (BHC) <sup>15</sup>. In 2011/12, there were 710,000 people (14% of the population) in relative poverty (BHC) and 780,000 people (15% of the population) in absolute poverty (BHC) in Scotland <sup>16</sup>.



However, some acknowledge that it is important to move beyond terms such as 'poverty' and 'deprivation' to include broader factors. This is because:

'The term 'deprivation' has become associated with an emphasis on the individual's own failings, rightly or wrongly, in contrast to the notion of 'disadvantage', whereby individuals or households are seen as systematically disadvantaged by economic and social restructuring and by the exercise of power in society.'<sup>17</sup>

Given this, we are using the following definition whereby:

"disadvantage' is used to describe an inability of individuals or households to share in styles of life open to the majority: it does not imply any failing on their part'<sup>18</sup>.

We also examine 'social exclusion', defined here as:

'a multi-dimensional, dynamic process which refers to the breakdown or malfunctioning of the major societal systems that should guarantee the integration of the individual or household. It implies a focus less on "victims" but more on system failure, and especially on the processes which cause exclusion. It also acknowledges the importance of the local context in such processes.'<sup>19</sup>

Given the importance of context and wider systems in these definitions, we begin with an in-depth review of policies and strategies which have sought to address poverty and disadvantage in Scotland (Section 2). We then move on to discuss key themes in rural poverty and disadvantage research, from the mid-1990s through to now (Section 3). Our discussion then moves on to the key issues concerning how to measure rural poverty appropriately (Section 4), and what happens when we start to 'unpack' the picture beyond the typical indicators (Section 5).

## Section 2: Tackling poverty and disadvantage through policy in Scotland

### Introduction

This sub-section comprises a substantial, new review of national policies and strategies to tackle poverty and disadvantage in Scotland since 1999. It is not our purpose to evaluate such policy developments, but rather to show how ideas and approaches have evolved over the past 15 years. Towards the end of this policy review, we then look at the extent to which rural poverty and disadvantage are highlighted in national policies and strategies, and finally, how they are raised in rural-specific policies and statements. This review is important since it helps us understand where, when and how poverty, and *rural* poverty, are represented, and the implications this then has for addressing rural poverty and disadvantage. Therefore, it is more than simply an overview, but instead develops the story in some depth.

### 1999-2006: Poverty, Social Justice and Inclusion

As noted in the introduction to *Poverty in Scotland* (2002, Brown *et al*), Donald Dewar stated in 1998 that:

"Too many Scots are excluded, by virtue of unemployment, low skills levels, poverty, bad health, poor housing or other factors, from full participation in society. Those of us who benefit from the opportunities of life in modern Scotland have a duty to seek to extend similar opportunities to those who do not. Social exclusion is unacceptable in human terms; it is also wasteful, costly and carries risk in the long term for our social cohesion and well-being. The government is determined to take action to tackle exclusion, and to develop policies, which will promote a more inclusive, cohesive and ultimately sustainable society"<sup>20</sup>.

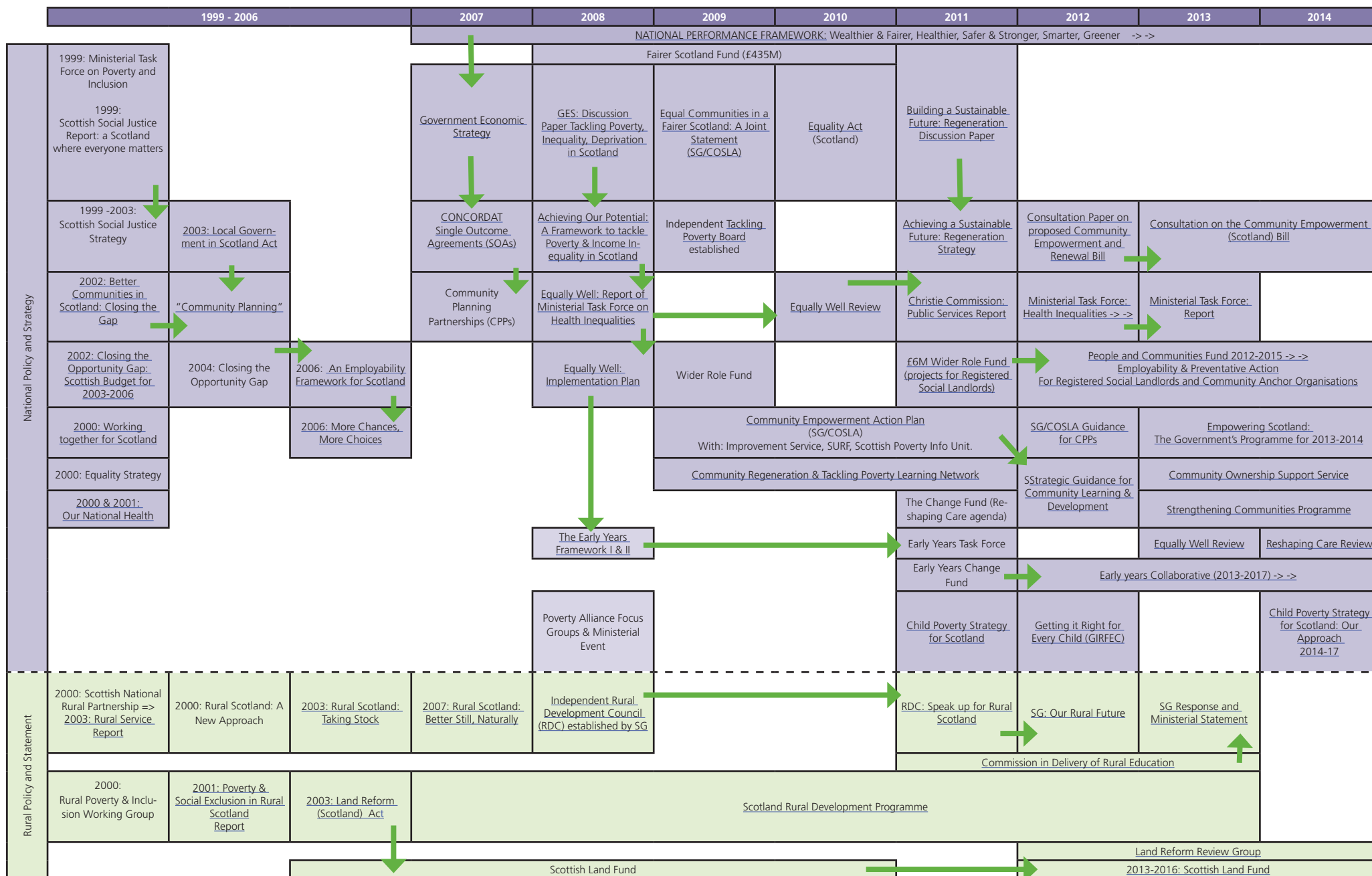
Within Scottish policy, there is a longstanding emphasis on social inclusion, partnership, equality and social justice. This is apparent (see Figure 5) in the appointment in 1999 of a **Minister for Social Justice**, as well as the establishment of a **Ministerial Task Force on Poverty and Inclusion** and the **Scottish Social Justice Strategy** (1999-2003). That same year also saw the publication of **Social Justice: a Scotland where everyone matters**<sup>21</sup> which recognised the need to "extend equality to a range of different social groups across Scotland, going beyond the issue of income inequality alone" (Mooney, 2001, p.10). The Social Justice section (pp.43-44), subtitled "*Working together for equality, to regenerate communities and to tackle poverty*", focused on three aims:

- To tackle poverty, ensure the best start in life for Scotland's children and give people more influence in their communities;
- To regenerate the most disadvantaged communities, ensure that decent affordable housing is available to everyone and increase residents' satisfaction with their neighbourhoods and communities (addressing empty homes, new homes and improved council housing);
- To promote equality of opportunity and community involvement.

Soon after, in 2000, we see the publication of: **Working Together for Scotland: A Programme for Government**<sup>22</sup> seeking to address cycles of poverty and disadvantage in families; the **Equality Strategy**; and **Our National Health: A Plan for action, a Plan for change**<sup>23</sup> in which poverty was recognised as a key determinant of poor health (Laughlin, 2002, p.152):

"To create a healthier Scotland, we have to tackle poverty and the root causes of ill health which persist in the life circumstances of too many in Scotland... Poverty, poor housing, homelessness and the lack of educational and economic opportunity are the root causes of major inequalities in health in Scotland. We must fight the causes of illness as well as illness itself" (Scottish Executive, 2000, p.5).

**Figure 5: Timeline showing Scottish Executive/Government national policies, strategies and statements for addressing poverty and disadvantage, and Scottish Executive/Government overall rural-specific policies and strategies, for the period 1999-2014 (Interactive diagram with live links).**





The momentum continued with the Scottish Executive's launch of **Better Communities in Scotland: Closing the Gap in 2002**<sup>24</sup>. In the Ministerial Foreword, we read that: "Breaking the cycle of deprivation, raising personal and community ambitions, and lifting children out of the misery of poverty are important aims of this government." (p.4). It is recognised that this is an extremely "complicated and difficult task" (p.6) but that "we do not accept the belief that deprivation and poverty cannot be avoided" (p.8).

In **Better Communities in Scotland: Closing the Gap** (Scottish Executive), 2002) we also read that the Scottish Executive began the process, for the first time, of establishing "a solid framework to allow us to measure progress in tackling the problems our disadvantaged communities face... to allow us to track change over time for the main priorities of health, jobs, education, crime and transport." (p.24). To do this, the Executive identified the need to develop the information sources and a set of indicators over a range of variables. Rather than creating new targets, the aim was to measure progress for existing targets "in closing the gap between incomes in deprived areas and the median" and to track change over time in deprived areas, in order to evaluate progress (p.24). At that time, the indicators were in the process of being decided, but those being considered included: employment in deprived areas; educational achievement; health improvement; child poverty; crime; transport; and housing. Significantly, the Scottish Executive states the anticipated significance of this framework in that it will be "the main system for setting outcome agreements and priorities at local level in local community plans, and we will work with COSLA, local authorities and other community planning partners to develop it... This will firmly root the work on community regeneration into the work on improving core services across the Scottish Executive. The Cabinet Sub-committee on Social Justice will monitor progress against the framework" (p.25). As a result, the **Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)** was established in 2003, and was felt to be a crucial step forward in systematically identifying and monitoring poverty and disadvantage in Scotland<sup>25</sup>.



Following a review of the Social Justice Strategy, the Scottish Executive then developed **Closing the Opportunity Gap** (2004), which was devised to focus on those issues particularly relevant to Scotland's experiences of poverty and deprivation. It set out three Aims, six high-level Objectives and ten lower-level Targets. The three aims were: (i) To prevent individuals or families from falling into poverty; (ii) To provide routes out of poverty for individuals and families; and (iii) To sustain individuals or families in a lifestyle free from poverty. The Objectives related to: sustained employment; confidence and skills of disadvantaged children; reducing family vulnerability; regenerating neighbourhoods; improving health status and access to (social) services in the most deprived neighbourhoods. The Targets were specific either to age group, geography or service.

The Targets of Closing the Opportunity Gap (CtOG) were to be delivered in part through **Community Planning Partnerships** (CPPs) which were in the process of being established by each of Scotland's 32 Local Authorities. The CPPs had been given a statutory basis in the **Local Government in Scotland Act (2003)**<sup>26</sup>, whereby:

"It is the duty of a local authority to initiate and, having done so, to maintain a process (in this Act, called "community planning") by which the public services provided in the area of the local authority are provided and the planning of that provision takes place after consultation (i) among all the public bodies (including the local authority) responsible for providing those services; and (ii) with such community bodies and other bodies or persons as it appropriate... It is the duty of the local authority to invite and take suitable action to encourage all other public bodies ... within the area of the local authority and such communities as the local authority thinks fit to participate appropriately in community planning." (Section 15)<sup>27</sup>.

**Closing the Opportunity Gap** continued to be the main framework for addressing poverty, disadvantage and social inclusion from 2004 through to 2007. Reflecting on the policy approach to poverty in Scotland over this early period, Mooney states that it was "strongly influenced and shaped by strategies that promote work activation, labour market participation and retraining, which together share a view that paid employment is the best route out of poverty." (2011, p.4). One example of this is the **Employability Framework for Scotland (2006)**<sup>28</sup> which has the subtitle "Part of the Scottish Executive's Closing the Opportunity Gap approach to tackling poverty", since "for most people and their families, work is the surest way out of poverty" (p.3). Mooney notes, however, that the view is not that poverty "be reduced to a question of income alone, or material wellbeing, but is also a matter of wellbeing in other senses" (p.4), highlighting how "social exclusion" is used to capture these wider dimensions of poverty. In Scotland, as distinct from England, it is important to note that the phrase "social inclusion" (rather than exclusion) was deliberately used to underpin all policies in this field, and continues to be the policy thread to the present day.

## 2007 to 2015: Achieving through Frameworks, Partnerships and Community Empowerment

As shown in Figure 5, 2007 is when we see the publication of **The Government Economic Strategy**<sup>29</sup> and associated **National Performance Framework**<sup>30</sup>, and significantly the establishment of the **Concordat**<sup>31</sup> between the Scottish Government and the Confederation of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA), resulting in **Single Outcome Agreements**<sup>32</sup> (SOAs) between Scotland's 32 Local Authorities and the Scottish Government (formally agreed in June 2009)<sup>33</sup>.

In relation to addressing poverty, the **National Performance Framework** superseded *Closing the Opportunity Gap*. The NPF represents a significant "gear-change" in Scottish Government policy in that all policy efforts became re-oriented towards the delivery of Outcomes underpinned by the Purpose of Government which is: "To focus government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth"<sup>34</sup>. As can be seen in Fig 5, there are five Strategic Objectives. These are delivered through 16 National Outcomes, in turn assessed by a range of Indicators from 2007-2017. Although several of the National Outcomes relate to poverty and disadvantage (employment, children's start in life, training and education, life chances, longer and healthier lives), the Outcome of specific relevance to this discussion is "**We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish Society**". The Scottish Government states that: "Although outcomes are generally improving for most people in Scotland they are not improving fast enough for the poorest and most disadvantaged sections of our society"<sup>35</sup>. The associated Indicator is to "**Reduce the proportion of individuals living in poverty**" where:

"The Scottish Government believes it is morally unacceptable that 17% of Scotland's people live in poverty... The Scottish Government has a significant role to play in tackling the root causes of poverty and mitigating the impacts of poverty through its policies in devolved areas such as education, health, skills, aspects of employability, housing, the criminal justice system and transport."<sup>36</sup>

In 2008, the Scottish Government published its Discussion Paper **Taking Forward the Government Economic Strategy: Tackling Poverty, Inequality and Deprivation in Scotland**<sup>37</sup>. This then led to the launch, with COSLA, of "**Achieving our Potential: A Framework to tackle poverty and income inequality in Scotland**"<sup>38</sup>. Alongside "Achieving our Potential" and sitting within the same social policy framework, the **Equally Well Report of the Ministerial Task Force on Health Inequalities**<sup>39</sup> and the associated **Equally Well Implementation Plan**<sup>40</sup>, together with the "Early Years Framework 1 and 2"<sup>41</sup>, were also launched to form a coherent approach, since:

"There is a strong positive relationship between having the best start in life, enjoying good health, a good education, and having enough money to provide for yourself and your family. These approaches recognise these relationships. They set the context for future investment decisions for the public sector in Scotland, as over time we shift resources from dealing with failure to tackling its root causes." (*Achieving our Potential*, p.4)

**Equally Well** (Scottish Government, 2008), the Report from the Ministerial Task Force on health inequalities, was unequivocal in spelling out the links between poverty, poor health and other manifestations, with the Task Force stating that: "Tackling poverty and deprivation will improve health and contribute directly to delivering the Government's overall purpose of sustainable economic growth." (p.24).

Key points to note from the Report are that, firstly: "People struggling with poverty and low income have poorer mental health and wellbeing than those with higher incomes or who find it easy to manage financially" (p.1) and that "poverty is a key factor in poor health and health inequalities." (p.24). Secondly, the report highlights the two-way link between health and employment, whereby "good quality employment helps physical health and mental health and wellbeing" (p.4) such that "increasing and improving employment opportunities is a significant means of tackling the root causes of poverty and poor health." (p.24). Thirdly, in these two extended quotes, we can see how the Report emphasises the ways in which different aspects of poverty interact and build on each other:

"People do not just live in poverty, they may also be a lone parent, may have a long-term disability that affects the work they can do, or live with discrimination which has an impact on their mental health. Gender, and masculinity in particular, contributes to problems of violence, to the reluctance of men to seek help for problems and may make men more likely to resort to alcohol and drugs than to seek help for a mental health problem." (p.12)

"Poverty influences poor health and inequalities in a number of ways. It affects the environment in which children are born and is likely to increase stress on both parents and children which will set patterns for children's future development and life chances. People on low incomes and those living in the most deprived areas are most likely to rate their general health as poor and to be more susceptible to mental illness. Poverty drives much of the inequality in death rates from the big killer diseases. Poverty also worsens the outcomes for individuals with chronic disease: increasing chances of losing employment and shortening life expectancy. Socioeconomic disadvantage underlies the increasing inequalities in the harm caused by drugs, alcohol and violence, particularly among younger adults." (p.24)

Fourthly, the Task Force concludes that providing the best possible environment for children's earliest years and ending cycles of poverty and poor health passed down from parent to child are fundamental (p.12). They make reference to COSLA who stated that:

"To address health inequalities it is likely that public sector resources will have to focus on early interventions and prevention, and as part of that, develop a more anticipatory and proactive approach to working with disadvantaged groups. If we do not do this, we will merely be falling back on a strategy that addresses the manifestations of disadvantage rather than tackling the source of disadvantage. Consequently, nothing will change: poverty and other social inequalities will continue to place vulnerable families at risk." (p.17)



This emphasis is echoed strongly in the third social policy framework document: **The Early Years Framework I** (2008) where one of the ten 'elements of transformational change' is identified as: "breaking cycles of poverty, inequality and poor outcomes in and through early years" (p.4), and is enshrined in their Vision: "Children grow up free from poverty in their early years and have their outcomes defined by their ability and potential rather than their family background." (p.10). In Early Years Framework II, we see reference to building on communities own assets and building their capacity (p.7)

Addressing the poverty targets through these three social policy Framework documents (Achieving Our Potential; Equally Well; the Early Years Framework) was seen as an innovative, collective, partnership approach between national Government and Local Authorities and associated CPPs, through the Concordat, *ensuring that all activities delivered to the National Outcome of tackling significant inequalities*<sup>42</sup>. This partnership and new, Outcomes-based approach was designed to combine local knowledge, flexibility and tailoring, whilst still delivering to higher-level Outcomes. It also encompassed a focus on 'empowering communities' and 'building capacity and resilience in individuals and communities'<sup>43</sup>.

This direction of travel was further built on when, in 2009, joint initiatives between Scottish Government and COSLA led to: the publication of "**Equal Communities in a Fairer Scotland: A Joint Statement**"<sup>44</sup>; the setting up of the **Tackling Poverty Board**<sup>45</sup>; the **Community Empowerment Action Plan**<sup>46</sup>; and the formation of the **Community Regeneration and Tackling Poverty Learning Network**<sup>47</sup> (2009-2011). The Network, a cross-Government initiative, aimed to support CPPs and their partners to: "improve the way communities are regenerated and poverty is tackled throughout Scotland" by giving practical help and guidance at local level. (The Network has since been superseded by the **Employability and Tackling Poverty Learning Network**<sup>48</sup>).



The Equal Communities Joint Statement (2009) focused on addressing the root causes of longstanding, concentrated, multiple deprivation, making early interventions through joint working, improving employability, and enhancing community empowerment to strengthen resilience (p.3). The subsequent joint COSLA/Scottish Government Community Empowerment Action Plan (2009) identified links between poverty and community empowerment:

"The Government has taken early action to address our economic challenges and has also launched, in partnership with COSLA, three frameworks which will be the dawn of a new social policy. These set the scene for a sustained long term effort to tackle inequality in Scotland. They cover the key areas of health, early years, and *poverty all of which will be affected positively by empowered and engaged communities*... This change process may not always be straightforward or comfortable. There are barriers to overcome when empowering communities, *whether they are the affects of poverty*, or lack of confidence or isolation, but the benefits that can flow from people having more responsibility for their own destinies are potentially so great, that we must overcome the challenges and barriers together, as we seek to develop the confidence and ambition that lies within our communities." (emphases added) (p.5).



A next key period is 2011 onwards. Firstly, we see the publication of **Building a Sustainable Future: Regeneration Discussion Paper** <sup>49</sup> which highlights how “investing in Scotland’s deprived communities generates growth and employment and can help to tackle the poverty and deprivation that still holds back too many of Scotland’s people and stops them fulfilling their potential.” (p.3). **The subsequent Regeneration Strategy “Achieving a Sustainable Future”** (2011) <sup>50</sup> outlines how the three strands of the joint social policy framework (2008), together with subsequent approaches including **Getting it Right for Every Child** <sup>51</sup> (GIRFEC), the **Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland** <sup>52</sup> are working together to address poverty and disadvantage.

The Regeneration Strategy outlines a range of funding sources, plus the focus on the *Town Centre Review, Housing, Placemaking* [see this report, Chapter 4] and *Making the Most of Public Sector Assets*. There is also a list of specific actions which are being delivered over the 2011-2015 timeframe:

- £6M **Wider Role Fund** (for Registered Social Landlord Projects in 2011/2012);
- the **Strategic Guidance for Community Learning and Development** (2012) <sup>53</sup>;
- on-going support for the **Coalfields Regeneration Trust** (see Case Study - p. 82);
- the **People and Communities Fund** (PCF) <sup>54</sup> of £7.9M p.a. for 2012 to 2015, focusing on employability and preventative action and aimed at registered social landlords and other community anchor organisations such as community development trusts (p.21);
- the launching of the **Consultation Paper** on the proposed **Community Empowerment and Renewal Bill** (2012) <sup>55</sup>, followed by the **Consultation on the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill** (2013) <sup>56</sup> (where under the theme of Equality, the Bill states: “We also want to consider issues relating to poverty and deprivation, to ensure that all communities are able to access the benefits that the Bill will deliver.” (p.49)).
- the **Community Ownership Support Service** <sup>57</sup> (supporting the transfer of [public] assets to communities) (2013);
- **Strengthening Communities Programme** <sup>58</sup> (2014) targeting investment in some of Scotland’s most disadvantaged areas to support community-led economic and social regeneration.

In delivering these actions, the Regeneration Strategy highlights the necessity for: putting communities first; being holistic; focusing on the safety and quality of places; integrating into wider economic strategies; addressing worklessness; aligning funding sources which also integrate with place-based intervention; and partnership working – including with the private sector (p.10).

Underpinning the delivery of the Regeneration Strategy are: an Asset-Based Approach; Preventative Spend <sup>59</sup>; Health Outcomes (and their relationship with place); and Justice Outcomes (pp.12-13). Finally, *community-led regeneration* is described as being at the heart of the Strategy’s approach (p.20), working with communities who are already active whilst helping to build capacity where communities are less engaged due to the challenges they face.

In parallel with these developments, and as outlined in **Empowering Scotland: The Government’s Programme for Scotland 2013-2014** <sup>60</sup>, the Scottish Welfare Fund <sup>61</sup> was launched in 2013. The Fund is operated by Local Authorities based on national guidance and is designed “to support an early intervention approach and support other policies such as care in the community, tackling poverty – particularly child poverty – and reducing homelessness.” (p.82). The total value of the Fund was £38 million in 2013 which “enables the award of an additional 5,600 Community Care Grants, and an additional 100,000 Crisis Grants in 2013-14.” (p.82). The Fund provides two types of grants: Crisis Grants (“Providing you with a safety net in the event of a disaster or an emergency”) and Community Care Grants (“Helping you to leave care and live independently, or to continue living independently”). The Empowering Scotland Programme also highlights how the new Scottish Welfare Fund Bill “will set out in statute Ministers’ intentions for this Fund to provide discretionary local welfare assistance to vulnerable members of the community.” (p.82). Under the heading of Third Sector Partnerships, we also read that: “As a contribution to the Solidarity Purpose Target to reduce income inequality, the Scottish Government provides funding to a range of third sector organisations to advise people on benefit entitlements, income maximisation strategies and to promote engagement with anti-poverty initiatives.” (p.85)

### So, where and how does rural poverty and disadvantage sit within these national policies and strategies?

We now look briefly at the extent to which rural poverty, disadvantage, or associated challenges in rural areas, are recognised or mentioned in the above national strategies and policies, before moving finally to explore rural-specific documents.

In the **Scottish Social Justice Report: A Scotland where everyone matters**, (1998) we read that disadvantage does not exist only in urban communities: “Our rural communities also face many obstacles because of isolation, lack of opportunities or difficulty in accessing the opportunities that are available.” (p.17). The language used implies concentrations of poverty, and the need to focus on those ‘hot spots’ of disadvantage:

“We will tackle the problems in the worst of these areas and prevent others from becoming disadvantaged. We will do this through an integrated approach to strategic planning, involving communities in the renewal of their own neighbourhoods and by making sure these communities can influence what happens in their own area.” (p.17)

However, as we see elsewhere in this chapter, rural poverty and disadvantage are typically dispersed, so this focus on places or neighbourhoods of prevalent poverty is not a good ‘fit’ for rural contexts.

**Working together for Scotland** (2000) does have a sub-section called “Working together to enhance rural Scotland” (pp.9-10). However, the focus is on projects relating to schools, health, transport and housing, with no specific mention of poverty and disadvantage and how it might be addressed. Similarly, the section on Rural Development (p.49) is focused primarily on agriculture, forestry food, and fisheries, and scientific research.

**Our National Health: a plan for action, a plan for change** (Scottish Executive, 2000) highlights that “Remote and Rural Scotland has particular needs which must be addressed” (p.26). Again, the focus is on specific services, rather than mentioning poverty *per se*:

“Providing health services to sparse populations dispersed over many hundreds of miles of land and sea is one of the distinctive features of the NHS in Scotland. The need for effective partnerships with other agencies, the flexible use of all members of the healthcare team, the creative use of modern technology and the need for effective patient transport are even more vital in rural Scotland. We recognise that services can and must be organised differently in rural Scotland as distinct from urban Scotland. We will continue to work with the NHS and with professional bodies to ensure that the needs of rural Scotland are addressed effectively.” (p.44).

