

(DRAFT) REPORT ON A SURVEY (01/02/06)

OF

HOUSING NEEDS, CONDITION AND VIEWS

IN

South East Caithness

comprising

Dunbeath & Berriedale

and

**Latheron, Lybster and Clyth
Community Council Areas**

BY HSCHT STAFF, AUTUMN 2005

1. KEY FINDINGS

1.1 Population and demographic trends (contextual)

Dunbeath and Berriedale

Age Group	Numbers and age distribution 1991	Numbers and age distribution 2001	% age distribution of population 2001	Highland average % in age group 2001	Trend % increase / decrease of population 1991 - 2001
Total	472	447			-5.3
0-4	81	12	2.7	5.4	-37.0
5-14		39	8.7	12.9	
15 – 24	159	40	8.9	10.6	-3.8
25 – 44		113	25.3	27.4	
45 – 64	187	155	34.7	27.1	+11.2
65 - 74		53	11.9	9.3	
75 +	45	35	7.8	7.3	-23.2

(source: 1991 & 2001 census)

Latheron, Lybster and Clyth

Age Group	Numbers and age distribution 1991	Numbers and age distribution 2001	% age distribution of population 2001	Highland average % in age group 2001	Trend % increase / decrease of population 1991 - 2001
Total	1246	1207			-3.1
0-4	252	47	3.9	5.4	-21.4
5-14		151	12.5	12.9	
15 – 24	451	113	9.3	10.6	-10.2
25 – 44		292	24.2	27.4	
45 – 64	444	369	30.6	27.1	+11.0
65 - 74		124	10.3	9.3	
75 +	99	111	9.2	7.3	+12.1

(source: 1991 & 2001 census)

- The census figures show the following trends:
 - A significant population decline in both the Community Council areas that make up South East Caithness Initiative at the Edge Area
 - A dramatic decline throughout the Area in the numbers of children
 - However, it should be noted that the decline in the numbers of school children is more pronounced in Dunbeath and Berriedale where the proportion of children to overall

population is 37.7% below the Highland average (whereas in Latheron, Lybster and Clyth the proportionate decline is 10%)

- In both Community Council areas the numbers, as well as the comparative proportion of people aged over 65 have increased (notwithstanding the overall population decline) resulting in an increasingly “top heavy” age profile in the resident population, which is ageing much more quickly than the norm for the Highland Council area.

.2 School roll trends (contextual)

	<i>Dunbeath Primary</i>	<i>Lybster Primary</i>
1975 / 76	68	133
1976 / 77	61	141
1977 / 78	58	125
1978 / 79	54	117
1979 / 80	51	116
1980 / 81	46	121
1981 / 82	41	101
1982 / 83	31	103
1983 / 84	40	95
1984 / 85	51	98
1985 / 86	49	95
1986 / 87	45	107
1987 / 88	41	113
1988 / 89	37	122
1989 / 90	34	133
1990 / 91	33	143
1991 / 92	31	135
1992 / 93	31	138
1993 / 94	31	112
1994 / 95	32	106
1995 / 96	33	112
1996 / 97	35	105
1997 / 98	33	107
1998 / 99	28	114
1999 / 00	23	101
2000 / 01	21	97
2001 / 02	22	105
2002 / 03	20	93
2003 / 04	13	108
2004 / 05	14	86
2005 / 06	12	97

2006 / 07	Projected	12	Projected	102
2007 / 08	Projected	13	Projected	109
2008 / 09	Projected	10	Projected	100
2009 / 10	Projected	10	Projected	100

(source: Highland Council)

- The Primary School roll figures show a worryingly sharp decline in the numbers of children attending Dunbeath Primary School (14 out of a population of over 400).
- Lybster Primary School numbers have also declined but more gradually and to a much higher base level and proportion of the population (97 out of around 1200).

