



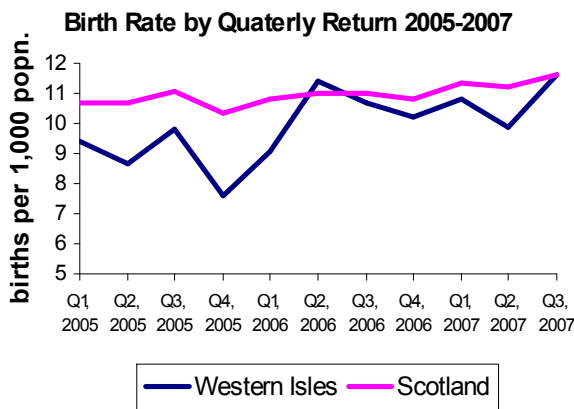
# SOCIO ECONOMIC UPDATE

This is the ninth edition of the Socio Economic Update; a regular e-bulletin which has been designed to keep you up-to-date with recently released socio-economic reports of reference to policy and planning in the Outer Hebrides. The socio-economic information is listed under topic headings.

## Population and Migration

### Sustained Climb in Birth Rate

The General Register Office for Scotland has released figures for [Vital Events](#) registered during Q3 of 2007. As the table below illustrates, the birth rate for the Western Isles has risen to be closer in line to the Scottish average.



### Census Tables for Multi Member Wards

A programme to produce [2001 Census Data for the New 2007 Wards](#) (also referred to as Multi Member Wards) is well underway and a number of the tables are now available to view on the Scottish Census Results Online (SCROL) website.

The data available at this level is comprehensive (although limited to that from the 2001 census on this site); an example of the type of info available is shown below:

#### % of Population with 'some knowledge of Gaelic' (2001)

An Taobh Siar agus Nis	81%
Barraigh Bhatarsaigh, Erisgeigh, Uibhist a Deas	79%
Beinn a Foghla agus Uibhist a Tuath	72%
Loch a Tuath	74%
Na Hearadh agus Ceann a Deas nan Loch	77%
Sgìr Uig agus Ceann a Tuath nan Loch	76%
Sgìre an Rubha	65%
Steomabhagh a Deas	59%
Steomabhagh a Tuath	59%

### Small Area Population Estimates 2006

Mid 2006 population [Estimates](#) at small area level (data zones) have been released. Results show that the percentage population change from 2001 to 2006 was:

Data Zone	Equivalent Name	% Change
S01002344	South Benbecula	-14.4
S01002360	North Bayhead (Stornoway)	-11.2
S01002362	Garrabost	-10.0
S01002373	Galson to Swainbost	-9.6
S01002343	Loch Eynort to lochdar	-9.2
S01002339	Vatersay to Castlebay	-9.0
S01002347	West North Uist to Baleshare	-8.4
S01002350	Paìrc and Kinloch	-7.4
S01002369	Carloway to Shawbost	-7.0
S01002361	Coulegrain to Stenish	-6.9
S01002349	North Harris and Scalpay	-6.5
S01002346	East North Uist to Berneray	-5.3
S01002351	Uig and Bernera	-4.0
S01002370	Bragar to Bru	-3.7
S01002352	North Lochs	-3.7
S01002341	Eriskay to South Boisdale	-3.4
S01002355	Newton to Plasterfield	-3.1
S01002359	Goathill	-2.6
S01002364	North Manor Park	-2.3
S01002353	Knock to Bayble	-1.2
S01002372	Barvas to Borve	-0.9
S01002354	Melbost to Braighe	0.3
S01002368	Coll to Back	1.8
S01002374	Habost to Port of Ness	2.4
S01002358	Loch Roag	2.6
S01002348	South Harris	4.1
S01002367	Tong to Upper Coll	4.1
S01002342	Loch Boisdale	6.0
S01002340	North Barra	6.3
S01002365	Sheshader to Tiumpán Head	8.8
S01002345	North Benbecula to Grimsay	9.2
S01002356	Central Stornoway	11.3
S01002363	Marybank to Newvalley	11.5
S01002371	Gress to Tolsta	12.7
S01002366	Newmarket	18.4
S01002357	Springfield	20.0

## Labour Market

### Low Unemployment Rate

The latest release from [NOMIS](#) (Office for National Statistics) gives the following unemployment rates for November 2007:

<b>Outer Hebrides</b>	<b>2.4%</b>
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>2.1%</b>
<b>Great Britain</b>	<b>2.1%</b>

As the adjacent graph indicates, over the last ten years the unemployment rate has fallen from a high of 9.3% in 1996 to a low of 2.2% (Nov 07), the lowest rate since records began.

Annual Population Survey 2006 [Link](#)

NOMIS Labour Market Statistics [Link](#)

% Working Age Claiming JSA



## Economy

### Interesting Fact:

Around 262,126 passengers arrived into the Outer Hebrides from the mainland during 2006....

It is estimated in 2006, that there were approximately 6,000 yacht visitors to the Outer Hebrides....