#### **Better Communities in Scotland: Closing the Gap** (Scottish Executive, 2002)

identify two themes relating specifically to rural Scotland: improving service provision (p.19), and making the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) more appropriate for the rural context: “we are also working to get a better understanding of rural poverty and are taking forward work to split the social-justice milestones into rural and urban milestones.” (p.15). This is the first time we see mention of the need to assess poverty differently in rural areas.

#### **Closing the Opportunity Gap: Scottish Budget 2003-2006** <sup>62</sup> (Scottish Executive, 2002)

states that: “rural communities and people living in them can face similar challenges to people living in deprived areas in our towns and cities.” (p.24), thus recognising the *people-level* nature of rural poverty and not only how it occurs at *place or neighbourhood level*. The document highlights how people’s opportunities can be frustrated by factors such as remoteness, and gaps/difficulties in accessing rural service provision, as well as feeling cut off from “the chances they see elsewhere in Scotland”. The emphasis is on increasing prosperity and quality of life for communities in Scotland, “making sure that they remain viable and allowing the people living in them the same opportunities as people living elsewhere in Scotland” (p.24). **Closing the Opportunity Gap** (Scottish Executive, 2004), has one of six high-level Objectives dedicated to rural: “To improve access to high quality services for the most disadvantaged groups and individuals in rural communities, in order to improve their quality of life and enhance their access to opportunity.” Plus one of the ten Targets relates specifically to rural areas: “By 2008, improve service delivery in rural areas so that agreed improvements to accessibility and quality are achieved for key services in remote and disadvantaged communities” (Target H). The delivery of Target H was through 22 Rural Service Priority Areas, beginning in 2005. However, the Objective, Target and RSPAs were all subsumed within the social policy frameworks (outlined above) in 2007/2008. However, the **Employability Framework** <sup>63</sup> (2006), which the Scottish Executive stated as being part of the CtOG approach to tackling poverty, makes no mention of rural Scotland.



So, in CtOG, we again see a focus on services. This is echoed in **Achieving our Potential** (Scottish Government, 2008), which describes how “the experience of poverty in rural areas differs in important ways to those in urban areas, and the services and responses put in place to deal with them must also differ.” (p.4). Further, **Equally Well** [2008] makes no mention of rural poverty <sup>64</sup> and **The Early Years Framework** [2008] make only one mention of “rural” in relation to the maintenance of rural schools as important centres.

In 2008, we then see explicit mention of rural poverty, in **Taking Forward The Government Economic Strategy: A Discussion Paper on Tackling Poverty, Inequality and Deprivation in Scotland** (Scottish Government 2008):

“In rural areas other factors may also contribute to poverty, such as lack of access to services and the fragility of remote communities. These can compound the effects of low income, educational achievement and poor health on life opportunities, and the capacity to seize them.” (p.16)

There is also the statement that:

“There is little difference between urban and rural areas in the prevalence of poverty although there may be some difference in how people in rural areas experience poverty as some goods are more expensive in rural areas and some services are less convenient to access.” (p.16).

Further, the Discussion Paper does mention (as highlighted back in 2002) that there is a need to *disaggregate the statistics* to show greater sensitivity, including towards the specifics of rural Scotland:

“The poverty indicator will be ... disaggregated to show progress for children, working age adults, and pensioners. We will also disaggregate the statistics, as far as we are able, to show how the incidence of poverty breaks down within and across Scotland (for example, for key equality groups, for urban and rural Scotland, and for the most deprived communities.) This will help to determine whether, and where, efforts need to be targeted at a sub-Scotland level.” (p.5)

**Equal Communities in a Fairer Scotland: A joint statement (SG/COSLA, 2009)** mentions, for the first, time, that the *patterns* of poverty in rural (compared with urban) areas may differ:

“We know that not all of the people living in poverty are concentrated in Scotland’s most multiply deprived areas. We understand that geographical concentrations of multiple deprivation are generally found in urban areas. However, tackling poverty is a pressing issue in rural areas, where there are unique challenges related to remoteness, accessibility, the fragility of economies and the availability of sustainable employment opportunities. (p.4)

However, the need to prioritise working in those places and neighbourhoods showing highest incidence of poverty and deprivation is then, again, re-stated:

“Within the overall context of the three linked social policy frameworks, a specific focus on improving outcomes for people living in our most deprived geographical communities remains essential if all of Scotland’s people are to have equal opportunities to improve their life chances.” (p.5).

As we saw in the policy review (above), the links between poverty alleviation and community empowerment start to be articulated formally through the **Community Empowerment Action Plan** (2009). Rural Scotland is mentioned in this context:

“Many of our communities, particularly those facing high levels of disadvantage in both urban and rural areas, will need support to help them build the skills, confidence, networks and resources they require on the journey towards becoming more empowered.” (p.11)

A key element of such empowerment, developed further in subsequent legislation and strategies, is the commitment towards community asset ownership:

“We also have a long history of work that has supported asset ownership and development – most notably in rural Scotland. This includes the community right to buy legislation which has enabled communities to form over 120 properly constituted companies, or community bodies, register their community interest in land, and have a pre-emptive right to buy the land when it comes up for sale. Financial assistance and guidance has been provided over the years by the Scottish Land Fund, and Highlands and Islands Enterprise Community Land Unit. There is also a strong tradition of community based housing associations who, along with their housing stock, have played a major part in developing a range of other assets, from managed workspaces to community facilities. (p.21)

In the **Regeneration Discussion Paper** (2011) “**Building a Sustainable Future**”, we again see the observation that deprivation is concentrated in urban areas, whilst recognising that rural areas have their own experiences:

“Given the concentration of problems associated with deprivation experienced in our towns and cities, this paper has a predominantly urban focus. However, we recognise the problems that fragile rural areas experience.” (p.5).

The paper then highlights how LEADER<sup>65</sup> (2007-2013) is supporting rural community empowerment through investments of £52M, and that “active help and advice from the Rural Direct service is also available for communities in accessing and channelling these and other funds.” (p.31). Examples of rural area activities are given in their Paper.



In the subsequent **Regeneration Strategy** (2011): “**Achieving a Sustainable Future**”, we see a more developed rural emphasis. Firstly, there is reference to the need for “our most rural and remote communities (to be) equipped to take advantage of the digital revolution” (p.5)<sup>66</sup>. Secondly, there is reference to the specific ways in which deprivation and problems can be experienced in rural Scotland:

“Although concentrations of deprivation tend to be located in urban areas, the Scottish Government recognises that the problems facing some of our most vulnerable rural communities can also be significant. It is recognised that living in rural areas can present its own particular problems. These include remoteness, high fuel costs and access to public and private services.” (p.6)

Two key priorities were identified for supporting rural communities (p.6): (i) **Land Reform**: providing opportunities for rural communities to acquire land; the appointment of the Land Reform Review Group (2012-2014); and further allocation of funding to the Scottish Land Fund (2012-2015); (ii) **Education** which “plays an important part in building communities and in maximising the attainment and life chances of young people... can be particularly important in rural areas in order to preserve, support and develop rural communities.” (p.6). The Scottish Government outlined how this is being explored within the remit of the Commission on the Delivery of Rural Education<sup>67</sup>.

The **Child Poverty Strategy for Scotland** (2011) highlights “rural” in relation to incidences of child poverty, low pay, and pressure on household budgets. Specifically, the Strategy states that, although child poverty is more prevalent in urban areas, “levels of low pay and in-work poverty are relatively high in rural areas, and a high proportion of poor children in rural areas live in a household where at least one adult is working.” (p.15). When examining low pay, the Strategy highlights how problems of low pay and in-work poverty are mainly concentrated in the private sector (particularly retail and hospitality) “and that these are particular issues for many rural communities.” (p.21). Finally, measures to reduce pressure on household budgets are particularly critical for those on lower income, and the Strategy notes that “Essential household costs, such as food and fuel, are often higher in rural areas.” (p.25).

The **Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill** (2013) makes one mention of poverty (in relation to Equality and ensuring all can access the benefits from the Bill), but no mention of rural poverty specifically. However, the Scottish Government had already articulated the link between community empowerment and poverty alleviation (particularly from 2009 onwards, as discussed above), so it may be possible to conclude that the CE(S)B sits within this broader community empowerment and regeneration framework. Within the Bill, rural community empowerment is highlighted in relation to community ownership of land (pp.2, 3, 16, 17). (See also Chapter 4 of this report where this is discussed).

## How do rural poverty and disadvantage appear in rural-focused policy and strategy documents?

In the final part of this sub-section, we briefly examine the extent to which rural poverty is discussed in rural-specific policy and strategy documents over the same time period.

The Scottish Executive's **Rural Poverty and Inclusion Working Group** (2000) produced their Report **Poverty and Social Exclusion in Rural Scotland** in 2001. They highlighted two key messages: firstly, that the *measurement of rural poverty and deprivation*, although difficult (due to scattered and heterogeneous population) is essential in order to assess "the effectiveness in rural areas of policies designed to promote social justice" and then to improve such policies. The authors recommend "a comprehensive programme to measure rural poverty and exclusion". (p.3). The second key message is that the *causes of and solutions to poverty and social exclusion in rural areas can be very different from urban areas*; therefore, there is "a need to tailor the delivery of policies in rural areas to maximise effectiveness" (p.3). Underpinning all of the Recommendations is the statement that: "Local and national agencies should always consider rural poverty and exclusion issues when creating new policies." (p.74)

The three Scottish Executive/Government strategies specifically designed for *rural* Scotland were: **Rural Scotland: A New Approach (2000)**; **Rural Scotland: Taking Stock (2002)**; and **Rural Scotland: Better Still, Naturally**<sup>68</sup> (2007). These are now briefly reviewed in relation to rural poverty.

In **Rural Scotland: a New Approach** (2000), *rural poverty* is not specifically mentioned. Rather, the report headings are: (i) A strong and diverse economy; (ii) A decent quality of life for all, including young people; (iii) Quality, accessibility and choice of public services; and (iv) A flourishing natural and cultural heritage. Echoing the 2000 Scottish Social Justice Report (Where Everyone Matters), the "kind of rural Scotland we were aspiring to achieve" is one where "everyone matters: every community, every family, every rural Scot." (p.3). Significantly, the document states that: "Our approach has been to **mainstream the needs of rural areas wherever possible**, so that the needs of rural Scotland are not set-apart as something different or a 'special case' - but rather something that all departments, agencies and service providers should take seriously." (p.4; emphasis added).

In **Rural Scotland: Taking Stock (2002)**<sup>69</sup> rural poverty is mentioned in relation to appropriate indicators for its assessment:

"We recognise that the nature of social exclusion in rural areas can be quite different and that population sparsity and low concentrations of poverty and deprivation in rural areas mean that problems can often be masked on large-scale 'official' indicators. We are therefore developing more sensitive instruments to identify problems and measure progress, as well as distinctive policy responses to tackle exclusion wherever it is found." (p.8)

In relation to this point, the document highlights the establishment and work of the **Rural Poverty and Inclusion Working Group** and the fact that it is taking forward the Group's recommendations from its 2001 Report (cited above). Specifically, the 2002 strategy points to how: "we have differentiated information on a rural/urban basis for 12 of our Social Justice Milestones and work is being taken forward to deliver further differentiation through our Neighbourhood Statistics Project and the Exchange of Education Data Project. We have undertaken a rural analysis of the Scottish Household Survey and this is due to be completed shortly." (p.8).

Specifically in relation to infants and their parents, the strategy highlights the *Sure Start Scotland* programme of support for families with children aged 0-3 in areas of greatest need, and that "Aberdeenshire use **Sure Start** funded social workers to provide 'virtual' family centres in rural areas." (p.8). With reference to **older people**, the strategy recognised the different needs and circumstances of older people in rural areas and, for example, "are working to improve access to health services and community care in rural areas and to improve benefits take-up through **Partnerships against Poverty**." (p.8).



**Rural Scotland: Better Still, Naturally** (2007) mentions rural poverty in two contexts. The first is in relation to fuel poverty and the promotion and growth of the renewable heat sector, whereby such an energy source could "alleviate fuel poverty in areas off the gas grid" (p.19). Secondly, mention is made of *Closing the Opportunity Gap* (2004) and the rural Target (H) outlined above. Progress made by 2007 is reported:

"Based on analysis and in consultation with local interests, agreements have been reached with 8 Community Planning Partnerships, which will deliver low cost improvements in local services spanning 22 priority areas and more than 90 local projects. Supported by £2.2m of Executive funding, these will benefit particularly disadvantaged individuals and communities in rural Scotland. In addition, the Rural CtOG objective is a cross-cutting priority for the Executive and its partners and a range of specific (Scotland) initiatives will help to deliver our objectives." (p.38).

Housing and public service delivery (in relation to rural poverty) are highlighted in **Scotland's Rural Development Programme 2007-2013**<sup>70</sup>. The importance of Closing the Opportunity Gap is emphasised as the approach for supporting urban and rural regeneration, as is working with national approaches, and, where such approaches are not meeting rural needs, ensuring that rural-specific approaches are then supported:

"Services that enable the relief of poverty and its effects are less likely to be accessible in rural areas, particularly to those reliant on public transport. Housing needs in rural areas often differ from those in Scotland's towns and cities... The Scottish Executive's *Closing the Opportunity Gap* strategy encourages a flexible approach to the regeneration of Scotland's most deprived communities whether urban or rural. The SRDP will help to facilitate action to address these needs; for example, it will complement actions of the Community Regeneration Fund which supports predominantly rural local Community Planning Partnerships to prioritise their allocations on local needs connected with building strong, safe and attractive communities. Support will be available for proposals which can be shown to have the potential to contribute to the quality, accessibility and choice of public services in rural areas where this is not already being addressed by mainstream service delivery." (pp.18-19)

In 2008, the Scottish Government established the **Climate Challenge Fund (CCF)**<sup>71</sup>, which continues at the time of writing (April 2014). Within CCF, there is a category for "Disadvantaged and Ethnic Minority communities" who have been eligible to apply for development grants of £750 designed to assist with the undertaking of preparation work in advance of a full application as a community group. Development grants have led to 17 community groups preparing a successful CCF application with the total value of grants being awarded standing at more than £2.15 million. Due to the successful take-up of applications, there is "a pause in allocation of these grants and an announcement will be made in due course regarding a possible re-commencement of Development Grants to support development of projects in 2015". However, in order to qualify as "disadvantaged" the community must be within the lowest 15% in the Scottish Indicators of Multiple Deprivation. As we will see in below, this means that many rural communities will be ineligible.

Also in 2008, the Scottish Government established the independent **Rural Development Council**, which met over the period June 2008 to December 2011. The role of the RDC was to "consider how best rural Scotland can contribute to the creation of a more successful country, through increasing sustainable economic growth... and help identify any obstacles to achieving this goal; consider possible solutions; and offer advice to Scottish Ministers, including identifying priorities for action." <sup>72</sup>

**Speak Up for Rural Scotland** (2010)<sup>73</sup> was produced by Rural Development Council, for the Scottish Government<sup>74</sup>. Amongst the 37 Step Change recommendations, there is no mention of rural poverty (although rural "being at a disadvantage" is mentioned in relation to rural broadband). The Speak Up document was put out to consultation (2010), receiving 131 written responses plus participation in four regional events. A report of the findings was produced (2011)<sup>75</sup>; again, poverty was not mentioned, although overall rural disadvantage was highlighted in relation to services and particularly rural broadband. The Scottish Government responded both to Speak up for Rural Scotland and the associated Consultation, with **Our Rural Future** (Scottish Government, 2011)<sup>76</sup>. Poverty is mentioned in one instance, in relation to a specific Community Participation Priority:

"A high proportion of rural homes fall into the "hard to heat, hard to treat" category, which means that fuel poverty is a particular problem - and fuel efficiency is an important part of the solution... Also, since 2009 the Scottish Government has developed two area-based home insulation schemes to help householders reduce their fuel bills, tackle fuel poverty and cut carbon emissions – the Home Insulation Scheme has, for example, been of particular benefit to householders on the Western Isles." (p.5)

Finally, in the **Commission on the Delivery of Rural Education**<sup>77</sup> (Scottish Government, 2013) final report, and in the response from Scottish Government (78), we see again no mention of rural poverty and disadvantage.

### What can we conclude from this review of national and rural policy and strategy?

It is evident from the above strategy documents and policies that there is recognition that rural poverty and disadvantage are different from urban – both in terms of how they are experienced, and where they exist, i.e. not in concentrated neighbourhoods, due to the dispersed nature of rural populations. We also see in some policies and strategies recognition that rural poverty and disadvantage should therefore be measured and represented differently, with indicators being tuned to rural specificities.

However, rural poverty and disadvantage, where they do appear, are largely equated with (or subsumed within) better service delivery (health, transport) and fuel poverty. In later strategies and policies, they are also subsumed within the processes and outcomes of community empowerment, and most particularly in relation to community ownership of land and other assets. However, and as argued in other parts of this chapter, the ways in which rural poverty and disadvantage are experienced remain complex, multi-faceted and change over the lifecourse. To reduce solutions to service provision and delivery through community empowerment may overlook structural, systemic and national issues which themselves can engender the persistence of rural poverty. It also overlooks issues of employment and employability, housing and child poverty – issues being tackled by other strategies and frameworks but which make no specific reference to rural.

Finally, and significantly, what we do see in this review is that rural poverty and disadvantage appear to fall between two policy arenas. The **national** arena where rural experiences are seen as different but are not specifically addressed, and/or are seen as sitting within rural policy; and the **rural** arena, where they are seen as being within the remit of national and local authority practice or gain no mention. We return to this key point at the conclusion of our chapter.



### Section 3: What are the main characteristics of rural poverty and disadvantage

Discussion around 'poverty' and 'disadvantage' in rural Scotland is not new. Key work in the 1980s through to the mid 1990s has shown the breadth of understanding of the distinctly *rural* nature of poverty and disadvantage. However, whilst a comprehensive 'baseline' of rural disadvantage was undertaken in England in 2006<sup>79</sup>, recent systematic analysis in Scotland remains limited<sup>80</sup>. Over this period, work has identified a number of key strands which contribute to, and are symptomatic of, rural poverty and disadvantage. These include: Income and Employment; Transport and Provision of/Access to Services; Housing; Invisibility and Isolation; and Demographics. We now review each of these in more detail.

#### Income and Employment

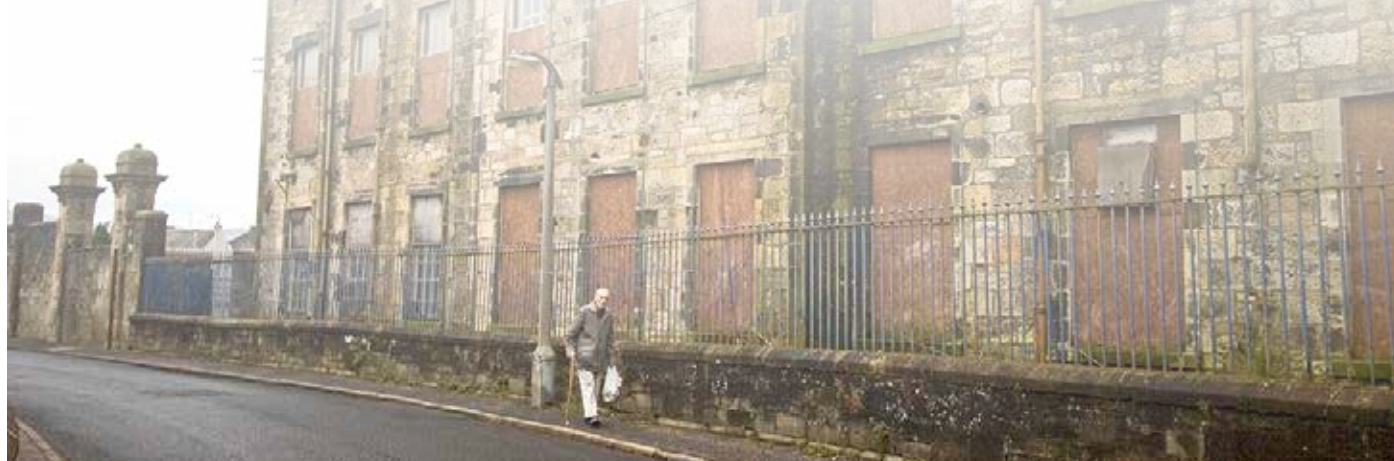
## Headlines:

1. *Compared with the rest of Scotland, hourly rates of pay and gross pay are lowest for those in remote rural Scotland, and highest for those in accessible rural Scotland.*
2. *Seasonality of employment and low wages are common in more remote rural areas.*
3. *Such factors can contribute to rates of persistent low pay and "working poverty" in rural areas.*
4. *Rates of employment are higher in rural, compared with urban, areas; however, those for whom a part-time job is their main job are higher in rural compared with urban areas.*
5. *Therefore, the type of employment and opportunities to improve employment prospects, must also be considered, in order to understand people's experiences of income and employment over time.*

Compared with the rest of Scotland, in 2011 **median hourly rates of pay were lowest for those living in remote rural Scotland, and highest for those living in accessible rural Scotland**<sup>81</sup>. Gross pay for those in full time employment was, similarly, lowest for those in remote rural Scotland and highest for those in accessible rural Scotland<sup>82</sup>. At an aggregate level, such measures potentially illustrate both the increasing role of accessible rural areas in housing those who commute to urban centres for work, but also a prevalence of work which is more commonly 'low paid' in more remote rural areas. In these areas, (after the public sector), 'agriculture, forestry and fishing' and 'accommodation and food services' are the greatest employers in the private sector<sup>83</sup>. Research has suggested these sectors are particularly characterised by **seasonality of employment and low wages**<sup>84</sup> so that those people in remote rural areas relying on such sources of employment may be particularly vulnerable, especially given the rural 'economic base' which is limited in its diversity of job opportunities<sup>85</sup>. **Rates of employment are higher** in remote and accessible rural areas relative to the rest of Scotland<sup>86</sup>. The percentage of those holding a second job is also highest amongst those in remote rural areas, followed by those in accessible rural areas<sup>87</sup>. There are also higher rates of individuals for whom a part time job is also their main job in rural compared to urban Scotland<sup>88</sup>. It is important to understand how far such a pattern is a forced necessity in coping with the precarious employment context in remote rural areas, or an active choice by the worker.

As part of a review of research regarding social exclusion in rural areas of Britain undertaken in 2000, it has been suggested that "the rural workforce is more likely to be faced with a limited range of employment opportunities, low pay, job insecurity, little scope for career progression, a paucity of careers advice, a high degree of non-unionisation, and a need to travel some distance to the workplace"<sup>89</sup> Research has also suggested that persistent low pay and a higher proportion of 'working poor' can be more common in rural areas, with less upward and downward mobility in terms of wages<sup>90</sup>. More recent work in Wales has also suggested that working poverty may be a particular issue in rural areas<sup>91</sup>. It has also been argued in the past that the probability of escaping from low income appears similar in rural and non-rural areas, but those who escape in rural areas are less likely to fall back into poverty<sup>92</sup>.

The evidence therefore shows that, when comparing urban with rural income and employment indicators, details around types of employment, multiple job-holding, part-time working, scope for career development, and experiences of moving in and out of employment over time, all need to be considered, beyond the actual numbers themselves.



## Headlines:

1. *High cost and lack of availability of public transport prevents people from accessing employment, education and training, services and support. This is made worse by the increasing centralisation of services and by more services going 'online-only', combining to lead to more "not spots" particularly where broadband coverage is inadequate.*
2. *Access to specialist services is particularly difficult in rural areas, placing the most vulnerable populations at greater disadvantage.*
3. *Private car ownership is essential in rural areas, in order to access services, employment, training, education etc. Data show that there is a higher percentage of the population in remote and accessible rural Scotland spending over £100 a month on fuel compared with urban areas.*
4. *Declining car ownership in rural areas is also linked to increased ageing, with older people having greater reliance on public or community transport.*

It is well established that access **to services in rural areas of Scotland is more challenging than in urban areas**. When relating this to experiences of poverty, recent work has argued that 'the high cost and lack of availability of public transport prevents people from accessing employment and training opportunities, as well as a range of services and supports' <sup>93</sup>.

Specifically, the rate of those finding access to hospital out-patient services, dentists, public transport and a chemist/pharmacist "very or fairly convenient" decreases as degree of rurality increases in Scotland <sup>94</sup>. This also interacts with – for example - transport, with the percentage of the rural population within 15 minutes drive time of services such as a GP or Post Office declining markedly when using public transport rather than a private vehicle. For example, in 2009, only 27% of those in remote rural Scotland were able to access a GP within 15 minutes drive time on public transport, compared with 43% in accessible rural Scotland and 95% in the rest of Scotland <sup>95</sup>.

Accessibility has also been affected by "a significant centralisation of public and voluntary sector services" in rural Scotland <sup>96</sup>. This means that the **combination of increasingly distant/centralised services and poor accessibility has the potential to exacerbate rural poverty and disadvantage**. A review of literature in 2000 found that groups such as older people or those without transport are particularly likely to be impacted by service decline <sup>97</sup>.

Another trend is the increased emphasis on **accessing public services online**: recent work (in *Rural Scotland in Focus* 2012) has illustrated the importance of continuing to invest in, and support access to, broadband in rural areas, and the degree of activity required even to simply maintain the 'digital divide' in its current state <sup>98</sup>. Therefore it is **important to ensure that the centralisation of services does not proceed in tandem with a continued pattern of broadband 'not spots' and 'twilight zones'** (See Chapter 1).

It is also evident that **specialist services are difficult to access** in rural Scotland <sup>99</sup> particularly for people needing mental health services <sup>100</sup> and services to support those with disabilities <sup>101</sup> (this issue is also covered in Chapter 2 in relation to young people's need for specialist services). Similarly, home care can be particularly challenging to deliver given the distances, costs and times involved to provide care at home (102). Such themes also interact with issues of stigma, visibility and cultures of independence highlighted later in this chapter (see also Chapter 2 with regard to young people). Limited access to **childcare** <sup>103</sup> can also impact on the potential for parents (particularly single parents) to find work – particularly when combined with the significant travel times and limited support services in rural areas.

