

Peak District National Park Population, Household and Labour Force Projections 2001-2026: Presentation and Workshop on 23 January 2007

The presentation/workshop presented the projections and explored the implications for policies. It attracted a broad spectrum of interests (see attendance sheet attached in Appendix A.)

The Projections

The projections were presented by the consultants, Cathie Marsh Centre for Census and Surveys at Manchester University. They indicate that the patterns indicated by national and regional projections will be more pronounced in the Peak District.

- Natural ageing of the population would be exacerbated by the pattern of migration, with net out-migration in the 17-30 year age group.
- Population numbers will fall unless around 95 dwellings a year are provided.
- Although there is likely to be net in-migration of 30-59 year olds, including their children, the population will become increasing elderly under all levels of building.
- The current background level - 48 dwelling completions a year – is likely to lead to population decline and changes in the population structure: with 47% of the population aged 60 and over in 2026 and 20% aged 75 and over.
- There will be slower decline in household numbers due to increases in small households.
- There is likely to be declining population of working age under all assumptions; the most likely level of housing completions would lead to a fall of 29%. However, the working population could be affected by other factors e.g. if the population choose to work longer, then the impact would reduce.

The Outcomes of the Workshop

There was general concern about the impact of this on the future sustainability of communities. There was also felt to be a need to influence the projected pattern and to adjust the National Park Authority's and other service providers' policies to meet the needs of an increasingly elderly population.

A summary of the discussions follows.

1. Migration

Need for better migration data and improved understanding of why young people are leaving rural areas and where they are going to. Students were registered at their term-time address in 2001 but this was unlikely to account wholly for the pattern. Similar but less pronounced patterns were happening regionally. However, conurbations tend to have more youthful age structures. Are the competition from local towns, the relatively prices of homes, the

nature of the housing available, and more limited opportunities in the rural area key drivers? Further analysis of migration patterns and a household movers' survey, as was carried out by Derbyshire County Council in the 1970s, may provide some answers.

Need to do something to change the pattern of migration as mixed communities with a more balanced age structure would be beneficial for community vibrancy, service provision, the economy and sustainability.

How to do this was not resolved especially since

-Most of the net change occurs in existing housing stock that was not controlled

-Attempts to control housing choice in new stock might be illegal on grounds of age discrimination (?)

Suggested interventions to counteract the trends included increasing the stock and variety of affordable housing, providing attractive communities for business and capitalising on the area's assets.

Other factors might affect the picture in future e.g. IT/communications developments, development in surrounding areas and changing international migration patterns.

2. What might the projections mean?

Higher numbers of elderly people could reinforce the sense of community and there are examples of the contribution that they can make to community services.

There is likely to be an increased demand for public transport and adaptations to facilities and services to meet the needs of older people, including housing, health and social services. There are also likely to be increased dependency rates, and there were likely to be inequalities due to differences in incomes and access difficulties. This should affect public service provision.

Coupled with a falling population, there was concern that settlements may not be sufficiently large to sustain the services required by residents (and if that was the case, would older people leave the area?); the costs of providing support and care services would be relatively high. Because of a lack of labour supply, rural enterprise and businesses might be affected adversely.

3. What might our aims be?

Housing

- Reflect the findings of the current housing needs surveys and housing market assessments
- Provide a range of affordable housing to meet local needs (which is likely to be primarily through the public sector), including accommodation for young people, elderly people and key workers.

However, in responding to local housing needs, note that currently the demand is from the under 35 age group and there is low demand for housing for people of pensionable age

- Consider alternatives to new building - e.g. safeguard the social and smaller housing stock; investigate what can be converted
- Identify sites specifically for affordable housing for local needs
- Provide a wider range of tenures attractive to younger people e.g. shared ownership schemes
- Investigate buying back open- market housing into the social housing stock

Economy

- Adapt to wider changes in the economy e.g. new ways of working, increased career changes during a person's working life, increased home-working
- Encourage socially active communities in order to attract businesses
- Encourage indigenous employment/employers
- Encourage local employment, rural diversification and local skills
- Promote the area's assets to attract business and support local economy e.g. tourism
- Safeguard employment sites
- Provide additional housing for local workers

Retail/Health/Education Services

- Adjust services to reflect changing local needs, particularly those arising from increasing numbers of older people
- Change the way goods and services are provided eg by integrated delivery mechanisms
- Stem the loss of services
- Provide services in key settlements large enough to sustain services to reduce the need to travel and make care and support services more cost-effective
- Continue to provide education facilities and other services for young people
- Adjust to increasing IT development