HIE-Innse Gall Economic Update [Link](#)

Outer Hebrides Tourism 2006 Update [Link](#)

2007 Scottish Economic Statistics [Link](#)

Corporate Sector Statistics 2006 [Link](#)

2003 Western Isles Regional Accounts [Link](#)

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Annual Report [Link](#)

Rural Scotland Price Survey [Link](#)

Scottish Aggregates Survey 2005 [Link](#)

## Education and Training

### Interesting Fact:

There has been an increase in number and rate of pupils taught exclusively through the medium of Gaelic in Scotland (630 pupils in 2005 to 710 in 2006); this figure was 138 for the Western Isles in 2006.

Scottish Executive Education Statistics [Link](#)

Historic School Roll Figures 1996-2006 [Link](#)

S1 and S2 Maths and English Class Size 2007 [Link](#)

School Openings, Closures & Mergers Narrative [Link](#)

Students in Higher Education 2006 [Link](#)

SQA Examinations Results 2005/06 [Link](#)

School Level Pupil Numbers at Sept 2005 [Link](#)

Attendance & Absences in Scottish Schools [Link](#)

## Agricultural, Fisheries and Forestry

### Interesting Fact:

The *value* of sea fishing landings into Stomoway increased by £4 million between 2005 and 2006 due primarily to the increase in the value of shellfish landed (landings also increased by 581 tonnes over the period)

The June 2006 Agricultural Census informs us that the *agricultural workforce* in the Western Isles was composed of approximately 368 full time, 3,987 part time and 83 casual and part time workers in 2006.

Scottish Agricultural Facts and Figures 2007 [Link](#)

Scottish Sea Fisheries Statistics 2006 [Link](#)

Economic Report on Scottish Agriculture 2007 [Link](#)

Scottish Fish Landings 2006 [Link](#)

2006 June Agricultural Census [Link](#)

## Natural Environment

### Interesting Fact:

Annual temperature in Scotland over the last four years is higher than for any other year during the period 1914-2006. By 2100, temperatures in Scotland are predicted to rise by 3.5 °C during the summer months and around 2.5°C during the winter months.

'Scotland's Biodiversity, It's in Your Hands' – A Progress Report on 22 Biodiversity Indicators 2005-2007 [Link](#)

SNH Site Link [Link](#)

Key Scottish Environmental Statistics 2007 [Link](#)

Greenhouse Gas Inventory 1990-2005 [Link](#)

Comhairle Biodiversity Website [Link](#)

JNCC Protected Sites [Link](#)

Western Isles Landscape Character Assessment [Link](#)

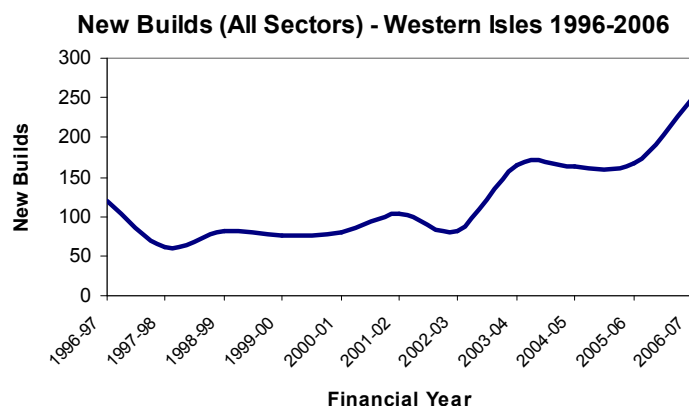
## Built Environment

### Housing Statistics for Scotland 2007

The recently released '[Housing Statistics for Scotland](#)' web tables contain a range of time series and summary tables and replace the 'Quarterly Housing Trends Bulletin Series'. The 2007 release has been published online and includes data on:

New house building; conversions and demolitions; sale of social sector housing; housing for older people and those with disabilities; private sector housing improvement grants and repair; etc.

The adjacent graph illustrates the rise in development over the last ten years.



### Highest Planning Approval Rate in Scotland Planning Authority Performance 2004-2007

The latest statistics on [Planning Authority Performance](#) across Scotland have now been collated, covering the period 2004-2007. The statistics are based on 6 monthly returns from Scotland's local authorities.

The figures show that the Western Isles has the highest approval rate (for all planning applications) in Scotland (99% in 2006/2007; compared to a Scottish average of 91%).

### Scottish House Conditions Survey

The Scottish House Condition Survey ([SHCS](#)) is the only national survey of housing undertaken in Scotland. Key findings for 2005/06 have now been released. The survey contains data on:

- [Key indicators of the Scottish Housing Stock](#);
- [Energy Efficiency](#);
- [Fuel Poverty](#).

### National Planning Framework 2

[NPF2](#) outlines a vision for Scotland's development to 2030; it is out for consultation until 15 April 2008.