Access to education can lead to young people from rural areas seeking or needing to move elsewhere, and/or long journeys required to access Further and Higher education. Greater difficulties in accessing Further and Higher education may also contribute to the higher rate of school leavers going straight into work following secondary school (32% remote rural, compared to 18% in accessible rural and 19% in the rest of Scotland) <sup>104</sup>. Further, appropriate skills and training opportunities are not always available locally. These themes are discussed fully in Chapter 2.

A key element of access is **availability of public transport**. In 2011, 2% of those in remote rural Scotland and 9% in accessible rural Scotland cited good public transport as an aspect of their neighbourhood they particularly liked, compared to 26% in the rest of Scotland <sup>105</sup>. This perception is backed up with data regarding availability of public transport in rural Scotland, with **12% of those in remote rural Scotland reporting they do not have access to a bus service, and 8% in accessible rural areas** <sup>106</sup>. It may also be productive to move beyond *availability to frequency* when considering public transport in rural areas and its relationship(s) with poverty and disadvantage. For example being able to easily access a bus stop which is served once a week is perhaps less useful than a bus stop a greater distance away served everyday: bus stops with five or more services an hour decline as degree of rurality increases, with no bus stops in remote rural Scotland having such a service <sup>107</sup>. Taking this into account, usage of bus services is also lower in rural Scotland, with travel diary research in Scotland showing that less than 3% of those in remote rural Scotland had used a bus in the last day, compared to 61% in large urban areas, altering to 20% and 55% when the last month was considered in a different question <sup>108</sup>. Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) and Community Transport (CT) are often important in rural areas <sup>109</sup>. DRT and CT are characterised by service users who are most often older or disabled <sup>110</sup>. However, in 2009 it was highlighted that services provided by community transport are not included in the free travel package for people over 60 <sup>111</sup>.

Similarly, access to **private transport** is an essential element of overall ability to reach and make use of services. Higher rates of households having access to at least one car are reported in rural Scotland compared to urban areas. When these data are examined more closely, those in accessible rural Scotland are more likely to have access to a car (86%) compared to remote rural Scotland (83%)<sup>112</sup>. This suggests that there are additional factors shaping likelihood of car ownership than purely the need to overcome gaps in public transport provision, for example household income/affluence.

## Housing

### Headlines:

- 1. The lack of affordable housing to purchase means that: first-time buyers are priced out, often leading to younger people leaving rural areas; the development of services and small businesses which often rely on lower-paid workforces is hampered; and higher house prices can feed into higher land prices which Housing Associations cannot afford.**
- 2. Around 25% of housing in rural Scotland is rented. There is a lack of social housing, plus in many rural areas, there are a high number of second homes and holiday lets (particularly in remote rural Scotland). Rental agreements are often seasonal and short-term, resulting in upheaval for sectors of the population, particularly single parents.**
- 3. The majority of rural Local Authorities have a lower than average proportion of dwellings with 1-3 rooms, and this supply is also declining over time. They also have a higher than average proportion of dwellings with 4-6 and 7+ rooms, with the clearest growth in the 7-9 room category. Given the growing need for single-occupancy households in rural areas – for both younger and older sections of the population - it is clear that the housing stock is not fit for purpose.**
- 4. Housing conditions in rural Scotland lead to a greater likelihood of experiencing fuel poverty and extreme fuel poverty compared with the rest of Scotland. Such poverty has been declining nationally, but less so in rural Scotland due to older housing stock and off-grid (54%) properties. Indeed, amongst those off-gas grid, fuel poverty has increased.**

A key theme in the research on rural poverty and disadvantage is the nature and availability of housing in rural Scotland. There are **five interconnected strands**: i) availability of housing to buy or rent; ii) affordability of housing to buy or rent; iii) the nature of the housing market; iv) the quality of the housing stock and associated costs; v) ownership of housing.

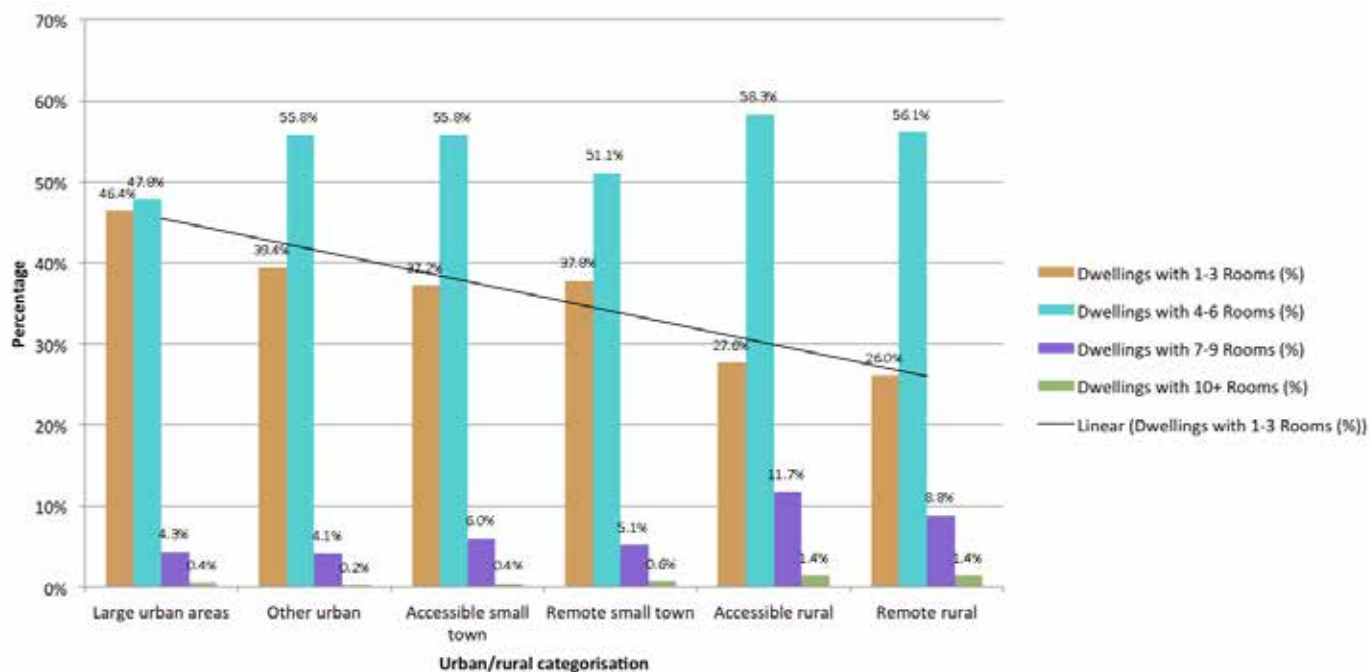
There is a lack of **affordable housing available to purchase or rent** in rural areas of Scotland. Demand for some types of housing is being met, but the continued high level of need evidenced in waiting list and research data suggests that this is not the case for affordable housing<sup>113</sup>. Local Authorities' housing needs and demand analyses and Halifax/Bank of Scotland reports on rural house prices consistently show that accessible rural areas have relatively high house price levels, with growth fuelled by commuting amongst higher income households<sup>114</sup>. **Housing affordability (as a ratio of average house prices to average earnings) varies across Scotland**, with the rural South East and North West of Scotland being particularly affected<sup>115</sup>. (This was covered in *Rural Scotland in Focus 2010* and is revisited in Chapter 1 of this Report). This means that it is particularly challenging for younger people to purchase a first home resulting in exclusion from the home-owning market and potentially leaving rural areas (see Chapter 2). A second impact is the difficulties of delivering services and developing businesses in rural areas, since these are often reliant on lower-paid workforces<sup>116</sup>. Higher house prices lead to more severe affordability difficulties for lower income households. They also feed into higher land prices that housing associations cannot afford, working against affordable housing development<sup>117</sup>.

In 2011, **the highest median house prices could be found in accessible rural Scotland** (£180 000), compared to £146 000 in remote rural Scotland, and the lower median price of £129 835 in the rest of Scotland<sup>118</sup>. To some extent, this could be linked to the nature of the available housing stock (with **a far lower proportion of smaller, more affordable housing**<sup>119</sup>) and factors such as the relative affluence of the populations in these areas. Drawing on analysis of Scottish data between 2006 and 2012

it appears that in general, the majority of rural Local Authorities have a lower than average proportion of smaller dwellings (with 1 – 3 rooms), which is declining over time and have a higher than average proportion of medium (4-6 rooms) and larger (7 + rooms) dwellings within their area. It also appears that the clearest growth in dwelling size in rural LAs is in the 7-9 room dwelling category<sup>120</sup>. Figure 6 demonstrates the variation in dwelling size with reference to number of rooms across Scotland in 2012, clearly illustrating the declining proportion of smaller dwellings as degree of rurality increases:



Figure 6: Dwelling size by rurality (2012) <sup>121</sup>



**Such housing stock in rural areas is often inappropriate for shifting demographics.** It is anticipated that nationally there will be an increase in elderly households, and also single-person households <sup>122</sup>. Both of these factors suggest a particular need for smaller housing. There is a pronounced lack of smaller housing in rural Scotland, with 53% of houses being detached compared to 17% in the rest of Scotland, and lower rates of flats/maisonettes, detached and semi-detached housing in both accessible and remote Scotland compared to the rest of Scotland <sup>123</sup>. This is of particular concern for rural Scotland in the future, as the demand for additional housing over the coming 20 years is expected to be particularly acute in East Lothian (with a projected 40% increase in future housing requirements); Perth and Kinross (38%); Aberdeenshire (35%); Orkney (32%); Highland (30%) and the Scottish Borders (27%) <sup>124</sup>.

In addition to house purchase prices, it is important to think of the affordability and viability of renting in rural Scotland. **Around one quarter of housing in rural Scotland is rented, compared to over one third in the rest of Scotland** <sup>125</sup>. Drivers for this can include a lack of social housing; a lack of availability of homes to rent, a high number of second homes/holiday lets (particularly in remote Scotland) as seen in *Rural Scotland in Focus* 2010 and 2012 <sup>126</sup>; planning challenges <sup>127</sup> and a lack of available land. It has also been argued that rented accommodation in rural areas is unaffordable <sup>128</sup>, and that **available accommodation can be seasonal and short term** (linked to tourism industries, the presence of second homes and the seasonal nature of agricultural employment). This can make it difficult to rent on a longer term basis, with resulting upheaval impacting particularly strongly on specific sectors of the population, such as single parents <sup>129</sup>.



It's more than 25 years since Shelter Scotland and Rural Forum Scotland published "Scotland's Rural Housing: Opportunities for Action", drawing attention to the entrenched but often hidden problems of housing poverty and homelessness in the remote and rural parts of the country. Since then we've understood these problems to be both different and the same.

They are different in that long stays in mobile homes or hopping between out-of-season holiday lets are distinctive of rural areas.

But there are many more common themes, albeit amplified or refracted. Like all areas private renting has grown massively in the last 10 years, most of all in the largest cities. But while there are still twice as many social lets as private lets in Scotland as a whole, their numbers are broadly similar in the most rural areas. Allowing for higher turnover in private renting, it is clear that for rural households priced out of home ownership, a private let is more likely to be available than a social let.

That in turns means welfare reform playing out differently. Rural areas may have received more from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in "Discretionary Housing Payment" to offset changes to housing benefit, but this is unlikely to address the real problems of undersupply in social housing to tackle the "bedroom tax" while risks to low income households of "No DWP" signs going up in private lets are greater in rural areas.

But homelessness is not just about housing units. Duties to provide housing support to vulnerable households were strengthened in 2013. In rural areas, centralised services cannot deliver, so person-centred, individually-tailored support is essential – at a time when the people most in need of support face changes to housing benefit, disability-related benefits or universal credit on the horizon.



Finally, the condition of the housing also contributes to a particular experience of poverty and disadvantage in rural Scotland. **Relative to the rest of Scotland, rates of both fuel poverty and extreme fuel poverty are higher in rural areas**; this is particularly so for remote rural areas, followed by accessible rural areas. In Scotland “a household is defined as being in fuel poverty if it would be required to spend more than 10% of its income (including Housing Benefit or Income Support for Mortgage Interest) on all household fuel use”. “Extreme fuel poverty” is defined as “a household having to spend more than 20% of its income on household fuel”<sup>130</sup>.

In 2010 18% of households in remote rural Scotland, and 12% of households in accessible rural Scotland, are classed as in extreme fuel poverty relative to 7% of households in the rest of Scotland. Including those who are fuel poor – rather than extremely fuel poor – this increases the percentage of households in remote rural Scotland facing fuel poverty to 45%, in accessible rural Scotland to 35% and in the rest of Scotland to 26%<sup>131</sup>. Whilst fuel poverty outwith rural Scotland has been declining over the longer term, this decline has been less pronounced in rural areas<sup>132</sup>. Fuel poverty is in part a result of the **higher prevalence of houses that are ‘off-gas’** and are therefore often heated via more expensive means such as fuel oil. Nationally, in 2012 approximately 10% of households are off-gas, with 54% of rural households being off-gas<sup>133</sup>. In 2012, falling rates of fuel poverty were concentrated among dwellings on the gas grid which saw a 5 percentage point reduction to 24%, while those off grid saw an increase of 4 percentage points to 52%<sup>134</sup>. Fuel poverty is also a function of **older housing stock being less energy efficient** using SAP ratings, with the difference particularly pronounced when NHER ratings are used to account for environmental factors such as local temperature, elevation and wind speed<sup>135</sup>. This is also related to the difficulties in increasing the energy efficiency of rural homes, which are **often older with solid walls**, limiting uptake of insulation schemes<sup>136</sup>. Similarly, the **condition of houses is also important to note** when considering the nature of poverty and disadvantage in rural Scotland. Whilst housing conditions continue to improve across Scotland according to the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS), higher failure rates remain in rural areas (57%) compared to urban areas (53%)<sup>137</sup>.

### Invisibility and isolation

## Headlines:

- 1. Poverty and disadvantage are far more geographically dispersed in rural areas (compared with urban), so usual ways of measuring poverty (e.g. using ‘data zones’) do not pick up on the pockets which exist.*
- 2. People living in rural areas can also reject the typical measures and definitions of ‘poverty’. This links with cultures of independence and self-reliance which mean that some are unwilling to access support and services. This can be exacerbated by the high visibility of service provision, and associated stigma, and may combine to increase isolation, particularly for those requiring specialist support.*
- 3. This lack of use further increases invisibility of those who may benefit from services and also implies a lack of need to those providing the services.*
- 4. A significant number of individuals in rural Local Authorities do not feel that they are “coping well financially”, with more than 50% stating this in four rural Local Authorities in the south and north Scotland.*

For a wide range of reasons, it has been argued that poverty in rural areas – and processes and outcomes of disadvantage – are less visible than in urban contexts. As we discuss below, **poverty and disadvantage are typically far more geographically dispersed in rural Scotland**, meaning that it is not always as quantifiable using existing approaches such as the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). As a result, very few rural ‘data-zones’ are included in the top 15% most deprived in Scotland, a measure which is often used to allocate resources and target interventions. It has also been found that rural households, when defined as being in poverty (based on income levels), would **reject such an ‘objective assessment’**, focussing instead on the more positive elements of living in a rural context<sup>138</sup>. This is linked to further research findings which suggest that **cultures of independence and self-reliance**<sup>139</sup> can hinder rural residents accessing support available to them, meaning both that they may be less likely to receive additional services and support but also that rates of benefits claimed may be lower, leading to further invisibility to public sector agencies<sup>140</sup>. Analysis of recent Scottish Household Survey data (Figure 7) shows that despite these issues, a significant number of individuals in rural Local Authorities do not feel that they were ‘coping well or very well financially’ in 2012. Whilst sample sizes are small when broken down in this way, it suggests that over half of households in East Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway, the Western Isles, and Highland were not in this position.





- starts by asking what's good in a community and what local people can contribute rather than focus on needs
- not about enforcing external agendas, local people determine activities and how groups develop
- workers have significant autonomy to develop and flex their approach in line with the local context and the aims of local people
- flexible funding enables participant ideas to be rapidly turned into action
- workers treat local people with real respect and value, recognising them as valuable contributors, not victims/issues to be saved/resolved.

Link Up is currently urban focused, but its experience raises important questions about the role of what appear to be relatively low-key social activities in creating positive change for individuals living in a rural context.



## Scotland's rural population

### Headlines:

1. *An ageing population and out-migration of young people are seen as key characteristics of rural Scotland's demography.*
2. *In the next 20 years, the proportion of rural populations of pensionable age is going to increase markedly in three rural Local Authorities: Aberdeenshire (by 49.7%), Shetland (47.5%) and Orkney (34.5%). Other rural Local Authority areas already have aged populations but nonetheless are predicted to see an increase.*
3. *In rural Scotland, young people, single pensioners, single parents, those with disabilities, those with mental health difficulties, ethnic minority populations and (seasonal or long-term) immigrants, all face distinct challenges in relation to their experiences of rural poverty and disadvantage.*
4. *It is crucial to understand how demographic and other characteristics then intersect with each other, to either enhance or reduce poverty and disadvantage*

*Rural Scotland in Focus 2010* and *Rural Scotland in Focus 2012* have provided extensive commentary on the nature of Scotland's rural population, as have key documents such as the series of 'Rural Scotland Key Facts' publications. It is not our intention to restate the themes identified within these documents here in detail. Instead, we focus on how particular members of the population have been found to experience poverty and disadvantage in distinct ways in rural areas.

It is important, however, to recognise that rural Scotland has an ageing population (see Chapter 1). For example, in the period to 2033 it is expected that "there will be rapid growth in the pensionable age populations of Aberdeenshire (49.7%), Shetland (47.5%) and Orkney (34.5%). Argyll and Bute is predicted to have the lowest increase in elderly population (9.8%) of the rural LAs, with Dumfries and Galloway, South Ayrshire, and North Ayrshire also predicted to have relatively low increases in pensionable aged population (they have low predicted immigration and are already quite aged areas)" <sup>145</sup>. This means that the need to access services, including specialist services, (as outlined above) will increase in rural areas, and the accessibility of those services via public transport will remain a challenge. As outlined in Chapter 1, it is also important to be aware of contemporary patterns of working hours (with those in rural areas more likely to work over 49 hours a week); wages and employment (including challenges associated with employment in tourism, leisure, food-related and agricultural industries); and of the distinct challenges and opportunities facing younger people in rural areas (Chapter 2).

It has been observed that "disadvantage experienced in rural areas is multi-dimensional and that those groups suffering most from disadvantage are those that suffer from powerlessness and inequality of opportunity in society as a whole – young people, elderly people, women, disabled people, unemployed people and so on" <sup>146</sup>. In addition, recent research regarding poverty in rural Britain 'consistently shows that some groups are more vulnerable to poverty / social exclusion than others' including older people living alone; the self employed; low paid workers; individuals with no access to private transport even in households with a car; and 'those detached from labour markets' <sup>147</sup>.

With reference to age, young people face distinct challenges with regard to rural life (Chapter 2). The literature regarding rural youth poverty and disadvantage emphasises the ways in which lack of access to transport can interact with social isolation and difficulties in accessing education, employment, services and housing<sup>148</sup>. The experience of poverty and disadvantage for older people in rural areas can also be distinct. Particular issues include social isolation and access to key healthcare services which are also bound up with transport and senses of independence<sup>149</sup>. Most recently, it has been found that single pensioners in rural areas of Scotland may be: particularly likely to fear stigma and exhibit cultures of independence; find few opportunities to increase their income and/or gain advice regarding pensions and benefits; experience challenges regarding public transport which can impact on ability to access healthcare and receive home care. For poorer pensioners, it can be costly to attend any organised activities that may be taking place<sup>150</sup>.

It is also important to highlight variations in the nature and extent of poverty and disadvantage in rural areas with regard to gender. It has been noted that women will often be balancing part time work with caring responsibilities and part time work within rural areas is usually low paid<sup>151</sup>. In work published in 1998, it was found that 'there is less upward and downward employment and wage mobility for both rural men and rural women experiencing low pay than is the case in non-rural areas of Britain'. It was also found, however, that 'while unemployed rural men seem more able to move into higher pay employment than unemployed non-rural men, the ability of unemployed rural women to do this appears to be significantly less than for their non-rural counterparts'<sup>152</sup>. Indeed, it is clear that women participate to a greater degree in part time work than men in rural Scotland. Between 2009 and 2011, 45% of women who were working in rural areas and remote rural areas were working part time. For men, this figure was 11% in accessible rural and 15% in remote rural areas<sup>153</sup>. More recent work with reference to women in rural Scotland has argued that more research and information is needed regarding: women in business; in unpaid work; the engagement of women in the rural policy process; exploration of the evidence base on gender issues; the identification of the extent of domestic violence and other sensitive research issues such as mental health and stress; and older women in rural communities<sup>154</sup>.

**CASE STUDY**

**In Focus: Empowering Women, Children and Young People Recovering from Domestic Abuse**

It is estimated that around 100,000 children in Scotland live with domestic abuse; the impact that this has upon children and the mother/child relationship can be devastating. In January 2012, The Big Lottery 'Becoming a Survivor' fund funded 12 Cedar (Children Experiencing Domestic Abuse Recovery) projects, across 12 local authority areas, over a three-year period. Six of the twelve BIG-funded Cedar projects – East Ayrshire, Perth and Kinross, Moray, North Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire and Scottish Borders - are operating in areas defined as 'rural' by SRUC.

Cedar is a therapeutic 12-week groupwork programme with groups for children, young people and their mothers. It supports mothers to understand the impact that domestic abuse has on children, empowering them and their children to build happier, safer futures. Cedar is an evidence-based, multi-agency initiative which cascades learning through communities and agencies, developing best practice and support. In line with local and national priorities (see Figure 5), Cedar helps improve the lives of children and young people by addressing the risks in early years which perpetuate inequality.

Though rural projects have championed Cedar as an effective way of working to support and empower women, children and young people in their recovery, some challenges have emerged in the rural context:

- Low population numbers: scattered referrals can be a barrier to ideal group composition, in terms of gender balance and age
- Wide geographical spread: this can lead to issues with transport to and from group, problems with carrying out Cedar assessment and increased pressures on practitioners
- Anonymity and confidentiality: the public nature of life, or visibility, within rural communities can have implications for confidentiality in the context of Cedar. Cedar can, however, enhance support networks and therefore individual and community resilience
- Childcare: identifying childcare provision, a factor which can determine access for mothers, is something that has proved challenging for some of the rural projects

With a continued focus on multi-agency partnership working and continued cross-party support, the barriers rural Cedar projects face can be overcome, allowing them to continue to empower mothers and children, supporting them on the path to a more positive future.

<http://www.cedarnetwork.org.uk/>





In 2001 it was found that families living in poverty in rural areas experience “lack of access to services; education, training and employment opportunities; and affordable transport and housing”<sup>155</sup>, and that higher visibility in the community also affects families in rural areas since a whole family can become stigmatised<sup>156</sup>. Specifically for single parents, more recent work has found: a lack of affordable childcare, making it harder for single parents to take-up and sustain employment (an issue also identified far earlier, in 1996<sup>157</sup>); infrequent and expensive transport can act as a barrier to many single parents, and can make outings and holidays expensive; employment and skills opportunities are limited for single parents; and a high number of second homes and holiday lets means longer lease options are limited<sup>158</sup>.

The same research also focussed on those with physical and mental health issues. In particular the more remote an area, the less likely it is to be served by specialist organisations; for those who are physically disabled issues of access to transport may be exacerbated when a carer may also need to travel; and access to buildings may be more challenging given the older nature of the housing stock and smaller nature of support organisations in rural areas. With regards to employment, it was felt that training and support could be better adapted to specific needs. Further, whilst the challenges faced by those with mental ill-health were sometimes shared, stigma in rural areas was felt to be particularly strong, and the dispersal and invisibility of those with mental ill-health found to be challenging<sup>159</sup>.

Migrant workers in rural Scotland (often likely to be working in more low paid, land-based jobs) were found to face particular challenges regarding language barriers; access to services (diverse needs and working hours creating difficulties); and accommodation (short term, seasonal and tied). Work undertaken in Fife and Highland identified specific barriers to employment (including language support; availability of appropriate childcare; prejudice and racism) with factors such as disabilities, gender and ethnicity, as well as living in remote rural areas, accenting the impact of poverty in different ways for different groups. These issues also interacted with factors such as industrial decline and rurality<sup>160</sup>.

#### Section 4: How is rural disadvantage measured and does that work for ‘rural’?

In the previous section, we presented elements of rural poverty and disadvantage identified from research stretching over the past 20-30 years: income and employment; transport and provision of services; housing; invisibility and isolation; and demographics. We now explore the extent to which these separate issues, or domains, are assessed in rural Scotland, in relation to poverty and disadvantage.

In Scotland, the principal approach to conceptualising the way in which a number of factors might lead in parallel to ‘deprivation’ is the compound measure of the **Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)**. The SIMD of 2012 contains the seven domains: Employment, Income, Crime, Housing, Health, Education and Geographical Access, which are all differentially weighted<sup>161</sup>. The SIMD Index is based on the geographical level of the data-zone, and was developed in 2003 by the Scottish Executive to identify small area concentrations of multiple deprivation across Scotland (see policy section above)<sup>162</sup>.

Recent Scottish Government analysis has found that **of the 15% most deprived datazones in SIMD 2012, around 91% of them are in urban areas and just over 2% are in rural areas**<sup>163</sup> (**6.5% are in accessible or remote small towns**)<sup>164</sup>. Perhaps expectedly, it is the ‘Geographical Access’ domain which rural areas were most commonly ranked highly in.

However, as the Scottish Government recognises, “rural data zones generally cover larger areas than their urban counterparts and so contain a greater mix of deprived and less deprived people”<sup>165</sup>. In addition, poverty and deprivation are more spatially dispersed and less concentrated in rural areas than in urban areas, and therefore more difficult to identify<sup>166</sup>. They state that “the SIMD does take rural issues into account” through, for example: the use of small geographical units of measurement (datazones) to enable pockets of deprivation to be identified; the inclusion of the domain on Geographical Access to Services; and averaging unemployment counts to take account of seasonal fluctuations in employment patterns<sup>167</sup>.