.3 Housing Stock, tenure and occupancy trends (contextual)

Dunbeath and Berriedale

Households	1991		2001		Trend:
	Number	%	Number	%	Increase/decrease %
Total number	205		222		+8.3
Owner-occupied	116	56.6	141	63.5	+12.2
Private rented	47	23	24	10.8	-11.2
The Highland Council	42	20.4	31	14	-5.4
Housing Association	0	0	3	1.4	
Living rent free	0	0	23	10.4	

(source: 1991 & 2001 census)

Latheron, Lybster and Clyth

Households	1991		2001		Trend:
	Number	%	Number	%	Increase/decrease %
Total number	487		517		+6
Owner-occupied	294	60.4	351	67.9	+11.7
Private rented	42	8.6	23	4.4	-3.9
The Highland Council	150	30.8	117	22.6	-6.8
Housing Association	1	0.2	1	0.2	0
Living rent free			25	4.8	

(source: 1991 & 2001 census)

- The census figures show the following trends:

- A significant increase (6.8%) in the number of households in South East Caithness notwithstanding the decrease (3.7%) in resident population
 - The average household size in Dunbeath and Berriedale (2.01 at the time of the 2001 census) was appreciably lower than that for Latheron, Lybster and Clyth (2.33)
 - Owner occupation has increased significantly throughout the Initiative at the Edge area (from 59.2% to 66.6% between 1991 and 2001) whilst the supply of council houses and private rented housing has greatly decreased by, respectively, 23% and 47%.
 - (Despite the census information) there were no Housing Association houses in South East Caithness in 2001 although Pentland Housing Association now own 1 house in Dunbeath and the Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust own 2 in Lybster which are managed by Pentland Housing Association.
- Highland Council figures show that Dunbeath and Berriedale have 28 Council Houses left (with 108 sold to date under the Right to Buy) and Latheron, Lybster and Clyth have 31 left with 63 RTB sales.

1.4 Non effective housing stock trends (contextual)

	Vacant Homes		Holiday / 2 nd homes		Housing Stock	
	1991	2001	1991	2001	1991	2001
Dunbeath and Berriedale	No data	26	22	26	205	222
Latheron, Lybster and Clyth	No data	41	29	23	487	517
TOTALS		67	51	49	692	739

(source: 1991 and 2001 census)

- The census figures show that:
 - Dunbeath and Berriedale have a significantly high proportion of holiday and 2nd homes (at 11.7% the 2001 census housing stock figure approaching twice the Highland average of 6.2%) but Latheron, Lybster and Clyth have a lower than average proportion.

- Both Community Council areas have higher than Highland average (4%) proportions of vacant homes although the proportion is greater in Dunbeath and Berriedale (11.7%) than in Latheron, Lybster and Clyth (7.9%)

1.5 Housing market Trends(contextual)

	Houses sold		Average prices		Median Prices	
	1993	2004	1993	2004	1993	2004
Thrumster and Clyth	6	19	£34,333	£88,399	£24,173	£85,500
Lybster and Latheron	8	19	£46,500	£72,018	£38,750	£50,150
Dunbeath and Berriedale	9	18	£34,167	£127,473	£26,000	£75,000
HIGHLAND REGION	3916	5003	£49,340	£104,935	£38,225	£83,250

(source: Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics)

- The Scottish Neighborhood Statistics figures (above) show that:
 - The number of houses sold in the private housing market in South East Caithness has doubled in recent years
 - Although median sale prices are generally below the Highland Region average the most expensive areas are at the northern and southern ends

.6 Income and employment trends (contextual)

Awaiting information from Highland Council

.7 Questionnaire response rate

	Households receiving questionnaires	Households who responded	Percentage return rate
Dunbeath and Berriedale	230	80	35%
Latheron, Lybster and Clyth	491	124	25%
TOTALS	721	205	28.4%

.8 Household details (questionnaire results)

- Most of the responding households included a member aged 60 or over including:

- 57 out of 124 in Latheron, Lybster and Clyth

And

- 51 out of 81 in Dunbeath and Berriedale

1.9 Single person households (questionnaire results)

- 94 single person households returned completed questionnaires, including:

- 42 in Latheron, Lybster and Clyth of which 27 were over 60

And

- 52 in Dunbeath and Berriedale of which 29 were over 60

1.10 Owner occupied households (questionnaire results)

- The great majority (85%) of responding households own the homes they live in of which:

