

GLENDALE

HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

Housing Needs Survey Report of Glendale, Isle of Skye
by Our Island Home working on behalf of Rural Housing Scotland
August 2013



**OUR
ISLAND
HOME**

GLENDALE HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

1.0. Introduction + Context

In August 2013, housing needs studies along with reply envelopes were sent out to 130 households in the Glendale area. The surveys were relatively short; 2 pages long and consisting of two parts. The first part focused on their household and the second part, on their housing needs. The response rate was 19%.

1.1 Purpose of the Housing Study

The Glendale Housing Needs Survey was conducted by the Rural Housing Service on behalf of the Glendale Trust in August 2013. The purpose of the survey was to identify housing needs in the village to help determine whether there was a need for new affordable housing in the area and to find out what sort of housing was required.

The research will assist the Glendale Trust in driving forward their Growth Plan for the area and inform their discussions with Highland Council, local housing associations, Highlands + Islands Enterprise and the Scottish Government.

1.2. Glendale, Isle of Skye

Glendale is an 18,956 acre estate that extends from Neist Point in the West, to Loch Pooltiel in the North, to Loch Dunvegan in the East. To the South it covers vast acres of moorland, skirting the slopes of MacLeod's Tables and extending almost down to MacLeod's Maidens at Idrigill.¹

- Education

The local school, Borrodale Primary, was officially closed in 2007 following an HMI report. Children from Glendale attend primary school in Dunvegan which is approximately, a 20 minute drive away (20 mile round trip). High school pupils take a bus to Portree, the island capital 25 miles away, for their secondary education.

- Transport

Public transport is not something that is readily available in Glendale. In fact, there is only a bus service from the village during the school term when high school pupils must travel to Portree for their education. The nearest town is Dunvegan, where there is a public transport service, however, it is 10 miles from Glendale on a single-track road. From when you arrive on Skye via the bridge, Glendale is 1 ½ hour drive away.

Around 80% of households in Glendale have at least one vehicle.

¹ www.glendaleskye.com

*"Moving to Skye means also having to own and fund a car, as there is no public transport. So even our own staff house (8 miles away at Harlosh) is not ideal. We have to insist that potential applicants for jobs with us can drive and own a car. This is a huge expense, particularly for young people. The lack of housing and the cost of travel are the two most crucial obstacles to our successful recruitment."*²

- Employment

Currently, in Glendale the biggest employer is The Three Chimneys restaurant, which employs over 40 staff and uses 22 local suppliers.³ Almost every year, The Three Chimneys have several positions that they simply cannot fill due to the fact that potential employees had nowhere to stay. Some employees are already housed in a Glendale property by the restaurant.

In many rural areas, hospitality work is only seasonal and Glendale is no different. It is difficult to retain staff if they have to look elsewhere for work during the winter months.

Respondents to the community survey in May 2011 were least likely to agree with statements such as appropriate job opportunities for a) all people and b) young people. They agreed that the community catered for people of retirement age rather than those of working age.⁴

The Community Growth Plan discusses the potential community ownership of the Meanish pier, slipway and area surrounding Loch Pootiel. The regeneration of the area would help to create marine based tourism and would be a means of sustaining the local economy, creating jobs and ensuring that Glendale flourishes. The creation of jobs would give great motive for affordable social housing.

- Affordable Housing

In the Glendale Community Growth Plan of 2012, it states that numerous families have had to move out of the area due to lack of social/affordable housing. The housing needs survey has shown that 64% of respondents knew of someone who had had to leave the area due to lack of housing.

In the community survey report, it showed that many residents of Glendale did not agree that there was adequate social housing in their area. .

A recent Housing Strategy from Highland Council states that Skye, among certain other areas, has the least affordable accommodation in the region.⁵

- Living Costs

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³ Glendale Community Growth Plan, 2012

⁴ Glendale Community Survey Report, May 2011

⁵ Highland Council Housing Strategy 2010-2015

Highland and Islands Enterprise (HIE) put together the report. 'A Minimum Income Standard for Remote Rural Scotland' in 2013.. The report found that, in order for households to achieve an acceptable living standard, their budgets needed to be 10-40% than those in urban areas. Furthermore, for those living in the most remote rural or island locations, costs could be more than 40% higher.

Without public transport, living costs are more likely to be higher. Especially as local primary school children have to be transported to Dunvegan for school, where the nearest petrol station is.

1.3. Population + Area Context

Glendale is rather unique in that it is essentially, a community owned estate. In the late 1800s, a group of activists, including a group of dedicated men from Glendale, helped to bring on the passing of the Crofting Act of 1888 after unrest in highland crofting communities. The men fought for the right to the common grazing land, which they were no longer permitted to use. Eventually, in the early 1900s, the land was bought and nowadays, the land is owned by 147 individual shareholders and managed by an elected committee of 5. The land is classed as Freehold Land and therefore, it does not qualify for crofting grants. Home ownership and self-build would be a much more affordable option for families and crofters if it was possible; and would also make Glendale a more attractive place to live.