However, recognising that challenges remain, work has been carried out by the Scottish Government to examine income- access- and employment-deprived rural datazones using the 2009 SIMD. By looking at *only rural datazones*, the analysis shows:

- “the **most income deprived rural datazones** are generally found in Western Isles, Dumfries & Galloway, rural North Lanarkshire, Orkney and the north of the Highlands.
- the **most employment deprived** rural datazones are generally found in similar areas as the most income deprived although they are slightly less prevalent in Dumfries & Galloway and Orkney.
- The **most access deprived** rural datazones are more spread out across rural Scotland. Much of Highland, Argyll & Bute, Scottish Borders and the Island authorities are amongst the most access deprived.
- In general, the rural datazones that are **amongst the most deprived in more than one** of the income, employment and access domains are found in four areas:
  1. The South West of Scotland: Dumfries & Galloway
  2. The North-West of Scotland: especially the Western Isles
  3. A small number of datazones in the North and North-East of Scotland – North Highlands.
  4. Some in Central Scotland (e.g. ‘Rural North Lanarkshire’)<sup>168</sup>

## How have others recognised these limitations?

There are two main criticisms of SIMD in terms of its capacity to capture, and adequately represent, rural poverty and disadvantage<sup>169</sup>. Firstly, that, due to the dispersed nature of people and communities, the SIMD is unsuited to accessing information at such a 'granular' scale, and is too aggregated. This means that it misses out smaller numbers of people who are experiencing poverty. Secondly, that SIMD does not readily allow for the recognition that factors or issues build on one another.

### Rural poverty and disadvantage are largely invisible

In relation to the first shortfall, as the SIMD Guidance itself states:

*Constructing the SIMD:* it is designed to: "Measure features of a given type of deprivation (not conditions just experienced by a very small number of people or areas)." <sup>170</sup>

*Using the SIMD do's and don'ts:* "It is therefore appropriate to use the SIMD if your focus is on areas with high levels of multiple deprivation. However, it is important to remember that the SIMD identifies areas not individuals. If your focus is on all deprived people then a different approach needs to be taken. It may be possible to use the underlying data from one of the domains, rather than the overall index. However, not everyone living in a deprived area is deprived, and not all deprived people live in deprived areas – even when looking at individual domains." (p.4, emphasis in original) <sup>171</sup>

However, these Guidelines and specific attributes of the SIMD are not routinely highlighted when SIMD analyses and outputs are used to compare places across Scotland. This has implications for visibility of rural poverty and disadvantage in national debates and in national policy (as discussed above). For example, Highland Council have stated that:

"The SIMD does not capture or reflect the scale of the problem within rural areas. The index itself shows that in Highland 90% of income and employment deprived people live outwith the areas where deprivation is concentrated. There are considerable implications in relying on the SIMD to identify deprivation within Scotland." <sup>172</sup>

This matters further because this 'invisibility' has been an issue well recognised for almost 20 years in research terms: **"Most households suffering rural disadvantage will not live in priority areas identified through the use of such indicators. People, not areas, suffer rural disadvantage"**. <sup>173</sup> (1996). More recently (2011) this has again been re-stated:

"The proportion of the population who experience employment and income deprivations is greater than the proportion of areas that are considered to be deprived in rural Scotland, e.g. 8% of the population in remote rural Scotland are 'employment deprived' and 11% of the population are 'income deprived', while the national share of remote rural areas that are among Scotland's 15% Most Deprived Areas is less than 1%. By focusing on area deprivation, there is a tendency to underestimate the extent of deprivation that is experienced in rural Scotland" <sup>174</sup>.

It has also been highlighted that "the population structure in rural areas (small, dispersed populations) means that to achieve datazones, **the individual and unique character of communities is lost in aggregation**" <sup>175</sup>. This can mean that the experiences of specific groups can be lost. This is important because (as reviewed earlier), in rural areas: "some groups are more vulnerable to poverty / social exclusion than others. For example: older people living alone; the self employed; low paid workers; and increasingly predominantly East European migrant workers; individuals with no access to private transport even in households with a car; and 'those detached from labour markets' for a variety of reasons including those formally unemployed or those registered as longer term sick or disabled." <sup>176</sup>

The Church of Scotland commissioned a report which employed the SIMD, and highlighted its limitations in the context of rural poverty and deprivation. Their report analysed SIMD data to identify social deprivation at congregational area level <sup>177</sup>. The report argues that **the SIMD is arguably a more accurate measure of social deprivation in urban areas**. It argues that rural areas require an approach which is better able to capture issues such as social isolation <sup>178</sup>, and *frequency* as well as *availability* of transport <sup>179</sup>. It is also noted that rural areas often score highly on some aspects of deprivation but not others, leading to a **"strong over-representation of datazones with 'lowish' and 'middling' levels of deprivation"**. This leads to an approach to identifying rural (social) deprivation which does not offer a complete picture.

Given that **"geographically-based measures of deprivation can conceal small pockets of deprivation in rural areas"** the authors then focus on counts of individuals rather than of datazones <sup>180</sup> in identifying geographical variation in social deprivation. They state that:

"The conventional practice of using geographic units to analyse deprivation misses small pockets of deprivation in rural areas – when counts of deprived people rather than deprived places are used, the difference in deprivation between rural and urban areas is substantially narrowed" <sup>181</sup>.

The research finds that rural congregational areas contain over 80,000 income deprived people and some 38,000 employment deprived people (**10% of the rural population is income deprived and almost 8% of the working-age population is employment deprived**). It goes on to recognise that "while these proportions are significantly lower than those in urban areas, the rural/urban gap is considerably less than that revealed in our analysis of the extent of socially deprived places" <sup>182</sup>.



## The ways in which different elements feed into each other is lost

The second major shortfall of SIMD when considering poverty and disadvantage in rural Scotland is that it does not readily allow for the **exploration of interconnectedness and causality between variables** within (or between) domains. This matters, because, as these two quotes, from 16 years apart, show:

“Rural disadvantage is characterised above all by the inter-connections which exist between the various facets of rural living. More housing for young people must go hand in hand with employment opportunities, transport and childcare, for example.”<sup>183</sup> (1996)

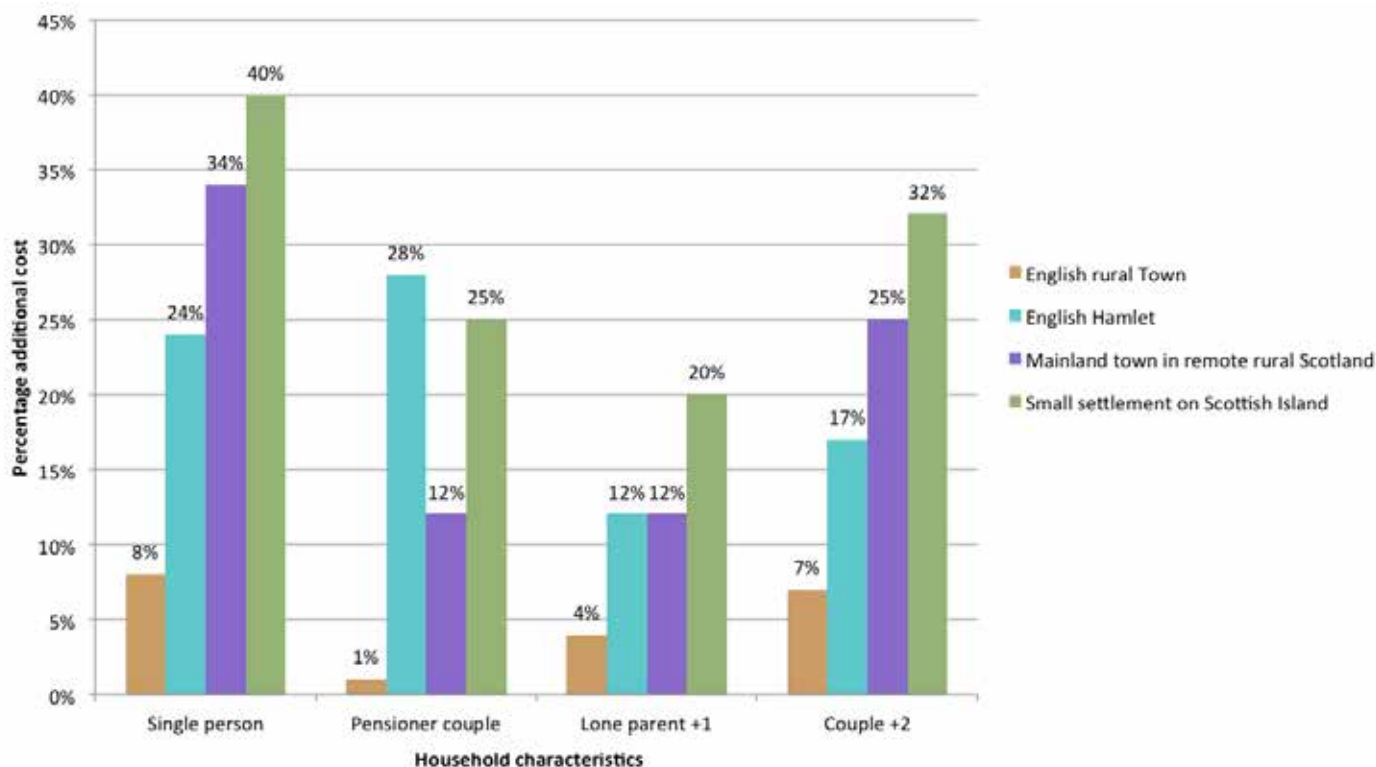
“These rural realities do not exist in isolation. Indeed, the qualitative experience of rural deprivation is intensified as a result of their interactions, e.g. the double-hit of higher transport fuel costs due to the higher cost of fuel and the greater volume of fuel that must be consumed to cover the greater distances that have to be travelled to reach work and services”<sup>184</sup> (2011).

How rural issues intersect for people in rural Scotland was the focus of a study commissioned by Highlands and Islands Enterprise, looking at a **‘minimum income standard for remote rural Scotland’**<sup>185</sup>. The work sought to identify how much it costs for people to live at a minimum acceptable standard in remote rural Scotland. The analysis drew on detailed discussions with members of the public about what should go into a minimum household ‘basket’ of goods and services. It also drew on expert knowledge where appropriate, building on work undertaken elsewhere, to identify the ‘Minimum Income Standard’ (MIS). The report concludes that the budgets required by households to achieve a minimum acceptable living standard in remote rural Scotland are typically 10%–40% higher than in other types of settlement across the UK (see Figure 8). Key areas of additional cost include:

- **Food:** costs to purchase food between 10 and 50% higher.
- **Clothing and household goods:** generally 30 – 50% higher.
- **Transport costs:** longer commutes and more expensive petrol.
- **Household fuel costs:** significantly vary in the degree of increase across contexts, and are higher due to fuel source (often oil), nature of housing stock (often old, poorly insulated and larger than required), and the nature of the severe climate.
- **Social participation costs** are found – on the whole – to be similar, although the nature of participation is found to be distinct (more localised, with more community-based activity and less paid-for recreation).

Importantly, and as mentioned above, the extent of the additional costs identified varies according to the characteristics of the household in question, as summarised below (Figure 8):

**Figure 8: Additional costs compared to equivalent urban UK households**<sup>186</sup>



The HIE analysis shows the ways in which multiple elements (such as those we highlighted in Section 2 of this Chapter) can compound each other and result in higher costs of living in rural Scotland, thus contributing to rural poverty and disadvantage. It also highlights the ways in which the cost of living can vary according to the characteristics of the individual or household in question. This is a theme which we now focus on in more detail.

## Section 5: How do elements of poverty and disadvantage build on each other for people living in rural areas?

In this Section, we aim to achieve three things. Firstly, we show some examples of how rural poverty and disadvantage ‘dimensions’ interact with one another. Secondly, we explore how these dimensions also interact with a person’s own characteristics, such as their age or gender. Thirdly, and throughout, we provide a commentary on how “rural” – as the key underlying element of context – shapes the ways in which these dimensions are experienced by people living in rural Scotland.

In doing this, we are bringing data together in ways which have not been presented before. We are also presenting data types which are not used in SIMD, but which, based on the literature we have reviewed, have great relevance to poverty and disadvantage in rural Scotland. For that reason, we return to the main themes from the research analysis outlined above: Income and employment; Transport and access to services; Housing, invisibility and isolation.

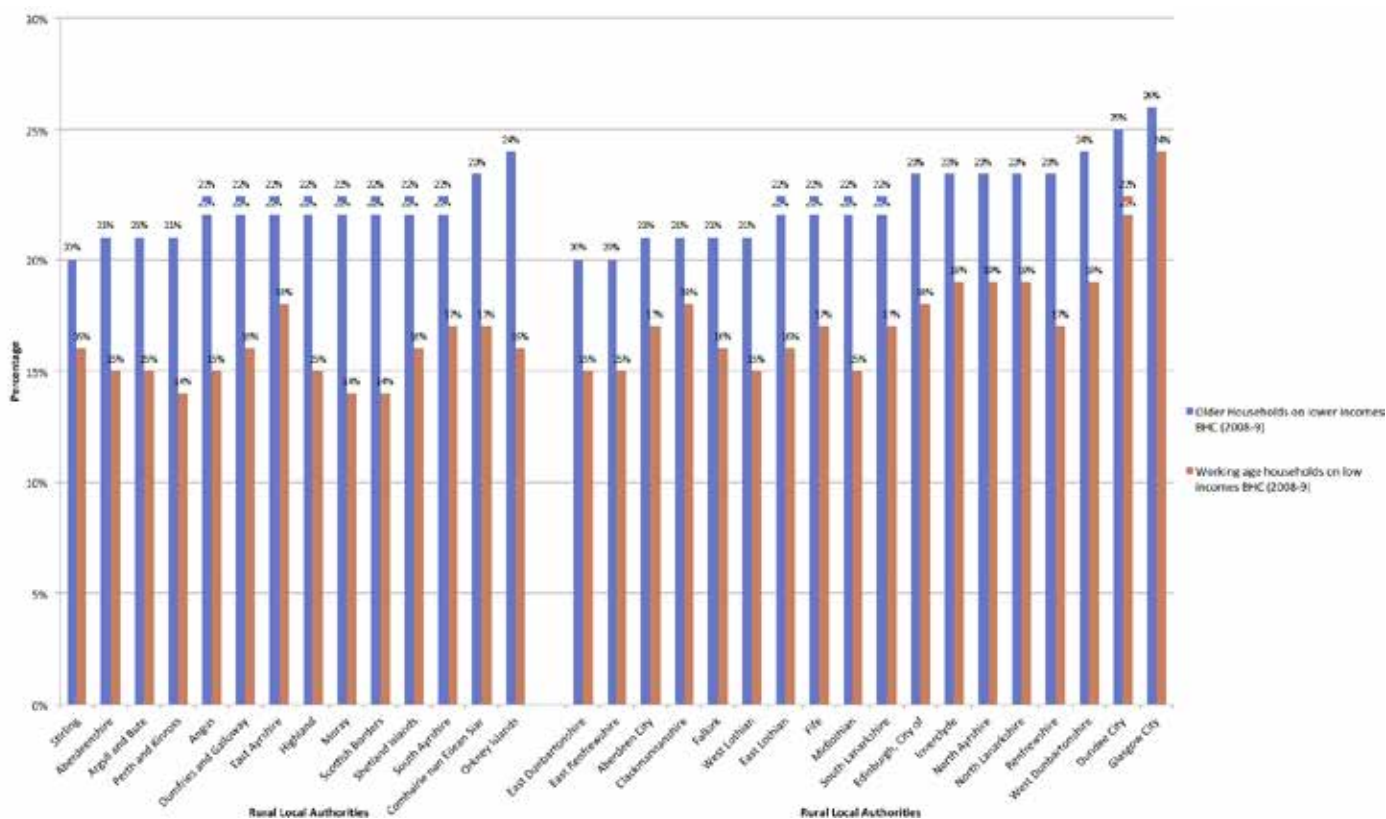
### Income and employment

As discussed in Chapter 1 of this Report, employment patterns in rural areas are distinct from urban, most notably:

- higher rates of self-employment;
- higher rate of part time employment;
- higher incidence of female part time working (remote rural);
- higher reliance on primary sector employment compared to the national average;
- higher than average reliance on employment in accommodation and food services (remote rural areas and remote small towns);
- across most of rural Scotland, a much higher proportion of employees working on average more than 49 hours per week when compared with urban areas (higher for male employment).

It is important to understand the implications of these patterns, in particular in relation to in-work poverty. This is challenging to measure robustly in rural Scotland at a household level, although in rural Wales it has been recognised as a factor which is particularly characteristic of more rural areas<sup>187</sup>. It is possible to show data estimating poverty amongst households of a working age by Local Authority (LA) (Figure 9). There is a small percentage point difference between urban and rural LAs, with 18% of those households in LAs estimated to have a low income, and 16% in rural LAs.

**Figure 9: Estimated households on lower income (BHC) by age and Local Authority (2008/2009).**<sup>188</sup>



Exploring data at the LA level shows that East Ayrshire has the highest rate of working age households on low incomes, whilst the Orkney Islands have the highest proportion of older households estimated to have low incomes. Further important patterns come to light by analysing data in this way. When looking at rural LAs:

- In 2009 the proportion of the population **claiming key benefits** varied from 21.6% in East Ayrshire down to 9.4/9.8 per cent in Aberdeenshire and Shetland.
- The proportion of the population who were **income deprived** fell between 2008 and 2011 across all rural LAs whereas the proportion of those **employment deprived** rose across all but one rural LA. In both measures, of the rural LAs East Ayrshire scored lowest (17%) on both measures and Aberdeenshire and Shetland highest (7% each).
- The proportion of the population claiming **income support** has declined over the three years 2010-2012 across all rural LAs. East Ayrshire had the highest proportion at 5.1% and Shetland the lowest at 1.7%.
- The proportion of the population aged 16-64yrs claiming **employment support** has increased across all rural LAs from 2010 to 2012. East Ayrshire had the highest proportion at 3.4% and Aberdeenshire the lowest at 1.8%.
- The proportion of the working population claiming **Job Seekers Allowance** increased across all but one (Shetland) rural LAs 2005 to 2009. East Ayrshire had the highest proportion at 4.7% with Aberdeenshire the lowest at 1.1%.
- In 2012 three rural LAs (Angus, East Ayrshire and Highland) had **unemployment** rates higher than the Scottish average.
- In five rural LAs (Angus, East Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway, Highland, Perth/Kinross) the **unemployed seeking work rates** were higher than the Scottish average in 2012.
- In four rural LAs (Aberdeenshire, Angus, East Ayrshire and South Ayrshire) the **permanently sick and disabled rates** were higher than the Scottish average in 2012.
- Among the rural LAs, East Ayrshire stands out as having rates higher than the Scottish average across all three measures including more than double the Scottish average for those unemployed seeking work and almost double the Scottish average in 'unemployment' per se.

Therefore it is clear that specific rural areas of Scotland persistently are rated towards the top or the bottom of key measures of poverty and disadvantage. However, what must also be noted is that 'rural' is not necessarily the only factor which might exacerbate these characteristics; others include post-industrial decline, or conversely, the strong economic growth of surrounding regions. What this analysis means is that decision-makers in rural areas must engage with issues of employment and income deprivation, particularly where there are commonalities in the rural LAs scoring higher and lower on these various factors (e.g. Angus, East Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway).



### The Coalfields Regeneration Trust (CRT)

In the early 1980's there were 21 working collieries operating in Scotland employing around 22,000 people. The dramatic decline of the industry is well documented and forms a key part of Scotland's recent industrial and political history. All of Scotland's underground mines have now closed, with coal mining (opencast mines) now accounting for the employment of just over a 1,100 people.

The decline in the coal industry has been impacted further with the recent closure of the opencast mines operated by Scottish Coal, with the loss of a reported 600 jobs.

Most coalfield communities were built up in rural locations and were completely dependent on the coalmining industry, once the pits closed this left little in the way of local alternative employment or access to opportunities..

It is recognised that the speed and extent of the decline of the coal mining industry in Scotland has had a significant impact on local communities. This not only included the loss of employment and the economic impact, but has also included the impact on the social fabric and purpose of local communities. Over the last 20 to 30 years, many of these communities have struggled to survive and have faced on going issues of social and economic deprivation. It is reported that the severity and complexity of the situation has made the collapse of the coalmining industry one of the most enduring regeneration challenges facing Scotland, with many of the former coalfield communities continuing to face major economic and social difficulties.

Drawing on the experience of CRT Scotland and work undertaken elsewhere, we have identified that the key barriers to development we will tackle, within the coalfield communities include:

- **Capacity Issues** – Building the capacity of local communities is a major issue and requires long-term investment and support. A range of issues have been identified including a lack of skills and knowledge; lack of effective community leadership; ineffective structures and networks; and relatively weak group activity. Building the capacity of local communities forms a key part of on going regeneration activity.
- **Enterprise Culture** – Evidence has suggested that there is a lack of an enterprise culture within many of the former coalfield communities. This would seem to relate to the historical dependency that existed on the coal industry. It is recognised that action is required to encourage greater entrepreneurship and enterprise activity within local communities.



- **Economies of Scale and Financial Sustainability** – Examples exist of community based projects not being able to achieve an economy of scale to support the on going sustainability of a service or facility. Too often this is due to projects and organisations working in isolation within a limited market. The potential exists to improve connections and joint activity across initiatives that could result in shared services; reduced costs and overheads; and improved sustainability.
- **Partnership and Joint Working** – A key feature of successful regeneration is linked to the development of effective partnership and joint working arrangements. This results in a coalescing of energy towards supporting the regeneration effort. Given the remote nature of many of the coalfield communities, the development of effective partnership and joint working arrangements tends to be an issue. The potential exists to develop the partnership and joint working arrangements as part of a wider process of area based regeneration.

The core of CRT regeneration activity in Scotland is to build on our success by encouraging use of local resources in a way to enhance local economic opportunities while improving social conditions in a sustainable way, by delivering a range of programmes that include working to develop local community structures and opportunities that can sustain activity and development over the longer term.

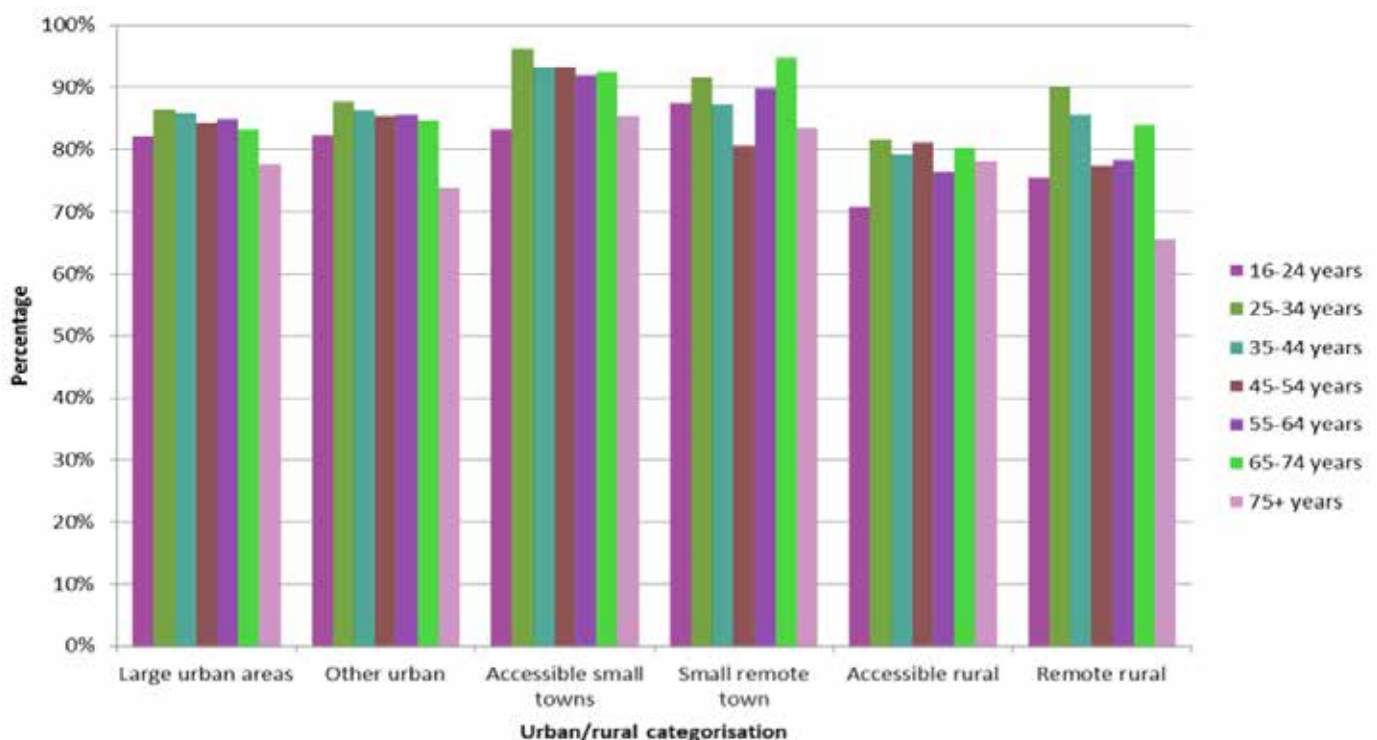
It is also important to keep in mind that rural areas often have lower benefit uptake rates<sup>189</sup>, with our recent analysis confirming that in 2012<sup>190</sup> i) proportions of the population in receipt of 'key benefits' generally decrease as degree of rurality increases, and ii) in all urban/rural categories the percentage of the population in receipt of benefits was lowest amongst those aged 16-24, increasing with age. It is important to understand what proportion of this variation is accounted for by lower need, and how far this is also a function of the issues of independence and stigma highlighted earlier in this chapter, and/or lower rates of awareness. It is also likely that challenges such as being out-of-work and therefore needing to claim benefits 'intersect' and are compounded by issues such as the higher cost of living in rural Scotland (as evidenced by the work of HIE in remote rural areas). Given that employment deprivation and employment support have been increasing, it is likely that poverty and disadvantage are also likely to increase in these rural areas.