Transport/Communications

- Developing more, flexible and innovative forms of public transport to meet residents' needs, particularly for young people and the elderly, who are among the largest users of public transport in rural areas e.g. local car sharing schemes, services targeted at taking customers to particular shops, facilities and services
- Provide more mobile outreach services

Population/Community Vibrancy

- Seek a more balanced structure and a diverse mix of people
- Learn from elsewhere e.g. recent EMRAF rural accessibility study
- Recognise community strengths, understand local community needs and work within the area's capacity and potential
- Motivate young people to stay in the area
- Address deprivation, particularly the gap between rich and poor, in access to services and facilities – settlement nucleation helps this

- Reduce the impact of second and holiday homes on the local community

4. Policy Responses

- Take a community development approach –listen to the local community, work with them but also challenge the belief that Authorities can and will help
- Continue to adjust policies, facilities and services to meet the requirements of an ageing population
- Use existing housing stock more flexibly to meet local needs
- Address under-occupation of housing stock e.g. with higher tax on second and holiday homes and by providing more affordable, accessible and manageable homes for elderly residents
- Provide additional affordable housing (assume private sector provision is unlikely)
- Provide a wider range of housing, including a wider range of tenures and services
- Impose local housing occupancy conditions on housing developments
- Use cross-subsidy (through Section 106 agreements) to support developments in the area
- Focus facilities, services and development within key settlements
- Encourage local employment opportunities through home- based businesses, rural diversification, and encouraging local enterprise
- Provide incentives to motivate young people to stay in the area e.g incentives reported in Amber Valley
- Provide more innovative, flexible public transport
- Provide rural premiums to support the relatively high costs of delivering services in rural areas - investigate

5. National Park Policy

- It was recognised that National Park Purposes restrict development; focus on local needs
- Reflect the close relationship of the National Park with surrounding areas, socially, economically and in terms of service provision, and the emerging community strategies affecting the area
- Joint working with other authorities to understand the linkages, the changes that are likely to occur and provide evidence to support plans
- Learn from the effectiveness of policies in other National Parks
- Housing supply: current rate of new building is likely to lead to elderly being unable to find suitable accommodation, insufficient accommodation for key workers, carers and younger people, so reconsider current policies on:
 - bungalow developments - to meet the needs of elderly people and release under-occupied housing for others to use
 - Holiday accommodation – allow its conversion to housing
 - Housing extensions – restrict them to maintain a mix of housing

- Review definition of housing need – consider under-occupation of dwellings by elderly people as constituting a housing need
- Objective of having a stable population not in the draft Regional Spatial Strategy – is it still relevant and does it need to be in core policy?
- What is the point of maintaining the population?
 - Services will not be sustainable in all settlements
 - Is there any relationship with the National Park's aim of having vibrant communities?
 - Some felt that vibrant communities do not need to be large or growing
- Others felt that there was a need to allow additional homes to be provided through conversions and to be built to maintain population at current levels (over and above the expected rate of completions, which are likely to reduce to around 48 dwellings per year as mill and barn conversions opportunities dry up)
- Allow for local employment development through rural diversification, development of home businesses and safeguarding employment land
- Adopt a key settlement policy – hard choices will be needed on which settlements will be viable.

Appendix A: Attendance

Richard Cooper	Nottinghamshire County Council
Barbara Ackrill	Derbyshire County Council
Steve Buffery	Derbyshire County Council
Derk van der Wardt	East Midlands Regional Affairs Forum
Giles Dann	Rural Action Zone
Mike Hase	Derbyshire Dales District Council
Gavin Clarke	Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
David Sparkes	Macclesfield Borough Council
Alison Clamp	Peak District Rural Housing Association
Lesley Tierney	Northern Counties Housing Association
Joanna McKendrick	Joint Strategic Housing Team for High Peak and Derbyshire Dales District Councils
Barry Foster	Peak District Affordable Housing Group
Lesley Savage	Staffordshire Moorlands Community and Voluntary Services
Linda Syson- Nibbs	Public Health Nurse Consultant
Isabel Bellamy	Derbyshire Rural Community Council
John King	Friends of the Peak District
Alan Marshall	Cathie Marsh Centre for Census and Survey Research, Manchester University
Peter Milway	DTZ Consulting and Research
Brian Taylor	Peak District National Park Authority
Peter Abbott	Peak District National Park Authority
Sonia Davies	Peak District National Park Authority
Tim Nicholson	Peak District National Park Authority
Andy Cooper	Peak District National Park Authority