The document states that the islands of Scotland should be viewed as 'an arc of opportunity' with potential for increased connectivity (both fibre optic and sub sea inter-connector) and community based enterprise.

### Scottish Household Survey Results

Results from the latest [Scottish Household Survey](#) have been published online.

The survey covers lots of topics, including what kind of housing people live in and who lives with them, what they do for a living, how they travel, health, levels of education, how they feel about the area in which they live and the local services available to them.

### Local Plan Nearing Completion

The Comhairle is now nearing completion in the preparation of the Western Isles Local Plan (WILP). The public consultation on the 'proposed post inquiry modifications' ended on 14 December 2007 and the Comhairle will consider the responses before moving towards adoption of the Local Plan in 2008. Key dates in the process were:

<a href="#">Finalised WILP - Published</a>	Oct 2005
<a href="#">Finalised WILP - Public Consultation</a>	Oct-Dec 2005
<a href="#">Finalised WILP Incorporating Proposed Modifications - Public Consultation</a>	Nov-Dec 2006
<a href="#">WILP Inquiry Statement of Case - Submission</a>	June 2007
<a href="#">Reporters Inquiry Report - Comhairle Response</a>	Oct 2007
<a href="#">Proposed Post Inquiry Modifications - Public Consultation</a>	Oct-Dec 2007

To review all of the documentation (including the accompanying Strategic Environmental Assessment) please go to the [Western Isles Local Plan](#) webpage.

### 12% rise in House Price

According to the Bank of Scotland's '[Scottish House Price Index](#)', average house prices in the Western Isles rose by 12% between 2006 & 2007 (year to Sept); the Scottish average was a rise of 14.2%.

The Western Isles were also recorded as having the lowest average house prices of any local authority area in Scotland; £113,667 in 2007.

### Useful Links

<a href="#">Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Planning Service</a>	<a href="#">Link</a>
<a href="#">Western Isles Public Access Planning Portal</a>	<a href="#">Link</a>
<a href="#">Housing Statistics</a>	<a href="#">Link</a>
<a href="#">Local Housing Strategy</a>	<a href="#">Link</a>
<a href="#">Historic Scotland's Spatial Warehouse</a>	<a href="#">Link</a>
<a href="#">Past Map</a>	<a href="#">Link</a>
<a href="#">Scottish Government Planning Information</a>	<a href="#">Link</a>

## Transport, Travel and Tourism

### Interesting Fact:

The number of fatal or seriously injury accidents in roads in the Western Isles has fallen from an average of 29 over the 1994-98 period to 18 over the 2002-2006 period.

Scottish Transport Statistics 2007 No.26 [Link](#)  
Transport across Scotland 2005 & 2006 [Link](#)  
Main Transport Trends 2007 [Link](#)  
Road Accident Statistics 2006 [Link](#)  
HIAL Passenger Numbers 2006/2007 [Link](#)  
Household Transport in 2006 (SHS Results) [Link](#)

## Health, Care and Welfare

### Interesting Fact:

The Western Isles has the highest prevalence of male Coronary Heart Disease in Scotland at 6.1 per 100 population (crude). The Scottish average was 4.1 per 100.

Scottish Households 'Below Average Income' [Link](#)  
Care Homes Scotland 2007 [Link](#)  
Scottish Health Statistics [Link](#)  
Latest Scottish Social and Welfare Statistics [Link](#)  
Latest Care and Community Statistics [Link](#)  
Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation [Link](#)

## Focus on: Stornoway Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI)

After officially starting in May last year, the Stornoway THI project is progressing well and evidence of this will soon be seen on the ground. Imminent projects include:

- The first Building Repair Grant (retail property on lower Church Street); has been approved and work is well underway;
- Work on resurfacing Cromwell Street is about to start in the near future (by late Spring);
- New interpretation panels, telling the story of the castle, should be in place in early Spring.

Although other possible Building Repair Grants are in early discussions it is hoped that more building owners will come forward at an early date to discuss the possibility of repair and restoration schemes.

The occupiers of all potentially eligible buildings have been written to but if owners/occupiers are in any doubt they should contact the Project Manager, at the contact address below.

A major exhibition celebrating Stornoway's ironwork is also to be held in Museum nan Eilean over summer 2008. The exhibition will document the remarkable resource of cast and wrought ironwork in the town. When many towns on the mainland lost their ironwork as part of the War effort much of Stornoway's has remained to today.

Other projects are planned but will take more time to develop and implement but improvements to the appearance of the town centre should soon become evident. Free leaflets, outlining the project, are available from the Project Manager – see contact details below. Alternatively you can telephone or arrange to meet the Project Manager to discuss it or check the website.

THI Project Manager – Ian Wilson. Tel: 01851 709535. Email: [iwilson@cne-siar.gov.uk](mailto:iwilson@cne-siar.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.cne-siar.gov.uk/StornowayRegeneration](http://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/StornowayRegeneration)



## Contact

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*This e-bulletin is also available (along with past issues) on the Comhairle's intranet in the 'Fact File'.*