### Transport and access to services

It is clear from qualitative research that it is not easy for all sectors of the rural population to access services. This has been shown to be the case for younger people (see Chapter 2)<sup>191</sup>; single parents; older people and the disabled<sup>192</sup> for example. However it is also the case that people's perceptions of 'convenience' of services appear to be influenced by a degree of pragmatism about rural life.

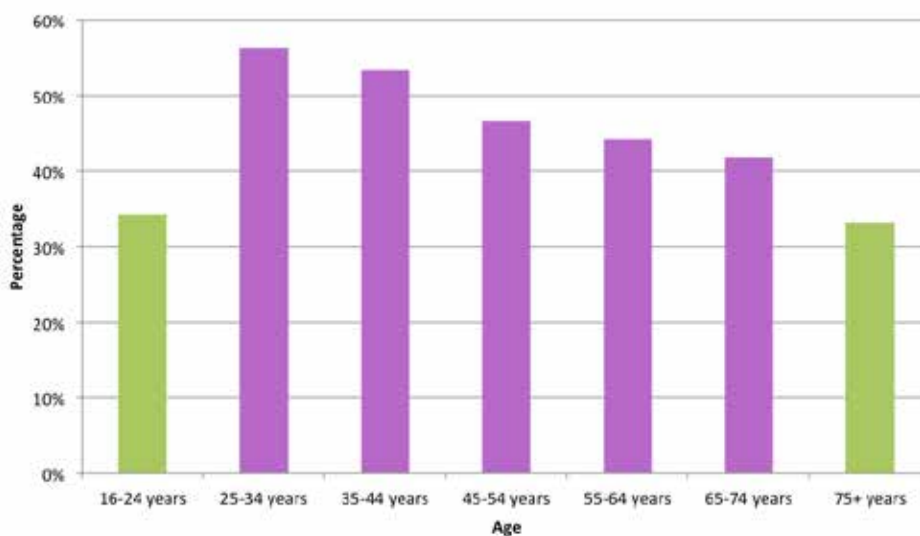
Analysis of all responses to a question in the Scottish Household Survey asking *how far respondents find particular services 'fairly or very convenient'* show some surprising patterns. Those in remote rural areas were more likely to rate access to a doctor's surgery, a post office and a petrol station as 'fairly or very convenient' than those in accessible rural areas. However, if we then disaggregate those answers by rurality and age (Figure 10) for GPs surgery as one example, we see that generally those in the 25–34 year old age category are most likely to report that they find this service convenient across all urban/rural categories. Those in the youngest (16-24) and oldest (75+) age groups are least likely to report that accessing a doctor's surgery is convenient, and particularly in remote rural areas for those aged 75+.

**Figure 10: Percentage of population finding access to doctor's surgery 'very' or 'fairly' convenient by age and rurality (2011)<sup>(193)</sup>**



The above pattern is even more pronounced in remote rural Scotland when looking at ease of access to a hospital outpatient's department. Again, it is those at either end of the lifecourse that are least likely to find access convenient (Figure 11):

**Figure 11: Percentage of population finding access to a hospital outpatients department 'very' or 'fairly' convenient by age in remote rural Scotland (2011)** <sup>194</sup>

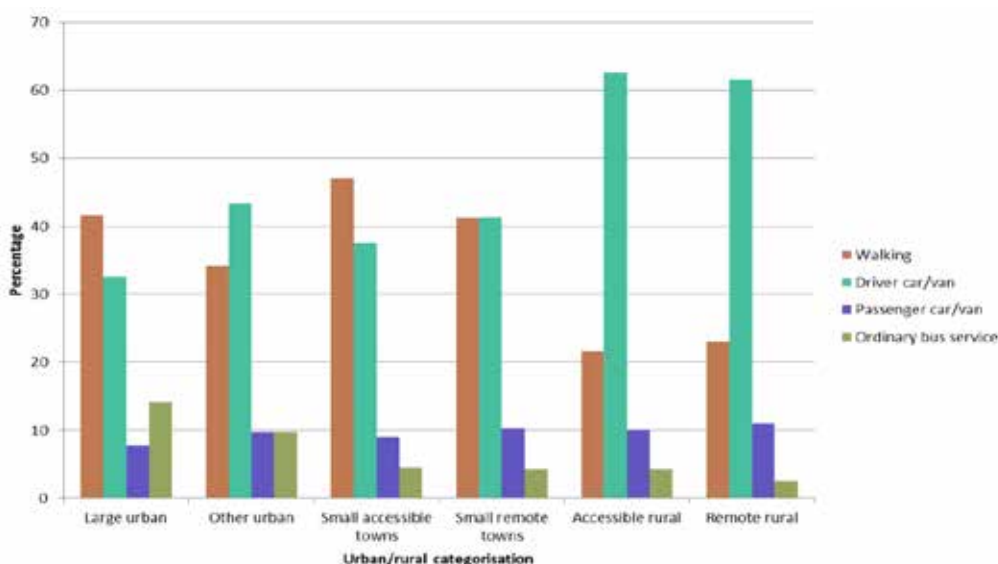


It might be anticipated that this pattern is linked to a certain extent to transport, centralisation of services and the particular challenges of accessing specialist services <sup>195</sup>. Car ownership also varies according to income and age. In 2012, 55% of those in the 15% most deprived datazones in Scotland do not have access to a car, relative to 27% in the rest of Scotland <sup>196</sup>. In urban LAs, 57% of households with a net income of £15 000 or less did not have access to a car. In rural LAs this decreases to 46%. However, **in five rural LAs (Angus, East Ayrshire, Highland, Scottish Borders and South Ayrshire), at least half of those earning less than £15,000 per annum, have no access to a car.** In three other rural LAs, the proportion was just under 50% (Stirling 49%; Moray 48% Argyll and Bute 47%). This means that over half of Scottish LAs, the proportion of those earning £15 000 or less without access to a car is at least 47%. Only one rural LA (Orkney) was lower than the Scottish average on this measure <sup>197</sup>. Overall, Taken in tandem with high fuel costs in rural Scotland <sup>198</sup> and the higher percentage of the population in remote and accessible rural Scotland spending over £100 a month on fuel compared to urban areas <sup>199</sup> this suggests that reliance on private transport in rural areas is far from problematic.

In terms of age, a scoping study of older people in rural Scotland (2003) found that in 1991 pensioner households were reported as less likely compared to other households to run a car, dropping particularly in the 65-74 and 75+ age groups, but that those in rural areas were more likely than urban residents of a similar age to still be running a car <sup>200</sup>. The same study found that these age groups were most likely to rely upon public transport and community transport schemes.

This is particularly important given dependence on a private car to access a doctor's surgery increases with degree of rurality whilst use of a bus service decreases (Figure 12). Given that it can be particularly costly and challenging to deliver health and care services in rural homes, this suggests that it is imperative that consideration is given to how older and younger members of the population are supported to access healthcare in a rural context. There is innovative work already taking place for example through the support of those in ill-health to use the internet to manage their conditions <sup>201</sup>

**Figure 12: Four most common modes of travel to doctor by rurality (2009-2011).** <sup>202</sup>



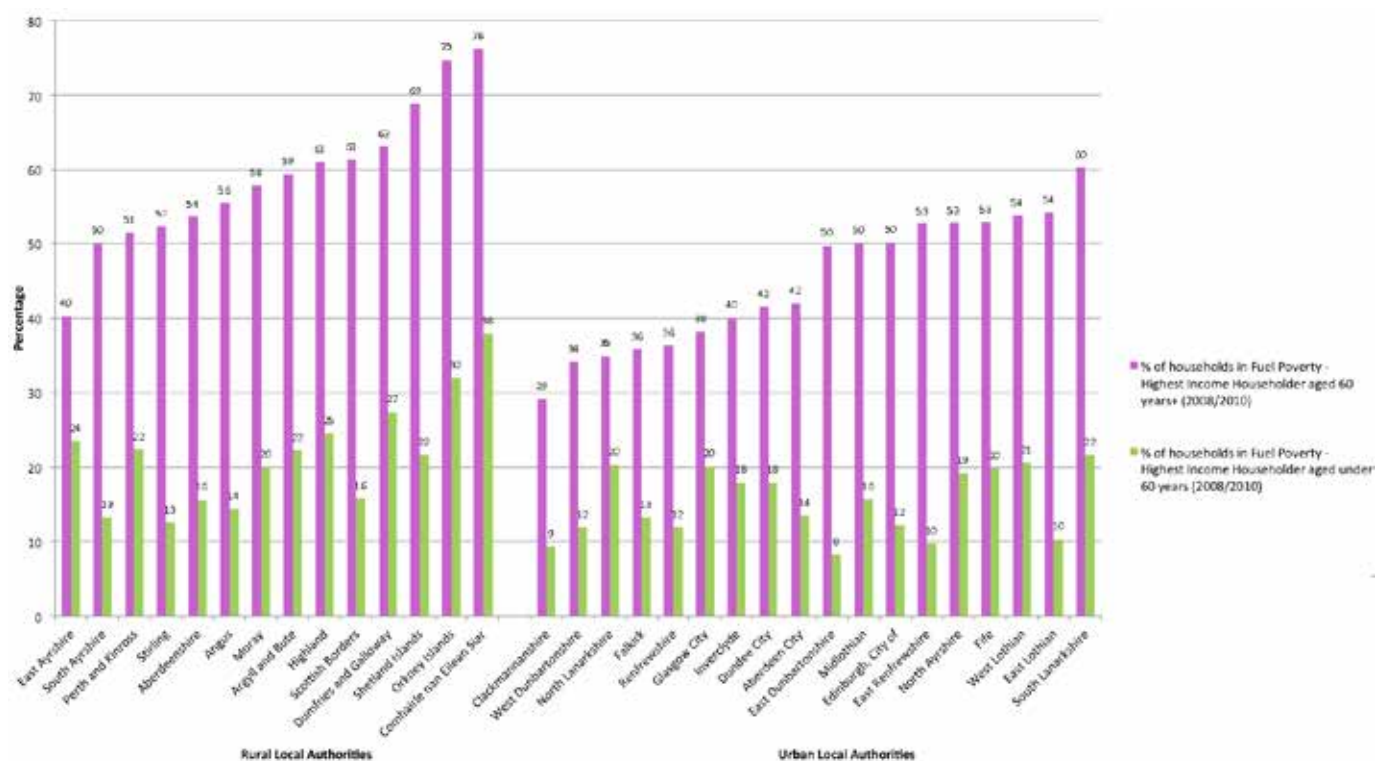
Our analysis shows how age, degree of rurality, access to different forms of transport for different services, all intersect with each other and will affect people's experience of access. Increasing these more nuanced understandings across other services, and assessing what they then mean for poverty and disadvantage, would support targeting of resources more at particular population groups than solely on places.

### Housing, fuel poverty, age and isolation

The overall, headline figures of those living in fuel poverty are fairly well known: 46% of those in remote rural areas and 36% in accessible rural areas (compared with the rest of Scotland at 26%) (2010) <sup>203</sup>. In previous *Rural Scotland in Focus* reports, we have highlighted how rural housing stock and being 'off-grid' exacerbates and feeds into this rural picture.

However, when we then explore the ways in which fuel poverty 'intersects' with age and rurality, there are some strong important variations. Whilst acknowledging the challenges of assessing household poverty <sup>204</sup>, this indicative analysis shows that the average rate of fuel poverty for households in which the highest income householder is aged 60+ in rural LAs in 2008/10 was 59%. In other words, *households in this category were more likely than not to be living in fuel poverty*. This is compared to an average of 22% for those aged under 60 in rural LAs. Both of these rates are higher than comparable data for urban LAs (see Figure 13):

**Figure 13: Percentage of households in fuel poverty by age and Local Authority (2008-2010) <sup>205</sup>**



Further, in the Orkney Islands and Eilean Siar, where the highest income householder is aged 60+, more than 70% of households are experiencing fuel poverty.

This finding is particularly stark when we consider research carried out by EKOS (2009) which found that: "limited availability of local activities, lack of income and poor transport arrangements mean that many people (particularly pensioners and disabled people) spend their days at home. This increases fuel usage and costs, as well as increasing isolation and loneliness." <sup>206</sup>. So, again, fuel poverty is exacerbated by other aspects of rural living, for particular sections of the rural population, and can become a self-perpetuating cycle.

Bringing together data for age and fuel poverty, and unpacking rural into LA areas rather than only 'remote' or 'accessible' rural, shows a clearer picture of where, and for whom, fuel poverty exists. It is this level of granularity, and more (i.e. below LA level), which is needed in order to begin to target interventions to lift people out of poverty.

### Where more work needs to be done to improve our understanding of rural poverty and disadvantage

Our aim in this sub-section has been to illustrate, through a few examples, the need for bringing data together in ways that reflect what we know about rural poverty and disadvantage, rather than being led by how the data are usually structured and presented. We start to see additional complexity and depth. More importantly, we start to see the people, rather than only the places, who are affected most by the composite effects of rural life.

We are aware that there are many data limitations which currently hold back more detailed, robust analysis of rural poverty and disadvantage <sup>207</sup>. For example, the picture we have presented here has generally been at the level of the LA, and as we highlighted at the beginning of this chapter, we recognise the diversity that lies within such administrative boundaries. We need to be able to robustly examine at sub-LA level, to understand people and process rather than taking a purely area-based approach.



It has also been recognised that “there has been very little, if any, research on dynamic processes and the identification of “pathways” into and out of poverty and deprivation in rural areas.”<sup>208</sup>. We have looked, briefly, at how experiences of elements of poverty are different with age. However, further exploration is needed of the specifically-rural routes into and out of poverty<sup>209</sup>, and the extent to which some people may be disadvantaged over a long period of time while others may move in and out of being disadvantaged several times during their lifetime<sup>210</sup>.

We also know that there are many issues which are likely to have a strong rural dimension for which there is currently limited systematic data available. Examples include: food banks and their role in rural areas<sup>211</sup>; homelessness which is particularly underreported and dispersed in rural areas<sup>212</sup>; domestic abuse which is a key example of the ways in which access to specialist support, visibility and stigma within a small community and lack of access to appropriate alternate accommodation might intersect<sup>213</sup>; the experience of child poverty in rural areas; the experience of poverty and disadvantage for ethnic minority populations, including migrant workers<sup>214</sup>; and the impact in rural areas of welfare reform. Understanding how these play out in rural Scotland, and how to address them, is all the more imperative given the on-going need to target limited funds and effort.

## CASE STUDY

### Becoming a Survivor – partnership working to achieve outcomes

Becoming a Survivor is part of Investing In Communities, through which the Big Lottery Fund (the Fund) invests in projects that bring real improvements to communities and the lives of people most in need. Becoming a Survivor provides support for people affected by domestic abuse to help them move on with their lives. In January 2012 the Fund invested almost £6.5m in 18 projects and followed this in March 2014 with a further investment of almost £12m in another 24 projects across Scotland.



In Scotland domestic abuse service provision is more geographically spread than it is in the rest of the UK and multi-agency working has been consistently recommended as a means of addressing and supporting people affected by domestic abuse. It is widely acknowledged that this is the most effective way to tackle domestic abuse and its consequences. **Without it, service providers may not be fully aware of the extent of the issue, the needs of the people they are trying to help, or the barriers people face when accessing services. Similarly, without a co-ordinated partnership approach, people affected by domestic abuse may be denied the specific support they need or be unaware of the support that is available.** Therefore, all of the projects supported by the Fund had to adopt a multi agency partnership approach to deliver their outcomes.

People who experience domestic abuse often have multiple and complex needs and while it occurs across society, regardless of age, gender, race, sexuality, wealth or geography, it is often found to coexist with substance abuse and addiction, mental health issues, poverty, and has long been recognised as a major contributory factor to homelessness.

Becoming a Survivor has invested in projects delivered by different types of organisations across Scotland, including remote and rural communities. These organisations are providing support for a wide range of people affected by domestic abuse, from different backgrounds and different areas, with complex and diverse needs, but who do not all currently have access to similar levels of support. By adopting a multi agency partnership approach it is anticipated that the types and levels of support available will be increased and improved, resulting in better outcomes for the Becoming a Survivor projects' diverse beneficiaries.



## Section 7: So what might some next steps be?

Rural poverty and disadvantage have been researched for 20-30 years and their core elements have remained the same over this period. Research continues to show (2014) that:

“Scotland should not be concerned with poverty only in urban areas... Sight must also not be lost of the fact that one quarter of Scotland's poor live between the extremes of city and country – poverty is also experienced in Scotland's small towns, accessible and remote to larger centres of population” <sup>215</sup>.



### Rural poverty

There are a number of topics that Scotland's policy makers place into the 'too hard pile', rural poverty is one of them. It is not that we don't know it exists, Scotland's now excellent data sets repeatedly prove its existence, and it is acknowledged the documentation of Scotland's poverty, but most of the significant anti-poverty interventions focus in the main on urban locations.

The logo for 'Inspiring Scotland' features the word 'Inspiring' in a large, red, cursive font, with 'Scotland' in a smaller, black, sans-serif font below it.

There are good reasons for this; with fixed resources it is logical to allocate them to areas where a density of need provides the biggest 'bang for buck' which repeatedly leads to the top 5/10/15% of the 'poverty league tables', but the consequence of this is a constant divergence between more diffuse incidents of poverty, and national interventions designed to alleviate it and its impact.

In many ways rural poverty is no different to that experienced in Scotland's towns and cities. Simply put, it is the lack of access to resources and opportunities to live a life that enhances, rather than diminishes, your wellbeing. That access may be determined by low income and/or distance. There are obviously nuances, whether it be the territorialism seen in Scotland's cities or the a long journey to access specialist medical services, but fundamentally the outcome is the same - a degradation of life opportunities often exhibited through poor health outcomes.

For decades some of Scotland's brightest minds have struggled with smart ways around the conundrum, and often technology and tele-services seem to be the light at the end of the tunnel, but the recent thinking about healthy inequality (led by Sir Harry Burns, Scottish Government's Chief Medical Officer) about the drivers of wellbeing - a sense within individuals of predictability, manageability and meaningfulness in their lives - should perhaps prompt us to look more widely at generating the growth of social capital within, and between, Scotland's pockets of rural poverty, as well as the more mechanistic logistics of connectedness.

There are some fundamentals around rural poverty: wages tend to be lower and work more periodic; and fuel, housing, food and transport is likely to be more expensive. Some of these effects are compounding - greater distances to travel to work with higher fuel costs. An obvious way forward is to increase income, but without radical adjustment of the value chain in the rural economy this seems unlikely to occur within the short-to-medium term. The reverse could be attempted - to subsidise costs, which occurs to a slight extent currently. This would be expensive at scale, and would significantly influence internal market balances, and is unlikely to be politically or economically unpalatable.

So is it back to the 'too hard' position or does the global movement to combining technology with the 'sharing/borrowing/collective purchase' movement provide a glimmer of light? Can the growth of bread clubs and food coops, car/lift sharing, tool sharing, collective energy purchase - made significantly more possible by the use of technology - provide the indication of a blueprint for away forward? Collective purchase can reduce unit costs and place more control with consumers. Solutions driven by communities lead to a sense of voice and efficacy often not available in the context of rural poverty. Communitarian solutions have the potential to build social capital and to speak to the challenges outlined by Sir Harry Burns. None of these are a panacea; the development of these approaches are yet to play out in urban spaces where they have the potential for greater critical mass; some will not be appropriate or speak to rural issues - but perhaps now is the time to release some creative thinking so we have a chance of a different narrative for rural communities rather than re-visit the same challenges in the next decades.

However, as has been argued for the past 15 years, the means for assessing such poverty and disadvantage in rural Scotland are not 'fit for purpose'. This is, in itself, important, because it limits our understanding. And as others have argued (in 1996), if we do not understand it, we cannot address it in a systematic or strategic way.

“more direct assistance could often be given by identifying and ameliorating the causes of individuals' and households' disadvantage... If the dimensions of rural disadvantage can be understood, and those affected can be identified, then it may be more effective to target policies at those groups and the problems which face them, rather than at the areas in which they (and many others) live.” <sup>216</sup>

As critically, the SIMD, which portrays poverty and disadvantage in Scotland, has been viewed since its inception as “the main system for setting outcome agreements and priorities at local level in local community plans... (which) will firmly root the work on community regeneration into the work on improving core services across the Scottish Executive” (2002, p.25). So, given the SIMD is not capturing rural dimensions accurately, they are also not being fed systematically or robustly into (rural) policies or strategies. We welcome the revision of the SIMD for 2015 <sup>217</sup> for this reason, since SIMD continues to be so central to policy formulation and implementation.

We have sought to examine other dimensions, based on the research into rural poverty and disadvantage. We have also represented data in different ways, so that we can highlight people rather than only places. This, we recognise, is only exploratory at this stage and challenges over data availability and robustness remain. Nonetheless, we wanted to illustrate the need to look at what needs to be measured for a rural context, and to see how that can be done, rather than starting only with what can be readily measured at a national level. Other examples which could be considered specifically in terms of their relevance to rural Scotland are: the work being carried out into personal wellbeing by the New Economics Foundation <sup>218</sup>; Oxfam Scotland's Humankind Index (HKI) <sup>219</sup>; and the Carnegie UK Trust's report on how well-being is measured in Scotland: "Shifting the dial in Scotland" <sup>220</sup>. There may be ways to explore how the Wellbeing Indicators (Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included) underpinning Getting it Right for Every Child, could be tailored to the specific experiences of poverty and disadvantage in rural Scotland.

With increased understanding and representation needs to come a discussion about where rural poverty and disadvantage "fits" into policy and practice. As we saw from the policy review, in 1999/2000, there was a specific Rural Poverty Working Group which produced its "Poverty and Exclusion in Rural Scotland" Report. Since then however, rural poverty is notably absent from rural policy and documents. It is similarly absent from national policies, other than recognition that it is experienced differently in rural (compared with urban) areas, although fuel poverty gains sporadic mention. For rural poverty and disadvantage to be systematically and strategically addressed, they need to be reinstated either into a rural vision, and/or integrated into national and Local Authority policies. Otherwise, the issues, and the people affected, will continue to fall between the policy cracks and undermine the achievement of the Scottish Government's Objectives of a 'Wealthier and Fairer' and 'Healthier' Scotland.

There is an opportunity within the upcoming Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, given that Priority 6 (widely interpreted as being the focus of LEADER) of the Programme is: "**Social Inclusion, Poverty Reduction and Economic Development**". However, in order to maximise the potential effectiveness of the approximately £66M budget for LEADER in delivering to this outcome over 21 Local Action Group areas in rural Scotland, it will be necessary to examine how tackling poverty and social inclusion could be aligned with existing national strategies outlined above. In turn, this must be underpinned by an improved understanding of rural poverty and disadvantage.



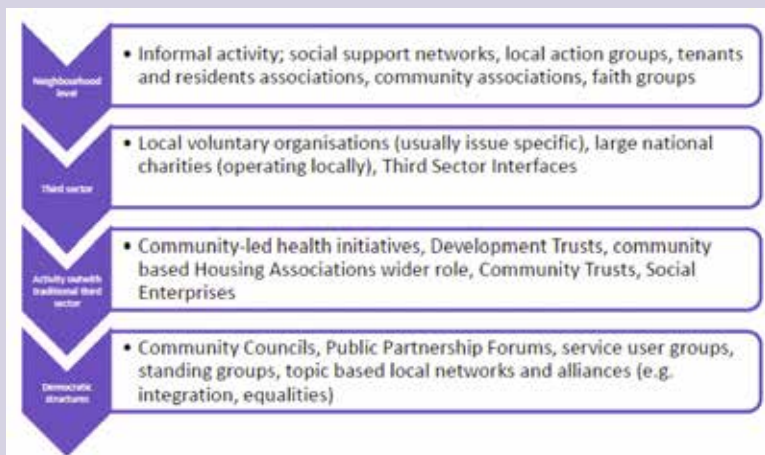
### Rural Scotland in Focus 2014: SCDC

The contribution communities can make to the creation of a sustainable and flourishing Scotland is increasingly recognised as essential, not just in economic terms but also in terms of achieving better health and social outcomes more generally. At a time of reducing public finances, supporting and working with communities can both mitigate the effects of service reduction and lead to positive outcomes such as more resilient and empowered communities, which in the future should ease pressure on demand for current models of public service provision.



Across policy areas there is an emerging commitment to preventative action improving health and wellbeing, promoting social inclusion, promoting healthy lifestyles and extending social and community capacity to address the health issues and social issues at large within Scottish society. Community development has a key role, especially in areas of Scotland experiencing entrenched health and social inequalities and where the impact of welfare changes and reductions in public spending will have most negative effect.

Many communities and community organisations are successful in addressing their own local issues. They bring in income by drawing on the skills and experience of local people; they put issues and solutions onto the policy agenda; they set up food and fuel projects to make essential requirements accessible and affordable and much more besides.



Broadly speaking, the best, and most impactful, examples of the activities take place where there are well connected and confident community organisations in place; good relationships and linkages between community organisations and between local agencies and community interests; and, where there is a commitment at strategic planning level to supporting community capacity building and community engagement work.

At community planning level, public services interventions are often attached to a specific policy area such as health, housing or community safety, and designed from the

perspectives of the service deliverers. These interventions may not translate easily to the experience of communities and a set of interweaving and complex factors directly related to local demographics, history and unique characteristics. All this suggests that one outcome cannot easily be addressed in isolation of another.

Supporting communities should be planned as part of the delivery of the single outcome agreement, with the commitment of all partners to its resourcing. The planning of this activity should demonstrate a shared vision, shared purpose and a whole systems approach. It should employ new methodologies, consider skills development requirements, and it should demonstrate strong leadership within community planning processes.

We have deliberately focused on policy in this section. However, it is important to note in our conclusions the critical role played by the third sector, including Social Enterprises<sup>221</sup>, in ameliorating rural poverty and disadvantage. We highlighted examples of their work in our previous reports (Rural Scotland in Focus 2010 and 2012). There is also activity by the private sector, and potential work through small businesses (such as the Federation of Small Businesses<sup>222</sup>) is considerable. As already stated, the key is then how to integrate and support this significant and potential resource within an overall vision and framework for tackling poverty and disadvantage in rural Scotland.