- 100 of the 173 owner occupied houses were built pre – 1945

1.11 Groundf bedrooms and showers (questionnaire results)

- 122 of the 204 respondents indicated they had one or more ground floor bedrooms, but 166 had ground floor showers

1.12 Fuel costs (questionnaire results)

- 110 respondents indicated that they spend more than 10% of their income on heating costs of which:

- Over two thirds (76) included someone aged 60 or more

1.13 Loft insulation (questionnaire results)

- 51 households indicated that their houses had less than 50 mm of loft insulation

1.14 Single glazing (questionnaire results)

- 30 households indicated that their windows were single glazed

1.15 Smoke detectors (questionnaire results)

- 184 households indicated that their houses had smoke detectors of which:

- 59 were mains electric powered

And

- 125 were battery powered

1.16 Repair and improvement needs (questionnaire results)

- Of the 205 questionnaire respondents 77 (37.5%) indicated that their houses had a repair or improvement need including:

- 43 of the 124 in Latheron, Lybster and Clyth (35%)

And

- 34 out of the 891 in Dunbeath and Berriedale (42%)

- Of the 77 households 46 have members aged 60+
- The commonest problems identified were leaking or draughty windows and/or external doors (40 out of the 77) and inadequate insulation (35 out of 77)

1.17 Adaptations and care needs (questionnaire results)

- 33 respondents indicated that their homes needs adaptations for a household member with a care need (usually a mobility problem), including:
 - 15 in Latheron, Lybster and Clyth

And

- 18 in Dunbeath and Berriedale

1.18 General housing needs (questionnaire results)

- 56 respondents indicated that there were housing needs in their household of which the main needs were as follows:
 - Repairs / improvements (27)
 - House too expensive to heat properly (15)
 - Disabled adaptations required(15)
 - Hoping to buy or build but can't afford to (12)
 - Young adults seeking independent housing (9)
 - Smaller house required (5)
 - Likely to become homeless in the near future (2)

1.19 Housing options preferred by those with needs (questionnaire results)

	Dunbeath and Berriedale			Latheron, Lybster and Clyth			South East Caithness Totals		
	Yes	Perhaps	No	Yes	Perhaps	No	Yes	Perhaps	No
Council Housing	2	4	6	4	2	3	6	6	9
Housing Association rented	2	4	6	3	2	4	5	6	10
Private rented	1	1	9	1	2	4	2	3	16
Sub – Total rented respondents	20			11			31		
RHOG to build or buy	4	2	5	9	4	2	13	6	7
HSCHT plot plus RHOG	2	3	4	1	5	3	3	8	7
Shared Equity	1	4	5	1	3	4	2	7	9
Starter Home	2	2	4	4	4	2	6	6	6
Crofter housing grant	3	5	3	3	2	5	6	7	8
Open market house / plot	1	3	4	9	1	3	10	4	7
Sub –Total Home Ownership respondents	32			19			51		

- The figures indicate that there is a significant level of demand for both rented and home ownership options to meet the identified housing needs but also that:
 - The overall level of expressed demand for rented housing from either the Council or a Housing Association is relatively low and appreciably less than that expressed for an affordable home ownership option

- The most favoured route to home ownership is getting a plot to build a house on, preferably with a Rural Home Ownership Grant (RHOG) assistance.

.20 Demand for council housing (contextual)

	Council houses 2006	Sold under RTB	RTB sales as a percentage	Waiting list (1st Pref)	Re lets per year (average)
Dunbeath and Berriedale	28	31	52.5%	7	3 or 4
Latheron, Lybster and Clyth	108	63	36.8%	19	8 or 9
TOTALS	136	94	40.8%	26	12

(source: Highland Council)

- These figures suggest that most of the expressed need for affordable rented housing can be met fairly readily from re-lets e.g. Council Housing stock (although whether the type and size of Council Housing is necessarily suitable for needs expressed is known).