Increasing our understanding, and building strategic responses, are choices. They are choices which will demand different lenses, different analyses, which complement existing approaches, bringing in more rural-sensitive assessment tools and processes. They are choices which demand resources and investment. However, we would argue that the on-going persistence of poverty in rural Scotland is a greater price to pay.



# 4. The importance of integrated spatial planning in rural areas

Richard Heggie & Davy McCracken

## Key points

- Addressing the economic, environmental and social challenges facing Scotland's rural areas will require ensuring that the right things happen, at the right time, in the right places, at the right scale.
- The major challenge is how best to ensure that the needs of people and communities in rural areas are taken into account and integrated effectively with the need to manage natural resources sustainably.
- Positive changes in emphasis are happening at a national level, but there is still a disconnect between national planning policy aspirations and local level implementation of planning in rural areas.
- There is currently no agreed vision as to what the Scottish 'countryside' is for. The lack of such a vision can hamper developments of potential benefit to communities and the environment in rural areas.
- Only by placing the needs of the land, communities and people in rural areas firmly at the centre of the spatial planning process, will the economic, environmental and social challenges facing those areas be addressed effectively.

## Introduction

Scotland has a wide range of environmental challenges to address, including: tackling climate change <sup>1</sup>; halting biodiversity loss <sup>2</sup>; reducing diffuse pollution of water <sup>3</sup>; and reducing flood risk <sup>4</sup>, the vast majority of which can only be tackled effectively through targeted actions in rural areas. But Scotland's rural areas also face major social and economic challenges, including: limited economic regeneration and employment opportunities <sup>5</sup>; lack of sufficient affordable housing <sup>6</sup>; high energy costs for business and homes <sup>7</sup>; poor transport infrastructure <sup>8</sup>; an ageing population as a result of youth out-migration and the in-migration of older people <sup>9</sup>. Most of these themes are discussed in Chapters 1, 2 and 3 of this Report.

Successfully addressing any one of the economic, environmental or social challenges facing Scotland's rural areas will require ensuring that the right things happen, at the right time, in the right places, at the right scale. However, the decisions and actions implemented to address any one of these issues also have the potential to complement or conflict with decisions and actions taken to address each or all of the other concerns. There is therefore a need to ensure that actions are planned in an integrated way, taking into account the spatial locations and scale at which all the actions need to be addressed.

The major challenge facing Scotland's rural areas is therefore how best to ensure that the needs of people and communities in those areas are taken into account and integrated effectively with the need to manage natural resources sustainably. The need to address such a combination of economic, environmental and social issues in rural areas also means that the type of integrated spatial planning that is required in a rural context is markedly different from that required in an urban context.

But how well integrated are current approaches to spatial planning in rural areas of Scotland? Does planning currently hear the rural voice? How well are the needs of local communities in rural areas currently taken into account in the implementation of the spatial planning process? What does not work well currently and why? What does work well currently and why? What needs to change in rural areas and who needs to drive those changes?

This chapter considers these questions by looking at some examples of what works well in practice together with some other examples of where improvements could be made. The aim is to highlight what more could be done to achieve more effective integrated spatial planning in rural areas. The overall guiding principle is that only by placing the needs of the land, communities and people in rural areas firmly at the centre of the spatial planning process will the economic, environmental and social challenges facing those areas be addressed effectively.



## Scotland's planning infrastructure

The Scottish Government has as its overall purpose to focus government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth<sup>10</sup>. This, together with the sixteen National Outcomes<sup>11</sup> (which articulate more fully the overall purpose and describe what the Government wants to achieve over a ten year period), sets the context within which planning policy and plans for development or major land use changes are considered.

The Scottish Government states<sup>12</sup> that the planning system considers "where development should happen, where it should not and how development affects its surroundings" and sets out a key principle, noting that "the system balances competing demands to make sure that land is used and developed in the public's long-term interest".

The National Planning Framework (NPF) sets the context for development planning in Scotland and provides a framework for the spatial development of Scotland as a whole<sup>13</sup>. It sets out the Government's development priorities over the next 20-30 years and identifies national developments which support the development strategy. At the time of writing, a draft National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3) is under consideration<sup>14</sup>. This sets out an ambition for Scotland to become: a successful, sustainable place; a low carbon place; a natural, resilient place; and a connected place. Fourteen national developments are proposed to help deliver the strategy.

Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)<sup>15</sup> sets out national planning policies which reflect Scottish Ministers' priorities for the development and use of land. At the time of writing, a revised SPP<sup>16</sup> is under consideration. It directly relates to:

- the preparation of development plans;
- the design of development, from initial concept through to delivery; and
- the determination of planning applications and appeals.

The SPP is a non-statutory document which is considered as a 'material consideration' in determining planning decisions, though planning authorities have flexibility to weight its relevance in each case.

The range of topics covered by the SPP indicates the wide influence of planning and the need to ensure integration across strategies, activities and investments undertaken by public agencies, the private sector and communities:

Principal Policies	Subject Policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sustainable Economic Growth</li><li>• Sustainable Development</li><li>• Engagement</li><li>• Climate Change</li><li>• Placemaking</li><li>• Location of New Development</li><li>• Spatial Strategies</li><li>• Town Centres</li><li>• Rural Development</li><li>• National Parks</li><li>• Coastal Areas</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Buildings</li><li>• Enabling Delivery of New Homes</li><li>• Supporting Business and Employment</li><li>• Valuing the Historic Environment</li><li>• Natural Resources</li><li>• Valuing the Natural Environment</li><li>• Enhancing Green Infrastructure</li><li>• Promoting Responsible Extraction of Resources</li><li>• Supporting Aquaculture</li><li>• Movement</li><li>• Promoting Sustainable and Active Travel</li><li>• Utilities</li><li>• Delivering Heat and Electricity</li><li>• Enabling Digital Communication</li><li>• Managing Flood Risk and Drainage</li><li>• Reducing and Managing Waste</li></ul>

The Development Plan and planning applications are the public interface for planning. Strategic Development Plans (SDP) cover Scotland's four main city regions and Local Development Plans (LDP) cover Council and National Park areas. These statutory documents are the starting point for planning decisions. They set out a long term vision and indicate<sup>17</sup> "where most new developments are proposed and the policies that will guide decision-making on planning applications". LDPs are accompanied by Supplementary Guidance, which provides detail on the policies and proposals they contain. Development Plans are subject to public consultation, enabling people, communities and other parties to participate in their preparation.

Development Management is the part of the planning process which deals with planning applications, which are categorised in terms of their National, Major or Local significance<sup>18</sup>. Many smaller scale developments, particularly domestic proposals are classified as 'permitted development' and do not require planning permission.

The governance of Scotland's planning infrastructure consists primarily, but not exclusively, of three main levels:

- Within the Scottish Government<sup>19</sup>, the Planning and Architecture Division consists of a team of specialist planners, architects, environmental professionals and generalist policy managers who collectively: maintain and develop planning legislation; prepare and monitor delivery of the National Planning Framework; provide planning policy and advice; facilitate the dissemination of good practice guidance; promoting high quality design and place making; and lead and co-ordinate the implementation of e-Planning (an online system to provide a simpler, faster and more accessible planning system for applicants).

- The primary responsibility for the delivery of the planning service in Scotland lies with the 32 Local Authorities and the 2 National Park Authorities<sup>20</sup>. These 34 planning authorities also undertake key pieces of work to inform stakeholders about the service they deliver. In particular, Development Plan Schemes indicate to stakeholders the intended programme for preparing and reviewing the development plan for each planning authority; Schemes of Delegation identify who will make the planning authority's decision on different types of planning application.
- Scottish Government Agencies (such as Architecture & Design Scotland, COSLA, Forestry Commission Scotland, Historic Scotland, Scottish Enterprise; SEPA, SNH, Scottish Water, Transport Scotland) engage with planning authorities in the preparation of the latter's individual Development Plans, consideration of planning applications and in the implementation of planning reforms facilitated by the planning authorities. There is a statutory requirement to consult some of these agencies on development plans and planning applications in some circumstances<sup>21</sup>.

### The implementation of the planning system in Scotland's rural areas

Scotland's planning system<sup>22</sup> covers the whole of the country: cities, towns, rural and marine areas. However, since most development takes place in urban areas, there has traditionally been an urban focus in the planning process and a tendency to regard rural landscapes as areas where development should be restricted. Rural resources have often received limited mention in planning strategies, and an emphasis has been placed on quantity (i.e. the number of houses) rather than quality (such as the place-specific needs of a town or rural area)<sup>23</sup>.

It is important to emphasise that this chapter is not concerned with all aspects of Scotland's planning policies. Rather it puts a particular focus on those aspects of the formal or informal planning processes that can have major impacts in a rural context. In addition, although it is recognised that a very large proportion of planning applications are approved in Scotland (e.g. 94% of planning applications were approved between July and September 2013<sup>24</sup>), concerns have been raised that the current planning process may result in innovative proposals not being put forward in the first place in rural areas or may result in some of those that are put forward suffering from delays in processing. Concerns such as these continue to drive adjustments to the planning system and its operation, most recently through the Regulatory Reform (Scotland) Bill<sup>25</sup>.



#### The East Lothian Rural Voice Project

The East Lothian Rural Voice project is an innovative partnership between public and private sector interests. It aims to achieve responsive rural planning policy by ensuring engagement reaches out into the rural sector.

To inform its forthcoming Main Issues Report, East Lothian Council carried out public engagement events in its main towns. Local surveyors Chalmers & Co felt East Lothian's rural voice would not be heard effectively through these urban events, so requested that the Council should also organise a dedicated rural workshop. An unusual co-funded event ensued, attended by 40 people, drawn from rural residents, community groups, businesses, farmers and landowners.

The event concluded that East Lothian's planning policy concerning rural development should be updated, particularly as it relates to housing in the countryside. A restrictive policy on new rural housing has enabled the Council to promote high quality refurbishment of traditional agricultural buildings in recent years. However, the supply of suitable buildings has reduced as a result and higher costs associated with refurbishment are now seen by some as stifling new development.

The Rural Voice workshop broadly agreed the following key points:

- 1 - Place making needs to be applied to villages and the rural area, as well as urban areas;
- 2 - Planning needs to drive economic development and community plans in the rural area;
- 3 - A positive policy framework is required, concentrating on what CAN be done, not what can't;
- 4 - 'Appropriate rural development' is not something the rural sector fears.

The East Lothian Rural Voice suggested planning policy is too strict and discourages development. In response, East Lothian Council pointed to a lack of evidence of refused planning applications. However, it was noted that planning policy which is widely perceived as restrictive may in itself result in potentially beneficial developments never reaching the application stage.



Non-submission of planning applications and delays in processing both occur in urban as well as rural areas. However, rural areas can suffer from the fact that far fewer proposals are under consideration or in development at any one point in time as compared to many urban areas. As a result, any such delays or non-submissions can have a potentially disproportionate impact on development in rural areas compared to urban. Given that rural areas cover a disproportionately large amount of Scotland's land mass then it is essential to ensure that appropriate development can occur in rural areas in order to address economic, environmental and social challenges, such as population growth (see Chapter 1), ageing and significant levels of demand for new housing, including from single-occupancy households (see Chapter 1) and migration (see Chapters 1 and 2).

In addition, while many of the issues facing rural areas do come under the formal planning process, many others do not. In particular, agriculture and forestry are the major land uses in Scotland's rural areas. Hence Scottish implementation of the Common Agricultural Policy<sup>26</sup> and Scottish Forestry Strategy<sup>27</sup> are major drivers of land use change. However, the land use changes resulting from each of these do not sit fully within the formal planning framework, and therefore decisions taken at an individual farm or forest level do not always reflect the economic, environmental or social aspirations for the surrounding rural communities.



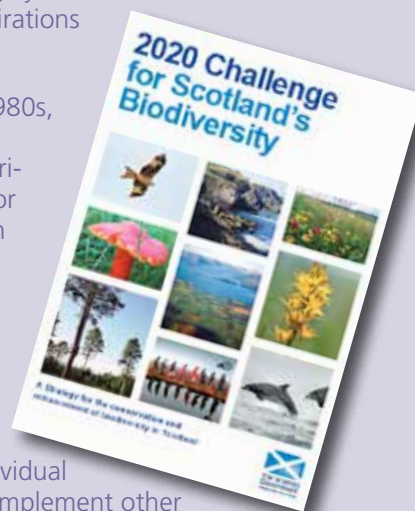
### Lack of CAP integration with other policies at the local level

Agriculture including arable land and permanent grassland is one of the most important forms of land use, covering nearly 45% of the European Union and over 75% of Scotland. The European Union's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), set up in 1962 to deal with food shortages following the Second World War, is now the main financial support mechanism and hence is a major driver of land use change decisions across Europe.

Many of these land use change decisions are made on an annual basis, taking into account individual farm needs (e.g. fodder and forage needs for livestock) together with the value of farm products (e.g. crops, livestock) in the wider marketplace. Originally, these land management decisions could be influenced by the level of CAP support available each year (e.g. per hectare of certain crops, or numbers of particular animals), but since 2005 these constraints have been removed. Nevertheless, on-farm decision-making still largely reflects the needs and aspirations of the individual farm with little link to the wider aspirations within the local area, or the spatial planning framework.

This is particularly noticeable in the agri-environment programmes. Since the 1980s, the CAP has put a focus on encouraging farmers to take action to help reverse some of the adverse impact that farming has had on the environment. Such agri-environment measures originally put a focus on helping improve water quality or addressing farmland biodiversity declines. In recent years there has also been an emphasis on helping farming systems mitigate the contribution they make to emission of greenhouse gases and associated climate change.

In Scotland, such agri-environment measures are supported financially through the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP). However, although these measures are designed to try to help address environmental concerns at a national or regional level, in the vast majority of cases the decisions as to what measures to implement where are largely taken with reference to the individual farm. Hence the implementation of such measures is not necessarily helping complement other conservation actions or indeed any other environmental, economic or social policy implementation at the local, regional or national level.



Conversely, where agricultural issues are considered in the formal planning process, there is still largely an assumption amongst planners that prime agricultural land should be protected and that development should be focused on larger settlements and not in the countryside. As already mentioned above, this reflects a tendency towards broad-brush restrictive policy which may not take full account of local circumstances. Given substantial in-migration into some rural communities (see Chapter 1), an ageing population, poor rural housing affordability, a limited supply of social and public sector housing (see Chapter 1) and the growing challenge of rising numbers of rural people in poverty (see chapter 3), the sustainability of many smaller rural communities is being seriously threatened.

## What does not work well currently and why?

### Disconnected policies

It has been emphasised already that there is a need to ensure that decision making and implementation of actions in rural areas are planned in an integrated way, taking into account the spatial locations and scale at which all the actions need to be addressed.

While positive changes in emphasis are happening at a national level (for example, in terms of recognition of rural issues in the new Draft National Planning Framework (NPF3)<sup>28</sup> and Draft Scottish Planning Policy (SPP)<sup>29</sup>, together with an associated encouragement of greater community engagement), the issues emphasised at a national level are not always reflected in local level planning practice. There is therefore currently a disconnect between national planning policy and aspirations and more restrictive local level development planning in rural areas<sup>30</sup>.

This was particularly evident in the responses submitted on the Consultation Draft Scottish Planning Policy published on 30 April 2013 by Scottish Government<sup>31</sup>, where aspects of the proposals for policy relating to housing provision in rural areas proved to be quite controversial<sup>32</sup>. In particular, the proposals that development plans should "make provision for housing and other residential accommodation in the countryside, taking account of the development needs of communities and the demand for leisure accommodation" and should also "allow the construction of single houses outwith settlements where they are well sited and designed to fit with local landscape character, or where landscape and carbon impacts are mitigated by significant woodland planting" were opposed or queried by many Local Authorities and Third Sector bodies, some of whom thought it would lead to a "proliferation of unsustainable small scale developments".



There can also be a disconnect between policy issues at local level. Within Local Authorities, departments may not maintain frequent enough contact with one another, partly as a result of organisational structures which separate related functions. Interests and teams – such as agriculture, forestry, roads, economic development etc. - may maintain separate identities resulting in the domination of single-issue interests in individual planning decisions. Participants in the planning process, including Planning Authorities, public agencies, developers and community groups may also lack strong leaders to bring different teams together to consider issues in a holistic way. Hence the potential for the development plan to act as a focus for all spatial aspects of Local Authority service delivery and statutory responsibility is not always recognised or maximised. This lack of clearly stated objectives and direction for rural area development may lead to participants not feeling a sense of ownership of the development plan and hence feeling divorced from the policy and decision making process.



### Negative perceptions of planning

Despite ongoing reform of the planning system<sup>33</sup> it is still perceived by some as inflexible, cumbersome, hard-to-understand and inadequately resourced, stifling innovation and creativity. A common perception in such situations is that local planning policy has a reactive “how can we stop it” rather than a proactive “can-do” mentality and has become too pre-occupied with the technical details of a development (e.g. the kind of roof material to be used) and numbers of houses, rather than the broader benefits to be gained by the local community from the development.

There is also a widespread perception of risk and misunderstanding about the role of the planning system. Planners can be concerned about the (very real) risk of expensive and time-consuming challenges to planning decisions through a statutory right of appeal<sup>34</sup>. As a result decision making may become defensive, tending to follow policies rigidly without demonstrating innovation and creativity.

In addition, many planners currently have a poor understanding of the Community Planning system<sup>35</sup> and development planning and Community Planning are often poorly integrated at local level. In fragile rural areas, this may have disproportionate consequences.

### Lack of an agreed vision for rural areas

Many of the above issues are not unique to rural areas, though as previously mentioned the impact of constraining development in rural areas can be disproportionate to those in urban areas. However, the fundamental issue is that there is no agreed vision as to what the ‘countryside’ is for. As a result, some view much of the ‘countryside’ as a natural wilderness to be protected<sup>36</sup> while others argue that it is a largely manmade landscape and therefore should be used to support sustainable rural life much more effectively<sup>37</sup>.

Scotland’s rural areas are many and varied and hence there are arguments that could be made more on one side or the other depending on the particular situation. Value judgements are inherent in planning decisions, as exemplified recently by a proposed wind turbine at Achiltibuie, which was approved following representations both in favour of and against the project<sup>38</sup>. The lack of an overall vision and ambition for vibrant rural life, combined with excessive caution over what development may be deemed to be acceptable, may prove a fundamental stumbling block to some developments of potential benefit to communities in rural areas.



## What does work well currently and why?

### Raising the rural profile

With the emphasis on city regions as economic drivers<sup>39</sup>, planning has perhaps not focused on rural needs and opportunities as directly as it should. However, a number of actions at national level indicate a shift towards a higher profile for planning in rural Scotland and opportunities for a more integrated approach.

The Scottish Government will publish the National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3) and the revised Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) in June 2014. Both documents have attracted significant consultation responses from the rural sector. The drafts of both documents contain greatly enhanced coverage of rural matters in comparison with their predecessors.

The Draft NPF3 highlights the aim to provide “a vision for sustainable growth and development across rural Scotland” and “emphasises the importance of our islands and coast as an economic opportunity and a resource to be protected and enjoyed”. The Draft SPP sets out specific opportunities to maximise rural vitality and enterprise, requiring development plans to produce spatial strategies for rural areas which.

- “responds to the specific circumstances of the area, reflecting the overarching aim of supporting diversification and growth of the rural economy;
- promotes economic activity and diversification, including development linked to tourism, forestry and farm diversification, while ensuring that the distinctive character of the area, the service function of small towns and natural and cultural heritage are protected and enhanced;
- makes provision for housing and other residential accommodation in the countryside, taking account of the development needs of communities and the demand for leisure accommodation, including huts for temporary recreational occupation;
- addresses the resource implications of the proposed pattern of development; and
- considers the services provided by the natural environment and safeguards those functions of land which are highly suitable for particular uses such as food production or flood management.”

The publication of Scotland’s first Land Use Strategy in 2011 had already highlighted the importance of rural ecosystems in addressing the challenges of climate change. The implementation of work to address diffuse pollution concerns within a range of Scottish catchments represents an early attempt to deliver more environmental benefits on the ground but more needs to be done.



### Diffuse Pollution Priority Catchments as a starting point for wider environmental integrated spatial planning

Diffuse pollution priority catchments in Scotland have been identified by SEPA as catchments failing to meet environmental standards (57). Fourteen priority catchments, containing some of Scotland’s most important waters (for conservation, drinking water, bathing and fishing), have been selected using a risk based approach for action in the first basin planning cycle.



SEPA has created a Diffuse Pollution Management Advisory Group, the main purpose which is to help create a robust governance, decision-making and coordination framework for the effective delivery of rural diffuse pollution RBMP actions in Scotland; and to ensure input from a cross section of rural, environmental and biodiversity interests.

The focus on reducing diffuse pollution impacts has meant a need to look across a catchment in order to take decisions as to what mitigation actions would be best to implement where and at what scale in order to achieve that goal. However, the spatial planning framework that is now in place is not unique to addressing diffuse pollution concerns – its generic nature means that the framework can be readily adapted for the consideration of other environmental concerns.

Hence work is already in progress to assess how best other actions (such as the development of natural flood management, increasing woodland cover in Scotland and the implementation of conservation measures to address farmland biodiversity concerns) can be integrated within the diffusion pollution priority catchment spatial planning process.

The diffuse pollution priority catchment approach currently has a very environmental focus and is increasingly being informed by, and hence becoming more integrated with, the implementation of Scotland’s Land Use Strategy. There is, however, also a need for the Land Use Strategy to be much more closely integrated with the Scottish National Planning Framework.

This would have the advantage of making much more apparent the economic or social opportunities associated with more efficient flood management or woodland expansion at a catchment level. It would also ensure that the targeting of such environmental management actions also took the wider economic and social implications much more clearly into account.

By the end of 2014, the Scottish Government intends to adopt a National Marine Plan <sup>41</sup>. The draft document notes:

“Integration between marine and terrestrial planning will be important and will be achieved through consistency of policy, guidance, plans and decisions, and local authorities will be represented within Marine Planning Partnerships. Legislation has been amended to require terrestrial planning authorities to give consideration to marine plans which apply to inshore waters, when developing strategic and local development plans.”



## Land Use Strategy Pilot Projects

The development and launch of Scotland's first Land Use Strategy in 2011 was a key response to the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 (58). The Strategy recognises that the best is not always being gained from Scotland's land even though more and more is demanded from it. The Land Use Strategy therefore takes a strategic approach to the challenges facing land use in Scotland.

The Strategy recognises economy, environment and communities as being the three pillars of sustainability. By recognising the benefits and implications of decisions and by focusing on common goals for different land users, it is intended that the Strategy will help to achieve a more integrated approach to land use, maintaining the future capacity of Scotland's land.

The overall vision of the Strategy is to fully recognise, understand and value the importance of land resources, and where plans and decisions about land use deliver improved and enduring benefits, enhancing the wellbeing of Scotland as a nation.

Two pilot projects have been established to trial the issues surrounding any implementation of the Strategy at a regional level. Aberdeenshire Council and Scottish Borders Council are piloting this innovative approach, which aims to provide a mechanism to guide future decisions on how the land is used in these pilot areas.

The pilot projects began in April 2013 and complete in early 2015. Both Councils are working closely with local stakeholders in their areas, taking a potentially pioneering integrated approach to looking at how land is used and how the natural environment works. By taking this wider view, the pilots aim to achieve a more efficient and optimal use of the land, benefitting the local economy, environment and society. The findings from the pilots will inform the first review of the Land Use Strategy in 2016.

From a wider Scottish perspective, the National Planning Framework (NPF) sets the context for development planning in Scotland and thereby provides a framework for the spatial development of Scotland as a whole. It is therefore critical that the Land Use Strategy and National Planning Framework are closely aligned. These provide the two key spatial drivers for the use and management of Scotland's land resources and between them will dictate the contributions that Scotland's rural areas can make to meeting nationally agreed outcomes and objectives.



A Scottish Rural Parliament will meet for the first time in November 2014<sup>40</sup>. The Rural Parliament will bring people from rural Scotland together with policy makers in an effort to promote better understanding, improved policy and action to address rural issues. It will sit every two years. The Rural Parliament will not be a formal part of government nor a legislative or decision making body, but will make recommendations based on the priorities identified by rural communities. Its core principals require it to be 'rooted in and empowering of rural communities' and 'independent and politically neutral'. Whilst it may take time to establish the Rural Parliament as an influential body, it offers another channel through which important rural planning issues can be highlighted.

Taken together, these initiatives, strategies and policy statements highlight an emerging focus on the resources, opportunities and needs of rural Scotland at national level.

### Improving communication and engagement

The Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006<sup>42</sup> and associated secondary legislation enhanced opportunities for people to get involved in the planning system. As a result, there is a greater level of community engagement in planning applications and development plans than had previously been evident. The Scottish Government's proposed Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill<sup>43</sup> seeks to expand community engagement further, in order to strengthen community participation, unlock enterprising community development and renew communities.

In rural areas, it can be difficult to identify and engage all relevant local stakeholders due to factors such as travel distance, poor connectivity and lack of suitable information distribution systems. Enabling communities to



become more actively engaged in local planning is being promoted through a variety of mechanisms, including public meetings, touring exhibitions, planning charettes and workshops, led by planning authorities and developers. Comparative analysis of response rates to planning engagement in urban and rural scenarios may be merited.

The East Lothian Rural Voice project (see case study - page 92) provides an example of an innovative community engagement exercise delivered through a public/private partnership. The project centred on the difficulty in identifying and engaging with a diverse and dispersed rural audience, including individuals, businesses, landowners, farmers and community groups.

It is worth noting that the definition of a 'major' development is the same in both the rural and urban context (e.g. 50 houses or 2 hectare site). This threshold results in most rural housing development being classified as minor, so the statutory requirement for consultation with the local community is significantly reduced. It may be appropriate to revisit the question of thresholds (which were considered in some detail during the most recent review of the planning system) to assess whether or not a lower threshold would be appropriate in the rural context (or a higher one in the urban context).

In an effort to improve engagement, Scottish Borders Council works with its Community Council Network to run training exercises and stakeholder meetings, advising communities on how to engage with developers and planning authorities. Using trusted, independent intermediary organisations (such as the Tweed Forum in the South of Scotland, which is coordinating the stakeholder engagement part of the Scottish Borders Land Use Strategy pilot project) may bring benefits by overcoming suspicion of the public sector.



Ongoing research on community resilience and empowerment will help to inform strategies for engaging communities<sup>44</sup>. It is important that researchers continue to ensure that this evidence is fed to policy-makers and practitioners in an appropriate and timely manner.

**Partnership approaches**

In the urban context, Strategic Development Plans (SDP)<sup>45</sup> have recently replaced Structure Plans, illustrating the dominance of city regions in strategic planning. The Strategic Development Planning Authorities (SDPA) bring together Councils surrounding each of Scotland's four largest cities: Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow. Significant parts of rural Scotland are represented in the SDPAs, although there is no doubt that the focus of the SDPs is primarily urban.

Given its extensive land area, Highland Council has responded to its own need for strategic planning by adopting a hybrid Highland-wide Local Development Plan<sup>46</sup>. Other Council partnerships have emerged to enable joint approaches to planning or other service delivery. For example, Aberdeenshire Council provides a shared developer contributions ('planning gain') service for Aberdeen, Highland and Moray Councils and the Cairngorms National Park Authority. Elsewhere, Stirling and Clackmannanshire Councils deliver education and social services in partnership. In a more dramatic example of partnership working, Shetland, Orkney and the Western Isles Councils are exploring opportunities for enhanced local decision making and collaboration on shared objectives through their 'Our Islands Our Future' initiative<sup>47</sup>.

The variety of these partnership approaches indicates the need for flexible solutions to public service delivery in the rural context. It may also provide experience and benchmarks which can drive enhanced integration of planning and related responsibilities.



There are also abundant examples of successful development and regeneration projects throughout rural Scotland. For example, the Tomintoul & Glenlivet Regeneration Strategy sees a community development trust working in close partnership with the Cairngorms National Park Authority, the Crown Estate, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Moray Council on a rural regeneration programme covering a geographical area of almost 200km<sup>2</sup>.



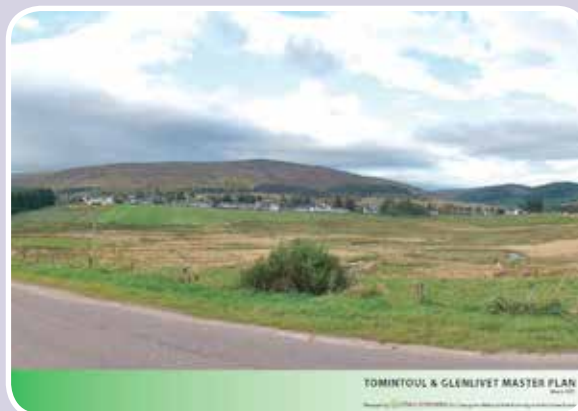
### Tomintoul & Glenlivet Regeneration Strategy

The Tomintoul & Glenlivet Regeneration Strategy is an ambitious and pioneering project which brings together the diverse resources of the community, public agencies, local businesses and a major landowner. It bridges the urban and rural divide by co-ordinating action across the historic planned village of Tomintoul, the dispersed rural settlement of Glenlivet and a thinly populated 200 km<sup>2</sup> rural catchment.

Driven from the outset by the local community, the project arose in response to decline in the area, the loss of key tourism assets such as hotels and the threatened closure of important visitor facilities as a result of local authority budget pressures. Once established, the project quickly gained momentum, with the Cairngorms National Park Authority and the Crown Estate managing procurement of a Regeneration Strategy and master plan. These documents dovetailed with the emergence of the first Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan.

This resulted in support from Moray Council and led to Highlands and Islands Enterprise designating 'account managed community' status, which has enabled the community to establish the Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust (TGDT). This popular and highly successful Trust is the focus for the implementation of regeneration projects. It has resolved previously strained relationships between the community and project partners by promoting a shared vision for the area. Approximately 25% of residents in the catchment are now members of the Trust.

The Crown Estate has recently completed a mountain biking centre, the Trust has taken over management of a failing Youth Hostel and a number of other key projects are in hand.



Elsewhere, the North Harris Trust operates a land management partnership with Scottish Natural Heritage covering protected habitats and species. Management activities include monitoring of upland vegetation and management of red deer. The Trust also works closely with the John Muir Trust, which provides assistance in land management for the benefit of the community and the enjoyment of the wider public. These partnerships have enabled the Trust to maximise local employment opportunities and enhance the unique qualities of North Harris.



### North Harris Trust

North Harris lies 17 miles off the North-Western tip of Scotland. A dramatic Atlantic coastline and a spectacular mountain range mean that each year more and more nature and outdoor enthusiasts make this their holiday destination of choice. The North Harris Trust (59) manages the estate, on behalf of the community. It aims to build a stronger community and enhance the wild landscape.

The North Harris Estate has a large red deer herd of 1100-1400 animals. Red deer are a great asset to the Trust but their presence also brings a responsibility of management to maintain a healthy herd whilst ensuring that other parts of the sensitive upland ecosystem do not suffer. A management agreement with SNH commits the Trust to maintaining the deer numbers to their current level for this reason. In order to achieve this around 50 stags and 100 hinds and calves are currently culled annually on the estate and deer counts are conducted on a bi-annual basis to monitor numbers.

In order to attract people to North Harris and also to reverse depopulation in the area, the development of affordable housing and making land available for such developments are also priorities for the North Harris Trust. A social housing project reached completion at Bunavoneader in the spring of 2011. The project, by Hebridean Housing Partnership (HHP) and Tighean Innse Gall (TIG) in partnership with the Trust and Ardhasaig Common Grazings, has delivered 8 affordable homes for rent. This development will help to meet some of the demand for affordable rental accommodation in the area.



The North Harris Trust formally joined the Carnegie UK Trust's Community of Practice (CoP) in October 2010 as a representative of the Community Landowning sector. The Carnegie UK Trust established the Community of Practice in 2008 to enable leading rural development practitioners and activists to meet in person and on-line to share knowledge and experience in their efforts to build vibrant rural communities. NHT was able to participate in the CoP thanks to funding from Highlands & Islands Enterprise. The 3 year funding package enabled the Trust to: visit other partners; host partners visits to Harris; reflect on its past experiences and publish reports on them to share with others; support events and activities which promoted development of the community landowning sector; and explore new ideas for developing the assets of North Harris for the benefit of the community.

### Improving placemaking

The Scottish Government published its updated architecture and place policy statement 'Creating Places' in June 2013<sup>48</sup>. The document notes the breadth of indicators place can affect, stating:

"Place should not be considered merely a backdrop to our lives, but as an agent of change. Good buildings and places can enrich our lives as individuals and as a society in many different ways. Whether it is by supporting active, healthy lifestyles, or reducing our carbon footprint, or being the critical factor which attracts visitors and inward investment, the value of place cannot be underestimated or ignored."

Creating Places covers both the built and natural environments and is applicable to both the urban and rural context. The importance of rural buildings, communities and landscape is noted. Some rural planning authorities (such as Scottish Borders Council and the National Park Authorities) reflect local aspects of place in their development plans. However, there is scope for greater emphasis on the qualities of individual places and the preparation of responsive planning policy which specifically aims to protect and enhance these qualities. This can be achieved through collaborative community visioning (via engagement strategies, community initiatives, charrettes etc.) to establish widely supported objectives for any given settlement or community. Other planning authorities have ventured into detailed design and placemaking guidance. For example, Argyll & Bute Council has produced a range of Sustainable Design Guidance<sup>49</sup> covering 'Small Scale Housing Development', 'Larger Housing Development' and 'Built Heritage'. A booklet of 'Case Studies' is available and detailed guidance has been prepared for Coll and Tiree.



There is broad scope for other planning authorities to use this approach to improve understanding of the diverse character of place found in rural Scotland, as part of an integrated approach to delivering on the range of social, economic, health and environmental factors highlighted by Creating Places.

### Highlighting and rewarding innovation and good practice

Examples of good practice need to be celebrated and shared. Awards schemes, such as those run by the Cairngorms National Park Authority, Aberdeenshire Council and Dumfries and Galloway LEADER, are critical in raising the importance of design on the public agenda and in promoting a more positive dialogue to celebrate planning. Broader information sharing about best practice projects and approaches at local level is also important.

The Scottish Government has reflected the importance of best practice by compiling a web-based 'Inspirational Designs'<sup>50</sup> resource showcasing design exemplars from across Scotland. Numerous rural projects are included in the five categories: conversion/extension; single house; small scale development; large scale development; masterplan.

### What needs to change and who needs to drive those changes?

#### Refining the planning system and improving integration

There appears to be little appetite or need for another structural overhaul of the planning system - the same system which produces some disappointing experiences and outcomes also produces positive experiences and outcomes. Significant energy is being invested at national level and through bodies such as the Heads of Planning Scotland group<sup>51</sup> in efforts to streamline the current system, improve performance and achieve better quality development on the ground.





However, there is a recognition that enhanced integration is required throughout national planning-related initiatives, such as NPF3, the Land Use Strategy, National Marine Plan and locally between SDPs, LDPs, Single Outcome Agreements and Community Planning. Given its cross cutting nature, planning is perhaps best placed to bring policies, strategies, agencies and ambitions together, connecting National Objectives with local communities and place making. In particular, there may be opportunities to extend the reach of NPF3 to address wider matters with spatial consequences, including social and economic issues such as demographic change, population and migration trends, new housing demands, discussed in Chapters 1, 2 and 3 of this report.

There is also scope to think innovatively about how different policy domains could be more closely integrated to bring benefits. For example, progress towards the new Scotland Rural Development Programme period in 2014-20, includes preparation

by LEADER LAGs of their Local Development Strategies (to include larger towns where they have a coherent relationship with their rural hinterland) and the requirement for LEADER to link more strongly with the work of Community Planning Partnerships. Could LEADER therefore become a “linking forum” at local level? One specific opportunity for LEADER to link issues at local level in a holistic way is in relation to young people (the focus of Chapter 2 of this report).

However policies are integrated now and in the future, local leadership and innovative thinking will be key. These are required within planning authorities to encourage holistic and creative thinking about planning developments. For example, the wider advantages of a forestry development might include health and wellbeing benefits, the potential for landscape and biodiversity enhancement, recreation and tourism developments, and the potential for renewable energy generation and community ownership/management. Planning policies designed to directly address stated objectives and outcomes will help to promote decisions and developments which serve the public interest and enhance communities and places.



The National Parks offer a good vehicle to test such approaches and hence should be used more for this purpose. Both existing Parks are committed to achieving best practice in the delivery of planning policy and decisions. The adoption of full planning power for the Cairngorms National Park Authority remains a matter of discussion (Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park Authority already has full powers). This may help to create a fully integrated approach. The ongoing debate over the creation of additional National Parks will be increasingly meaningful as the positive impacts of the existing Parks are clarified over time.



### Land, communities and people should be at the centre of the planning process

Planning is about more than decisions on individual planning applications. It is about place-making and improving the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities. As well as serving as a top-down prescriptive regulatory ‘control’ system, planning policy must provide a positive and integrated framework that encourages bottom-up initiative and innovation.

This requires that the change of mindset which is becoming evident at national level through the emerging NPF3 and SPP, must also be taken up amongst all local and national stakeholders engaged with the planning system.

Given the diverse nature of rural areas, towns and villages, and the issues and opportunities they face, there is a need for planning policy and decisions to be more responsive to local circumstances. Moray Council’s Proposed Local Development Plan takes a fine grain approach to the matter of new housing in the countryside, with a variety of policy layers applicable at different scales. The East Lothian Rural Voice project (see Case Study - page 92), sees East Lothian Council considering how rural policy can best be updated to take account of changing local context. Static, one-size-fits-all policy will not meet the needs of changing rural areas.

Just as the impact of planning policy and decisions may be proportionately greater in the rural context, the impact of community empowerment may also be more significant in its scope and reach in the rural context. The North Harris Trust [Blue Box] is an example of community land ownership driving appropriate rural development in a sensitive landscape, to achieve a sustainable future for a remote community. The Scottish Government has

stated an ambition to double the amount of land in community ownership by 2020. Rural planning authorities should note this context and consider how the planning system can respond positively to what may be a significant change in land use and ownership.

In 2012, there were an estimated 459,134 acres of land in community ownership in Scotland <sup>52</sup> and a 2008 Scottish Government study found there are close to 3000 village halls and other community facilities in rural Scotland, 80% (2,400) of which are community owned <sup>53</sup>. The forthcoming Community Empowerment Bill and Land Reform Review Group report may encourage further expansion of community ownership. The Scottish Land Fund (SLF) is able to support rural communities in the ownership and management of land through its extended budget of £9m for the period 2012-16 <sup>54</sup>.

An improved understanding of the potential benefits of community development might be achieved through greater dialogue between planning authorities and organisations supporting communities, such as the Development Trusts Association for Scotland (DTAS) and the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC). DTAS operates the Community Ownership Support Service as part of the Scottish Governments Community Empowerment Plan and SCDC is recognised by the Scottish Government as the national lead body for community development.

The potential for expansion of community renewable energy schemes and the availability of funds from commercial wind farms offers both a policy challenge and a development opportunity, with new sources of funding available for rural investment by communities. Planning authorities will need to ensure rural policy can respond to an increasing number of proposals for small scale developments such as affordable housing delivered by these new funding sources (particularly given the declining trends in new builds from private and social housing sectors 2008-2013; see Chapter 1).

## Conclusions

Rural planning policy may well be entering an interesting era, where the full potential of the rural resource is more widely recognised and the need to enhance the vitality of communities is appreciated <sup>55</sup>. The emerging National Planning Framework and Scottish Planning Policy are setting the agenda, with the rural planning authorities beginning to find their own responses. The complexity and inter-dependence of land and natural resources, communities and people, economy and culture, suggests integrated planning and spatial management is pre-requisite for a successful rural Scotland.



It should be noted that efforts to improve integrated working between public agencies have been proceeding for some time. In 2008, the Scottish Government established a Key Agencies Group <sup>56</sup> to interface with reform of the planning system. The group brings together SNH, SEPA, Scottish Water, Scottish Enterprise, Historic Scotland, Transport Scotland and Architecture + Design Scotland. Other bodies such as COSLA, Sports Scotland and Forestry Commission Scotland also participate. This multi-agency approach offers scope to achieve greater integration between planning and other frameworks such as the Land Use Strategy, CAP and SRDP.

Failure to achieve greater integration will result in unfulfilled potential for a number of emerging and ongoing opportunities, including ecosystem management, marine planning, rural economic development, community land ownership and renewables, hutting, town/village centre regeneration, agricultural reform and woodland crofting.

Projected demographic and population changes in rural Scotland over the longer term will make significant demands on rural resources, including infrastructure, landscape, public services and land (see Chapter 1 for some specific predictions in this regard). The spatial consequences should be considered well in advance. There is an opportunity to take a fully integrated approach in forward planning to accommodate this change. The disproportionate impacts of change in the rural context have been highlighted elsewhere in this chapter. There is no obvious need for a different planning system to serve rural areas. However, there is scope for a finer grain of local planning policy which is more responsive to specific rural issues and opportunities. It is important that planning authorities clearly identify those local issues and opportunities and hear what the rural voice (see Case Study - page 92) has to say about potential solutions and creative approaches to planning policy.

Rural Scotland needs to address a range of large scale issues including climate change, economic regeneration and the demographic trends outlined elsewhere in this report. Planning can play a greater role in integrating the responses of public agencies, communities and the private sector but it can't single-handedly determine the direction of travel.

It will be important for all relevant and interested parties to help shape a distinctive vision for rural Scotland, making the best use of resources, enhancing natural assets and building sustainable communities. Scotland's Rural Parliament could prove to be an influential participant in this process. Its strength could lie in its overarching role as a focus for rural vision. Its success may depend on its ability to find common ground between diverse participants with, in some cases, competing priorities and ambitions.





# 5. Report Conclusions: People, Places and Policy: Where Next for Rural Scotland?

As we stated at the outset of our report, and as we have explored in the preceding chapters, rural Scotland comprises people with drive, energy, ideas, experience, and places which are considerable environmental assets. However, we have also identified how there are people in rural Scotland for whom life is not easy, who live in poverty and with other associated pressures. Similarly, there are places where rural Scotland's finite land resource is under competing demands as rural Scotland continues to evolve. Given this, we now explore the need for an over-arching, comprehensive, vision and strategy for rural Scotland, to move forward positively in the 21st Century.

## What does the evidence tell us?

In the 2014 edition of *Rural Scotland in Focus*, we have presented evidence of rural change in recent decades and with projected trends. We have explored themes of housing need and provision, population migration within rural and between urban and rural Scotland, and the on-going need for next generation broadband to be readily available across all of Scotland to move towards equality of access and inclusion. We have described the patterns of youth migration into and out of rural Scotland, and how local and national drivers can either push young people away or cause them to stay, depending on their capacity and the resources available to them. We have 'unpacked' rural poverty and disadvantage, arguing for much-improved visibility across the whole policy arena, underpinned by the longstanding call for appropriate measures for rural Scotland. And finally, we have identified the need for integrated spatial planning in order to bring together the many disparate, and sometimes conflicting, elements of current - and future - land use in rural Scotland.

What comes through from all the report chapters are the ways in which all these aspects of rural are interconnected. People, businesses, communities and organisations all experience rural in joined-up ways: housing, employment, transport, health and social services, education, training, broadband, environment, land use and landscape all feed into each other, shaping (and being shaped by) how people live their lives in rural Scotland.

What also emerges, however, is that policies and practices operating in and for rural Scotland appear not to demonstrate that same level of interconnectedness, but rather operate sectorally at Local Authority and national levels, through, for example, health, education, agriculture, land use, planning, transport and infrastructure remits.

Further, what has become evident through our analysis is that there is no consistent, over-arching articulation of "what rural Scotland is for". This was highlighted by the OECD's 2008 report on their assessment of Scotland's rural policy, where they recommended that: "Scotland aim for a distinct vision of policy for rural areas, one that is comprehensive and integrated, capable of mixing sectoral and territorial approaches..." (p.20).

## A vision for rural Scotland?

Different "visions" for rural Scotland have been expressed by the Scottish Executive, and then by the Scottish Government, since 2000. In **Rural Scotland: A New Approach (2000)**, the vision was of "A rural Scotland where everyone matters: every community, every family, every rural Scot. A rural Scotland that is integral to Scotland's success, thriving and providing opportunity and a high quality of life for all who live and work there. A rural Scotland where two of our most important assets – our natural and cultural heritage – are protected, enhanced and celebrated." Four broad themes were identified: Supporting economic development; Breaking down barriers; Improving access to services; and Sustaining and making the most of our natural and cultural heritage.

In **Rural Scotland: Taking Stock**<sup>1</sup> (2002), the vision remained as in 2000, and, in addition to the four broad themes, five key priorities formed the focus: jobs, education, transport, crime and health. Two additional overarching themes were identified: closing the opportunity gap, and promoting sustainable development.



**In Rural Scotland: Better Still, Naturally**<sup>2</sup> (2007), eight strategic aims and approaches were listed (p.vi): (i) broaden and strengthen the rural economy, including the skills base; (ii) protect, maintain and develop our natural and cultural assets; (iii) improve the accessibility and quality of services people and businesses depend on; (iv) address the challenges and opportunities of population change; (v) promote social and economic inclusion; (vi) help to build resilient, sustainable rural communities; (vii) improve stakeholder engagement; and (viii) improve focus, delivery and measurement of progress towards the main outcomes. In preparation for the 2007 document, a short futures-focused project was undertaken with key stakeholders. The group emphasised the need for an “agreed sense of purpose for, and clarity of role of, rural Scotland” (p.xi), and reiterated it was necessary to evolve a shared vision, “a clear sense of purpose for rural Scotland and its place in Scotland.” (p.xii). So, even though strategic aims had been identified, there was still felt to be a need to articulate an overarching purpose and role for rural Scotland.

In 2008, the Scottish Government established the independent Rural Development Council (Chapters 2 and 3), and it reported in 2010 with **Speak up for Rural Scotland**<sup>3</sup>. The vision is for rural Scotland to be “an international shop window for all of Scotland”, underpinned by four elements of: active and confident communities; the best connected place; competitive enterprises creating employment opportunities; and world-rated natural and built environments. (p.6). Thirty-seven Step Changes were identified to deliver to this vision, focusing on: rural economies; multipurpose land use; empowered communities; sustaining rural communities; infrastructure and services; and working together.

The Scottish Government responded with **Our Rural Future**<sup>4</sup> (2011), outlining a vision for rural Scotland (p.2) as follows:

“We want to see a rural Scotland that is outward looking and dynamic - with a diverse economy and active communities. Rural prosperity will increase in ways which make best use of all of our resources – our people, as well as the land, seas, rivers and wildlife. Our rural communities will grow in confidence and diversity, taking control of local assets and providing local services to generate income and employment. Our young people will have the opportunity to build careers and prosperous futures in the area where they grew up. Services of the highest possible quality and with the greatest possible choice will be accessible to the whole community. Our world-rated natural, cultural and built environments will be managed sensitively to balance development requirements with the vital need to manage our precious natural assets sustainably. We want to see rural Scotland participating fully in the global exchange of ideas and culture, with the right connections to make this happen, including high speed broadband and appropriate transport infrastructure. Rural businesses will make best use of local assets to become more competitive and enterprising.” (p.2).

The Future Priorities were set out as:

- Infrastructure (higher speed broadband, improved supply of affordable housing, affordable motor fuel and effective use of public transport, improving rural healthcare services);
- Land Use (better partnership working to agree on priorities);
- Community Participation (renewable energy developments with shared benefits; more effective partnership between communities, Community Planning Partnerships and Local Authorities; capacity and skills development);
- Community Enterprise (more community control of assets/resources; promotion of Development Trusts and Social Enterprises);
- Business and Skills (local business growth making best use of local resources; skills training based on the needs of the local economy; public procurement opportunities for local businesses).



## A coherent, comprehensive vision and strategy for rural Scotland?

While laudable, these vision statements have not resulted in the development of a coherent, comprehensive strategic plan for delivery. Whilst there are strategies for land use (the Land Use Strategy) and spatial planning (National Planning Framework), there is no overall strategy for rural Scotland and all that it encompasses. What is absent is a strategic framework setting out: specific rural outcomes; a baseline, targets, indicators, monitoring or review processes to see whether targets are being met; and the identification of the means by which collaborative working would be put in place to achieve them.

Precedents exist. The Land Use Strategy (LUS) (2011) <sup>5</sup>, in responding to the question “Why do we need it?” states: “The Land Use Strategy helps us

think more strategically about the potential of our land and the ways in which land is used now and into the future. It sets the long-term directions we need to pursue to get the best from Scotland’s land and contribute to a more prosperous and successful nation.” (p.3). The Vision Towards 2050 is stated as “A Scotland where we fully recognise, understand and value the importance of our land resources, and where our plans and decisions about land use deliver improved and enduring benefits, enhancing the wellbeing of our nation.” (p.5). Significantly, the Strategy is made up of an Action Plan, annual progress statements <sup>6</sup>, a framework comprising indicators, milestones and deliverables to measure progress against the three LUS Objectives and Proposals, pilot schemes, and approaches to mainstreaming the LUS Principles into other legislative developments.

Similarly, the Scottish Forestry Strategy (2006) <sup>7</sup>, necessarily long-term, states its vision as: “By the second half of this century, people are benefiting widely from Scotland’s trees, woodlands and forests, actively engaging with and looking after them for the use and enjoyment of generations to come. The forestry resource has become a central part of our culture, economy and environment.” This vision is underpinned by Principles, Outcomes, Objectives, Key Themes and Purpose, Priority Actions with specific Targets, and a series of short to medium term Implementation Plans. Again, in Scotland’s two National Parks, there are vision statements accompanied by integrated strategies to bring together a range of differing targets. <sup>8</sup>

In a national context, and as reviewed in Chapter 3, there is the compelling example of three anti-poverty social policies sitting within a single framework: “Achieving our Potential: A Framework to tackle poverty and income inequality in Scotland” <sup>9</sup>; the Equally Well Report of the Ministerial Task Force on Health Inequalities <sup>10</sup> and Equally Well Implementation Plan <sup>11</sup>; and the “Early Years Framework 1 and 2” <sup>12</sup>. These were launched together to form a coherent approach, since:

“There is a strong positive relationship between having the best start in life, enjoying good health, a good education, and having enough money to provide for yourself and your family. These approaches recognise these relationships. They set the context for future investment decisions for the public sector in Scotland, as over time we shift resources from dealing with failure to tackling its root causes.” (*Achieving our Potential*, p.4)

## How could a comprehensive rural strategy deliver for rural Scotland?

### Assessing competing and complementary activities

Firstly, an over-arching strategy would allow competing and/or complementary activities to be assessed within the context of wider rural outcomes. Decisions and actions implemented to address any one issue also have the potential to complement or conflict with decisions and actions taken to address each or all of a range of other concerns (Chapter 4). Greater strategic coherence can also support developments of potential benefit to communities and the environment in rural areas, and allow connections to be explored.

With reference specifically to spatial planning (Chapter 4), projected demographic and population changes in rural Scotland over the longer term will make significant demands on rural resources, including infrastructure, landscape, public services and land. The spatial consequences should be considered well in advance. An emphasis on “place-making” <sup>13</sup> is increasingly required, given the growing range of demands on, and opportunities for, rural Scotland. One specific example is the potential for expansion of community renewable energy schemes and the availability of funds from commercial wind farms (Chapter 4). This offers both a policy challenge and a development opportunity, with new sources of funding available for rural investment by communities. Planning authorities will need to ensure rural policy can respond to an increasing number of proposals for small scale developments such as affordable housing delivered by these new funding sources. There is an opportunity to take a fully integrated approach in forward planning to accommodate this change, underpinned by a coherent rural strategy. As the OECD highlighted in their review of Scotland’s rural policy (2010): “A place-tailored approach to rural policy and programmes, characterised by a stronger local participation and wider stakeholder engagement, is key.” (p.21) <sup>14</sup>.