1.21 Locational preferences of those with needs (questionnaire results)

PREFERENCE	Yes	Perhaps	No
Berriedale	5	2	2
Dunbeath	8	3	1
Elsewhere in CC area	0	2	3
Latheronwheel	6	2	0
Latheron	8	2	0
Lybster	15	2	1
Occumster	7	0	1
Clyth	6	3	1
Elsewhere in CC area	2	3	1

- The figures show that those with housing needs would like to see housing stock located in all the main settlements in South East Caithness although Lybster, Latheron and Dunbeath are the their preferred locations.

1.22 Potential returners (questionnaire results)

- 6 respondents indicated that a former member of their household would be seriously interested in returning to live locally, if they could find a suitable, affordable house in the community:
 - 4 in the Dunbeath and Berriedale Community Council area
- And
- 2 in Latheron, Lybster and Clyth Area

1.23 All views on affordable housing (questionnaire results)

- Of the 205 respondents to the questionnaire, 174 (85%) expressed their views – whether their household had a housing need or not – on the question “Do you think the community would benefit from some more affordable housing opportunities being made available for local people?” as follows:

	Yes	Perhaps	No
Dunbeath and Berriedale	55	11	6
Latheron, Lybster and Clyth	78	13	11
TOTALS	133	24	17

- On the kinds of affordable housing options respondents indicated they would like to see provided locally the results were as follows:

Dunbeath and Berriedale

<u>Housing Option type</u>	Yes	Perhaps	No
Housing Association rented	24	9	4
Private rented	9	9	3
RHOG assisted houses	18	8	3
Locally affordable house plots from HSCHT	20	10	1
Shared ownership/equity	11	5	6
Affordable starter homes	44	5	2
Crofter grant assisted houses	23	9	3
Other	2	0	0
Total number of respondents			65

Latheron, Lybster and Clyth

<u>Housing Option type</u>	Yes	Perhaps	No
Housing Association rented	39	13	4
Private rented	11	15	8
RHOG assisted houses	25	12	4
Locally affordable house plots from HSCHT	35	11	2
Shared ownership/equity	14	12	8
Affordable starter homes	67	6	1

Crofter grant assisted houses	34	8	3
Other	4		
Total number of respondents			87

- Comparison of these general views of all respondents with the views (see 1.19) of those who have housing needs shows that starter homes and locally affordable house plots from HSCHT find much greater general favour than they do from those with needs.
- Similarly, comparison with table 1.21 shows that there is a much stronger general preference for any new housing options to be located in Lybster or Dunbeath.

“Where should any new housing options be located? “

	Yes		Perhaps		No	
	<i>Dunbeath and Berriedale</i>	<i>Latheron, Lybster and Clyth</i>	<i>Dunbeath and Berriedale</i>	<i>Latheron, Lybster and Clyth</i>	<i>Dunbeath and Berriedale</i>	<i>Latheron, Lybster and Clyth</i>
<i>Berriedale</i>	1	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Dunbeath</i>	16	5	-	1	-	-
<i>Latheronwheel</i>	7	5	-	1	-	-
<i>Latheron</i>	7	6	-	1	-	-
<i>Lybster</i>	19	26	-	-	-	-
<i>Occumster</i>	2	2	-	-	-	-
<i>Clyth</i>	2	2	-	-	-	-
<i>Wick</i>	5	5	-	-	-	-
<i>Other</i>	12	12	-	-	-	-

The aggregated responses to the question “which groups of people should any new affordable housing opportunities be for ?” were as follows:

	Yes	Perhaps	No
Young Couples	128	7	0
Families with children	120	6	0

Single People	60	26	4
Older person householders	69	25	3
Other	11	0	0

.24 Improved day care / health care services (questionnaire results)

“Would you like to see improved day care or other health care services / facilities provided in your Community Council area?”

	Yes	Perhaps	No
<i>Dunbeath and Berriedale</i>	23	20	7
<i>Latheron, Lybster and Clyth</i>	35	23	4
TOTALS	58	43	11

.25 Written comments (questionnaire results)

Respondents were invited to write down their comments on nay housing related issues affecting their community. 23 came from Dunbeath and Berriedale respondents and 16 from Latheron, Lybster and Clyth respondents.

The issue of housing affordability and availability for locals received most comments. (11)