A rural strategy would also help to address the disconnect between national planning policy *aspirations* and (more restrictive) local level *implementation* of planning in rural areas (Chapter 4). As with mainstreaming the LUS Principles (above), such a rural strategy would also support work at Local Authority (LA) level. LA departments may not maintain frequent enough contact with one another, partly as a result of organisational structures which separate related functions. Interests and teams – such as agriculture, forestry, roads, economic development, health and social services etc. - may maintain separate identities resulting in the domination of single-issue interests in individual planning decisions.

At national level, a rural strategy with specific goals could also play a role in enhancing coherence and connectivity between existing frameworks. One example, as we outlined in our submission to the Rural Affairs, Climate Change and Environment (RACCE) Committee in the Scottish Parliament, relates to the National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3)<sup>15</sup>. Currently, in NPF3, the Land Use Strategy is mentioned once, but otherwise appears isolated from other important elements. Similarly, Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs), Economic Development Strategies (EDS), Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs), the Scotland Rural Development Programme (SRDP) or LEADER receive scant or no mention<sup>16</sup>. There is potential for NPF3 to play more of a unifying or linking role in bringing together such elements which are all integral to rural Scotland's future.

### Integration of a 'measurable' rural policy with national policy

As our evidence shows in preceding chapters, the complexities and interconnectedness of "rural" can slip between policy arenas. National policies note the specificities of rural Scotland, and, *where problems can be identified and where resources allow*, rural Scotland can receive tailored approaches (such as with broadband roll-out, health services, housing). Conversely, rural statements refer to national policies (as in *Our Rural Future*) as the means for addressing rural characteristics and circumstances. However, there are instances, such as tackling poverty and disadvantage (Chapter 3), and aspects of young people's experience of living in rural Scotland (Chapter 2), where "rural" falls between the cracks of national and rural approaches. An over-arching rural strategy would support the development of rurally-sensitive policy at national level, which encompasses the specifics of the rural context and its diversity. As stated in *Rural Scotland: Taking Stock* (2002):

"The way in which these issues manifest themselves in rural areas, and therefore the challenge for the Executive and our partners, can be quite different from that in our cities. The realisation of our rural vision will therefore require distinctive policy responses, tailored to rural circumstances." (p.2).

We fully understand the significance of the Outcome-based approach of the Scottish Government, and its underpinning integration role. We do not see a rural vision and strategy as being at odds with this. What it would allow is the systematic identification of how a range of policies are, and are not, currently delivering to National Outcomes *in and for rural areas*. Further, through developing a rural strategy with benchmarks, measures, indicators and a review process, it would be possible to identify progress on how existing policies are, and should be, delivering to outcomes for rural Scotland, both currently *and* for 20-30 years ahead. Ameliorating and supportive actions could then be identified, in relation to the overall strategy.

The development of meaningful, rural indicators is absolutely essential to this process, not only in terms of measuring change and being able to attribute that change to certain activities or interventions, but also in ensuring that issues which require locally-tailored policy intervention can be systematically identified (Chapter 3). As we see from 2007:

"Rural Scotland is not homogenous and evidence is not always unequivocal or robust. There is a need to develop further the evidence base and the ability to measure progress and success – with a clearer focus on the impacts (outcomes) of policies and actions and to take account of regional, local and other variations. Better comparative, including international, data and analysis are needed." (*Rural Scotland: Better Still*, Naturally, 2007, p.v).



Our analysis has shown, for example, that the tools for measuring poverty and disadvantage (mainly the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, SIMD) are not designed for rural Scotland (Chapter 3). Low population numbers and dispersed settlements mean that poverty exists in isolated pockets rather than in whole neighbourhoods. Therefore poverty and disadvantage in rural Scotland often remain *hidden*. This invisibility matters in and of itself. It also matters because the SIMD has been viewed since its inception as "the main system for setting outcome agreements and priorities at local level in local community plans... (which) will firmly root the work on community regeneration into the work on improving core services across the Scottish Executive" (2002, p.25). So, given the SIMD is not capturing rural dimensions accurately, they are also not being fed systematically or robustly into (rural) policies or strategies. We welcome the

revision of the SIMD for 2015 for this reason, since SIMD continues to be so central to national policy formulation and implementation.

Creating such a vision and comprehensive strategy would not separate rural from the rest of the policy and practice sphere. Rather, it would further integrate rural within national policies, and national policies towards rural outcomes, and would also allow for the development of approaches encompassing rural-urban interactions and interdependencies (Chapter 1) which are increasingly apparent (Chapters 2 and 4). Such an aspiration is reflected in the following quote from *Rural Scotland: a New Approach* (SE, 2000):

"Our approach has been to mainstream the needs of rural areas wherever possible, so that the needs of rural Scotland are not set-apart as something different or a 'special case' - but rather something that all departments, agencies and service providers should take seriously." (p.4).

## Integration through partnership working

In the preceding chapters, we have highlighted examples of integration and partnership working to achieve higher-level goals, including through the National Performance Framework, National Outcomes, and partnerships with Local Authorities through Single Outcome Agreements (Chapter 3). Six brief examples follow.

Firstly, in 2008, the Scottish Government established a **Key Agencies Group**<sup>17</sup> to interface with reform of the planning system (Chapter 4). The group brings together SNH, SEPA, Scottish Water, Scottish Enterprise, Historic Scotland, Transport Scotland and Architecture + Design Scotland. Other bodies such as COSLA, Sports Scotland and Forestry Commission Scotland also participate. This multi-agency approach offers scope to achieve greater integration between planning and other frameworks such as the Land Use Strategy, CAP and SRDP.



Secondly, in relation to Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing<sup>18</sup> (e.g. Getting it Right For Every Child [GIRFEC] and Supporting Young People's Health and Wellbeing – see Chapters 2 and 3), policies that aim to improve young peoples' health and wellbeing, and therefore reduce the gap between the health of the best-off and worst-off young people in Scotland, span many Scottish Government Directorates, with no one Directorate responsible for policy development.

Thirdly, within the Scottish Parliament itself, the importance of the role of the Scottish Parliamentary Committees in reviewing policies (such as the NPF3<sup>19</sup> and Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill)<sup>20</sup> is also recognised.

Fourthly, the Scottish Government will publish the National Planning Framework 3 (NPF3) and the revised Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) in June 2014. Both documents have attracted significant consultation responses from rural interests. The drafts of both documents contain greatly enhanced coverage of rural matters in comparison with their predecessors. In particular, there may be opportunities to extend the reach of NPF3 to address wider matters with spatial consequences, including social and economic issues such as demographics, population and migration trends (Chapter 4).

Fifthly, collaborative working between three Local Authorities has taken place in the LEADER (2006-2013) Programme in Ayrshire through their Rural Ayrshire 21 project<sup>21</sup> (2013). The project worked with 21 local communities who have been least able to take advantage of development and funding opportunities in the past. Working in partnership with local and Scotland-wide development organisations, Ayrshire 21 supported the communities to write community action plans that will help them build on the strengths they have and address the most important social and economic issues they face.

Finally, other planning authorities have ventured into detailed design and placemaking guidance. For example, Argyll & Bute Council has produced a range of Sustainable Design Guidance<sup>22</sup> covering, 'Small Scale Housing Development', 'Larger Housing Development' and 'Built Heritage'. A booklet of 'Case Studies' is available and detailed guidance has been prepared for Coll and Tiree (Chapter 4). There are also numerous examples of public agencies working with local people on collaborative community visioning to establish widely-supported placemaking objectives for any given settlement or community.

In addition to partnerships between statutory bodies and public agencies, it is extremely important to note the critical role played by the third sector and communities in addressing specific rural challenges as well as in realising significant opportunities. We have highlighted their significant contribution in our previous reports (*Rural Scotland in Focus* 2010 and 2012)<sup>23</sup>, through our report on community land ownership and resilience outcomes<sup>24</sup>, through our focus on Social Enterprises<sup>25</sup>, and throughout this report in the example Case Studies. There is also considerable on-going activity by the private sector and small businesses (such as the Federation of Small Businesses<sup>26</sup>), as well as through the land-based sector<sup>27</sup>). Their potential contribution may well be greater, for example, under the new LEADER Programme (2014-2020) with its increased emphasis on economic development.

In order to maximise the collective impact of these efforts and achievements, some accrued over many years, it will be important to integrate and support them within an overall vision and framework for rural Scotland. Further resources and programmes could then be targeted towards specific rural outcomes, with progress monitored and supported as part of overall national delivery.

## Putting people at the centre

Previous chapters in this report have emphasised the need for a people-centred approach to assessing, and delivering, outcomes in rural areas, and for integrating people into decisions and plans (Chapters 2, 3 and 4). Examples have been given as to how this has taken place. Our evidence shows that it is important to ensure that the needs of people and communities are taken into account and integrated effectively with the need to manage natural resources sustainably (Chapter 4)<sup>28</sup>. Further, it is important that young people themselves are involved in decisions about the support and information needed and the mechanisms to provide them, to ensure that this is done in the most appropriate ways (Chapter 2). Also, given the diverse ways in which poverty and disadvantage are experienced in rural Scotland, tailored approaches which address stigma and isolation are required if people are to be included in decisions which then affect their lives, particularly in relation to sensitive issues (Chapter 3).

The national policy context provides a very important driver for putting people at the centre, given its growing emphasis on community empowerment, capacity building and community ownership of land and other assets. Specifically, the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill, and further encouragement for communities to engage more fully with land and assets through the Land Reform Review process (2014), will play a key role. At EU and national level, the Local Development Strategies (LDS) in the new LEADER Programme (2014-2020) are being developed through extensive community consultation. Greater encouragement is being given to liaising with Community Planning Partnerships and other community bodies in their preparation and potentially in their implementation.

There is also an important role for the Scottish Rural Parliament<sup>29</sup>, which has its inaugural meeting in November 2014. It will be important to ensure wide representation and participation. There are many sectors, and many policy and practice stakeholders, who may not feel that their work or policies directly affect, or are particularly relevant to, rural Scotland. In order to ensure that it is not only 'rural speaking to rural', such breadth of coverage will need to be deliberately built in. This is particularly the case, given the range of policy and practice domains encompassed by "rural", and all the associated players who may yet be able to contribute.

### Underpinning principles of a vision and strategy for rural Scotland

Finally, based on the evidence presented in preceding chapters, and the arguments outlined above, we propose ten key principles which should underpin an effective rural vision and strategy. These are:

1. **Comprehensive:** brings together economic, social and environmental outcomes within one coherent vision.
2. **Strategic:** develops an accompanying strategy with actions, measures of progress, and timeframes for delivery.
3. **Appropriate:** uses indicators which are appropriate to rural Scotland's characteristics and diversity.
4. **Significant:** has influence and status at national and regional levels in order to perform an integrating function across policy domains and across levels of government and governance.
5. **Integrative:** relates to National Outcomes and to urban Scotland, therefore involving players who would not necessarily consider themselves to have a 'rural contribution' to make.
6. **Collaborative:** fosters proactive partnerships between multiple partners from across public, private and third sectors, urban and rural, local and national.
7. **People-centred:** involves users in designing delivery; is inclusive of those who may be economically or socially marginalised.
8. **Holistic:** seeks to focus on overall "wellbeing" for those in rural areas; incorporates "place-making".
9. **Dynamic:** uses an approach which meets the changing needs of, and opportunities in, Scotland's rural areas (rather than static, one-size-fits-all).
10. **Innovative:** encourages national and local leadership to be innovative in its thinking, particularly to encourage holistic and creative approaches.



# Endnotes

## Chapter 1

- (1) Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
- (2) <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/theme/households/projections/2010-based/figures-and-maps.html>
- (3) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Housing-Regeneration/HSfS>
- (4) <http://www.sns.gov.uk/>
- (5) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0041/00415549.docx>
- (6) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Housing/BuyingSelling/lift/FTBNSES>
- (7) <http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/census-results>
- (8) Here we are calling what is technically a locality a settlement for ease of understanding. A “locality” is a group of high density postcodes – where there are more than 2.1 residential addresses per hectare or 0.1 non residential addresses per hectare – which subdivides “settlements” into more manageable units – e.g. the “settlement” Inverness is broken into “localities”: Inverness, Smithton, Culloden and Balloch see <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/glossary.html# High Density Postcode> for a glossary of terms.
- (9) <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-north-east-orkney-shetland-15668827>
- (10) <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/raf-kinloss-becomes-kinloss-barracks>
- (11) see <http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/cap-post-2013/>
- (12) <http://www.hie.co.uk/community-support/community-broadband-scotland/>
- (13) <http://www.digitalscotland.org/superfast-broadband/the-project/>
- (14) <http://www.scotlandsdigitalfuture.org/>
- (15) <http://www.ofcom.org.uk/>
- (16) <http://maps.ofcom.org.uk/broadband/broadband-data/>
- (17) <http://maps.ofcom.org.uk/broadband/>
- (18) <http://www.samknows.com/broadband/index.php>
- (19) UK fixed-line broadband performance, May 2013 The performance of fixed-line broadband provided to UK residential consumers: [http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/broadband-research/may2013/Fixed\\_bb\\_speeds\\_May\\_2013.pdf](http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/binaries/research/broadband-research/may2013/Fixed_bb_speeds_May_2013.pdf)
- (20) Otherwise known as Next Generation Access
- (21) <http://www.superfast-openreach.co.uk/where-and-when/>
- (22) [http://www.royalsoced.org.uk/1058\\_SpreadingtheBenefitsofDigitalParticipation.html](http://www.royalsoced.org.uk/1058_SpreadingtheBenefitsofDigitalParticipation.html)
- (23) Progress from <http://www.superfast-openreach.co.uk/where-and-when/> and total exchanges from [http://www.samknows.com/broadband/statistics/local\\_authority](http://www.samknows.com/broadband/statistics/local_authority)

# Chapter 2

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- (2) This section is by no means comprehensive in terms of its coverage of the literature on youth out-migration. A summary of recent literature on this topic is provided in Jamieson, L. and Groves, L. (2008) Drivers of youth out-migration from rural Scotland. Key issues and annotated bibliography, Scottish Government Social Research, Edinburgh. Available online: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/01/22131922/0>, Accessed 10 February 2014. A comprehensive analysis of the evidence relating to out-migration from rural Scotland, including the factors that encourage young people specifically to stay and leave; Crow, H. (2010) Factors influencing rural migration decisions in Scotland: an analysis of the evidence, Literature review carried out to support the development of Speak up for Rural Scotland, The Scottish Government: Edinburgh. Available online: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/09/10103019/0>, accessed 14 April 2014.
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- (4) Culliney, M. (2014) Going nowhere? Rural youth labour market opportunities and obstacles, *Journal of Poverty and Social Justice*, 22 (1), pp. 45-57.
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- (6) Shucksmith, M. (2004) Social Exclusion in Rural Areas: A Review of Recent Research, Defra, London
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- (9) See also Stockdale, A. (2004) Rural out-migration: Community consequences and individual migrant experiences, *Sociologia Ruralis* 44 (2), pp. 167-194.
- (10) See Rural Scotland in Focus 2012 (Section 1) for a discussion of the challenges of rural housing.
- (11) Hall Aitken (2007) Outer Hebrides Migration Study, for Eilean Siar Council, Eilean Siar Enterprise and Communities Scotland. Available online: <http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/factfile/population/migrationstudy.asp>, accessed 1 February 2013; Stockdale, A. (2002) Towards a typology of out-migration from peripheral areas, *International Journal of Population Geography*, 8, pp. 345-64; Jones, G. (2001) 'Fitting Homes? Young People's Housing and Household Strategies in Rural Scotland, *Journal of Youth Studies* 4, 1, pp. 41-62.
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- (13) Shucksmith, M., Chapman, P. and Clark, G. (1996) *Rural Scotland Today: The best of both worlds?*, Aldershot: Avebury.
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- (28) See for example, Glendenning, A. et al. (2003) Rural communities and well-being: a good place to grow up? *Sociological Review* 51 pp. 129-156.
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- (31) Further information on demographic change in the Cairngorms National Park will be available on the 'Economy of the Park' section of the Park's website shortly. For more information on this, please contact David Watson, Economic Development Manager Cairngorms National Park Authority ([davidwatson@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:davidwatson@cairngorms.co.uk) or Tel: 01479 870505). For more information on population change in Aviemore, Nairn and surrounding communities please see: [http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourcouncil/news/newsreleases/2014/March/2014-03-19-05.htm?utm\\_source=&utm\\_medium=&utm\\_campaign](http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourcouncil/news/newsreleases/2014/March/2014-03-19-05.htm?utm_source=&utm_medium=&utm_campaign), accessed 10 April 2014.
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- (39) For more information, see: <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/communitylearninganddevelopment/youngpeople/youthwork/strategy/index.asp>, accessed 14 April 2014.
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- (42) For more information, please see: <http://thirdforcenews.org.uk/youth/news/volunteering-project-to-help-young-jobless-in-rural-areas>, accessed 10 April 2014.

- (43) For more information, see: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2003/03/16701/19555>, accessed 10 April 2014.
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- (49) For more information, see: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Education/edandtrainingforyoungple/commissiondevelopingscotlandsyoungworkforce>
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- (55) It is perhaps worth noting that previous research has demonstrated that policies that rely on rural development to curb rural to urban migration are likely to be unsuccessful. Although rural to urban migration seems inevitable, this research argues that it is possible to influence the pattern of migration by promoting development activities which stimulate employment generation in regional centres or small cities (see for example, Rhoda, R. (1983) *Rural Development and Urban Migration: Can We Keep Them Down on the Farm?*, *International Migration Review* 17 (1), pp. 34-64.
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# Chapter 3

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- (27) <http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk/supporting/strategy-policy-guidance/forestry-strategy>
- (28) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/NPF3-SPP-Review/NPF3>
- (29) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/NPF3-SPP-Review/SPP-Review>
- (30) This issue was discussed in more detail at a recent workshop on 'Integrated Planning in Rural Scotland' organised by SRUC. For a summary of discussions at the workshop see: [http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120402/rpc\\_news/1320/2014\\_integrated\\_planning\\_in\\_rural\\_scotland](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120402/rpc_news/1320/2014_integrated_planning_in_rural_scotland). Planning and rural Scotland was also discussed at a meeting of SRUC Council's Consultative Committee in March 2013 (a summary of this discussion can be found here: [http://www.sruc.ac.uk/downloads/download/563/2013\\_planning\\_enabling\\_or\\_disabling\\_scotland%E2%80%99s\\_rural\\_economic\\_and\\_social\\_development](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/downloads/download/563/2013_planning_enabling_or_disabling_scotland%E2%80%99s_rural_economic_and_social_development)) and at a meeting of the Cross Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on Rural Policy in February 2014, see: [http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120471/group\\_meetings\\_2013-14/1246/meeting\\_3\\_planning\\_and\\_rural\\_economic\\_development](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120471/group_meetings_2013-14/1246/meeting_3_planning_and_rural_economic_development).
- (31) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/04/1027>
- (32) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/11/6251/6>

- (33) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/built-environment/planning/reform>
- (34) <http://www.dpea.scotland.gov.uk/>
- (35) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/PublicServiceReform/CP>
- (36) <http://www.snh.gov.uk/protecting-scotlands-nature/looking-after-landscapes/landscape-policy-and-guidance/wild-land/mapping/>
- (37) <http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A1218449.pdf>
- (38) <http://www.whfp.com/2014/02/21/planning-committee-approve-coigach-turbine/>
- (39) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/09/13091128/5>
- (40) <http://www.scottishruralparliament.org.uk/>
- (41) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/07/9185>
- (42) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/publications/legislation>
- (43) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2013/11/5740>
- (44) See for example work going on at SRUC on community resilience and engagement, as part of the Scottish Government's Strategic Research Programme 2011-2016. This includes work in Dumfries and Galloway and Ayrshire with communities that have traditionally not engaged in LEADER or other community development programmes to understand why.
- (45) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/contact/Planning-Authorities/Strategic>
- (46) <http://www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/planning/developmentplans/HighlandWideLocalDevelopmentPlan.htm>
- (47) <http://www.orkney.gov.uk/Council/C/our-islands-our-future.htm>
- (48) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0042/00425496.pdf>
- (49) <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/design-guides>
- (50) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/AandP/InspirationalDesigns>
- (51) Heads of Planning Scotland (HoPS) is the representative organisation for senior planning officers from Scotland's local authorities, national park authorities and strategic development planning authorities.
- (52) DTAS 'Community Ownership in Scotland: A Baseline Study, September 2012
- (53) [http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120485/thriving\\_communities\\_archive/42/2011\\_community\\_land\\_ownership\\_and\\_community\\_resilience](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120485/thriving_communities_archive/42/2011_community_land_ownership_and_community_resilience)
- (54) <http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/scottishlandfund>
- (55) It is worth noting recent discussions around reforms of the planning system elsewhere in the UK. In 2007, the Prime Minister asked Matthew Taylor MP to undertake a review of the rural economy and the availability of affordable rural housing. The report ('Living, Working Countryside' published in 2008), the Government's response (issued in 2009) and the subsequent implementation plan issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government are all available here: <http://archive.defra.gov.uk/rural/living/housing/taylor.htm>. The Commons Select Committee has recently announced an inquiry into the operation of the National Planning Policy Framework since it came into operation in 2012. For more information, see: <http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/communities-and-local-government-committee/inquiries/parliament-2010/national-planning-policy-framework/>.
- The Welsh Government is currently working towards a Planning Bill to improve the planning system in Wales. A draft Bill and supporting paper were published earlier this year for a consultation which ended in February 2014. The Bill will be introduced to the National Assembly for Wales in 2014. For more information, see: <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/planning/legislation/planningbill/?lang=en>.
- The Northern Ireland Assembly was also discussing a proposed new Planning Bill in 2013 but the Bill was withdrawn in the Autumn.
- (56) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/modernising/cc/KeyAgencies>
- (57) [http://www.sepa.org.uk/water/river\\_basin\\_planning/dp\\_priority\\_catchments.aspx](http://www.sepa.org.uk/water/river_basin_planning/dp_priority_catchments.aspx)
- (58) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Environment/Countryside/Landusestrategy>
- (59) <http://www.north-harris.org/>

# Chapter 5

- (1) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2003/03/16701/19578>
- (2) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/173061/0048277.pdf>
- (3) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/319168/0102002.pdf>
- (4) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/344246/0114504.pdf>
- (5) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/346071/0115177.pdf>
- (6) The second annual progress statement (2013): <http://scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0042/00425896.pdf>
- (7) [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/SFS2006fcfc101.pdf/\\$FILE/SFS2006fcfc101.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/SFS2006fcfc101.pdf/$FILE/SFS2006fcfc101.pdf)
- (8) Cairngorms National Park: <http:// Cairngorms.co.uk/resource/docs/publications/21062012/CNPA.Paper.1827.Cairngorms%20National%20Park%20Partnership%20Plan%202012-2017.pdf> Loch Lomond and Trossachs: [http://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/images/stories/Looking%20After/PDF/NP%20Plan/NPPPPlan2012\\_final3.pdf](http://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/images/stories/Looking%20After/PDF/NP%20Plan/NPPPPlan2012_final3.pdf)
- (9) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/246055/0069426.pdf>
- (10) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/229649/0062206.pdf>
- (11) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/254248/0075274.pdf>
- (12) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/257007/0076309.pdf>
- (13) The Scottish Government published its updated architecture and place policy statement Creating Places in June 2013: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0042/00425496.pdf>
- (14) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/212557/0056531.pdf>. See also Rural Policy Centre Report by Dr Jane Atterton and Frances Rowe (2012) Building on the New Rural Paradigm: [http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120485/archive/777/2012\\_building\\_on\\_the\\_new\\_rural\\_paradigm](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120485/archive/777/2012_building_on_the_new_rural_paradigm)
- (15) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0042/00421073.pdf>
- (16) [http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4\\_RuralAffairsClimateChangeandEnvironmentCommittee/General%20Documents/SRUC.pdf](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_RuralAffairsClimateChangeandEnvironmentCommittee/General%20Documents/SRUC.pdf)
- (17) <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/modernising/cc/KeyAgencies>
- (18) Scottish Government (2012) Supporting Young People's Health and Wellbeing. A Summary of Scottish Government Policy, Scottish Government: Edinburgh. Available online at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0041/00418332.pdf>
- (19) <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/71180.aspx>
- (20) <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/62233.aspx>
- (21) <http://www.scdc.org.uk/what/rural-ayrshire-21/>
- (22) <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/design-guides>
- (23) [http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120428/rural\\_scotland\\_in\\_focus](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120428/rural_scotland_in_focus)
- (24) [http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120485/archive/42/2011\\_community\\_land\\_ownership\\_and\\_community\\_resilience](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/info/120485/archive/42/2011_community_land_ownership_and_community_resilience)
- (25) Within Chapter 3 of Rural Scotland in Focus 2012: [http://www.sruc.ac.uk/downloads/file/470/rural\\_scotland\\_in\\_focus\\_2012\\_web\\_version](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/downloads/file/470/rural_scotland_in_focus_2012_web_version)
- (26) <http://www.fsb.org.uk/scotland>

Rural Scotland in Focus

2014









# Rural Scotland in Focus

# 2014



For more information or to obtain further copies of this report please go to [www.sruc.ac.uk/ruralpolicycentre](http://www.sruc.ac.uk/ruralpolicycentre)

Welcome to the third edition of Rural Scotland in Focus.

Since starting to publish our Reports in 2010, our ambition has been to produce impartial, evidence-based commentary which takes you to the heart of key rural issues, with links to a wide range of documents for you to explore further. In our 2014 edition, we continue to address critical issues – important not only to rural Scotland, but to how rural can continue to enhance its contribution to a vibrant Scottish economy, society and environment.

We provide an update, with new data, on: housing activity and need; population growth or reduction, migration patterns; employment trends; and the on-going critical importance of broadband. We focus on young people's migration and/or exclusion patterns: whether to stay or leave the rural communities in which they grew up; and what more needs to be done.

We 'unpack' rural poverty and disadvantage and review key national policies and strategies from 1999-2014 for tackling poverty and disadvantage in Scotland. We then assess spatial planning, and why an integrated approach is essential given rural Scotland is facing multiple and increasing demands and opportunities for its finite land resource.

We conclude by bringing these themes together. We explore why integration must increase, because people and communities in rural Scotland experience their lives where all these different elements intersect. We identify the need for a shared overall vision and accompanying strategy for rural Scotland, to support the development of further resilience and vibrancy.



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