Nowadays, if the crofts are used at all, they are used as a hobby or side-line work.

Glendale is home to around 350 people and 130 households.

- **The Glendale Trust**

The Glendale Trust's objectives are the promotion for the public benefit of rural regeneration in areas of social and economic deprivation, and in particular within the area of Glendale, Isle of Skye.⁶

"The Glendale Trust (GT) has been selected as the anchor organisation by Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) to employ a Local Development Officer (LDO) to work on projects for the benefit of the Glendale area."

The trust consists of six directors.

1.4. Research Methodology

⁶ Glendale Community Growth Plan, 2012

1.4.1 Housing Needs Survey

A housing needs survey was conducted in July 2013 by postal questionnaire. Survey questionnaires were distributed to every household in the Glendale area, including Colbost which is home to The Three Chimneys restaurant. One hundred and thirty surveys were distributed by post in late July 2013. Households were given until the 16th of July to complete their form and return it using an enclosed return envelope to Rural Housing Scotland or hand it in to the Post Office in Glendale.

1.4.2 Literature Review

Previous to the Housing Needs study was conducted by Rural Housing Scotland in August 2013, the Community Growth Plan was written by Elgar Finlay, the local development officer, in October 2012. Prior to that, a community survey was completed in May 2011. This report refers to both pieces of literature as well as our own housing needs study. Some estimates have also been taken from the 2001 census.

1.4.3 Interviews

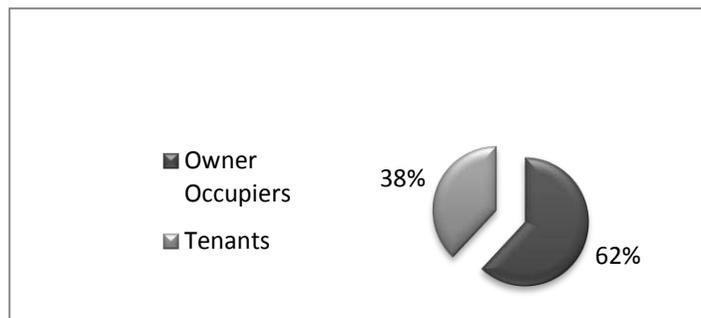
Housing surgeries were held in the village hall with Jodi MacLeod from Rural Housing Scotland and Local Development Officer, Elgar Finlay on the evening of the 15th and the morning of the 16th of August 2013.

2.0. GLENDALE HOUSING

2.1. Households + Population

2.2. Tenure

Of the 91 resident households on the island – 56 (62%) are owner occupiers and 35 (38%) are tenants.



- Rented Housing - Social

There are currently 5 social rent properties in Glendale (almost 5%). Four of the properties are owned by Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association and one is owned by Highland Council.

- Rented Housing - Private + Tied

Over 30% of households in Glendale are in private rental accommodation. 20 or more of these houses are owned by the shareholders of the Glendale Estate.⁷ 12% of respondents to our survey answered that they were in private rental accommodation. There were no comments regarding landlord-tenant relationships.

2.3. Glendale Housing Market

In 2013, there were 5 house sales within the area covered by the Glendale Trust with the price averaging at £199,700. The average house price in Scotland, however, is around £50,000 less than this. In October, according to the BBC, the average house price following 19, 939 sales was £153,102. This average is more in line with the mean house price for Highland, Glendale's local authority, where the average house price is £155,177.⁸

⁷ <http://www.caledonia.org.uk/socialland/glendale.htm>

- **House Plots**

In 2013, there were 3 plot sales in the Glendale Trust's area with the price for a plot averaging at £41,666. The highest price paid for a plot was £65,000. A cost this high for ground before beginning to build shows the expense that is associated with home owning in the area – this would not be affordable for those on low to moderate incomes.

- **Low Cost Home Ownership**

With house prices averaging at almost £200,000, they are not affordable homes. The price thresholds for purchasing property through the Open Market Shared Equity Scheme in the Highland Council - West area would rarely work in Glendale. The price threshold for a 2 bedroom house is £85,000 and for a 3 bedroom house, the price threshold for Highland – West is £105,000. At this rate, there is no scheme which could help first time buyers in the area.

What is also notable, is that all respondents to Part Two of the survey: Your Housing Needs, stated that the housing which would be most suitable to them would be 'Rented Housing' as oppose to 'Shared Ownership' or 'Owner Occupation'.

⁸ http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/spl/hi/in_depth/uk_house_prices/regions/html/region12.stm

3.0. GLENDALE HOUSING NEEDS SURVEY

3.1. Households

A total of 25 housing needs surveys were completed and returned, a poor response rate of approximately one fifth of resident households. Please note that not all respondents fully completed the surveys therefore, sometimes the numbers do not add up and match precisely with the 25 surveys received.

The households that responded comprised 4 single house holds(16%), 10 couples(40%), 1 family with dependent children(4%), 6 all-adult families(24%) 1 household which described themselves as 'other' (4%).

With such a small proportion of the Glendale population being families with dependent children, it is understandable why there is no longer a local primary school.

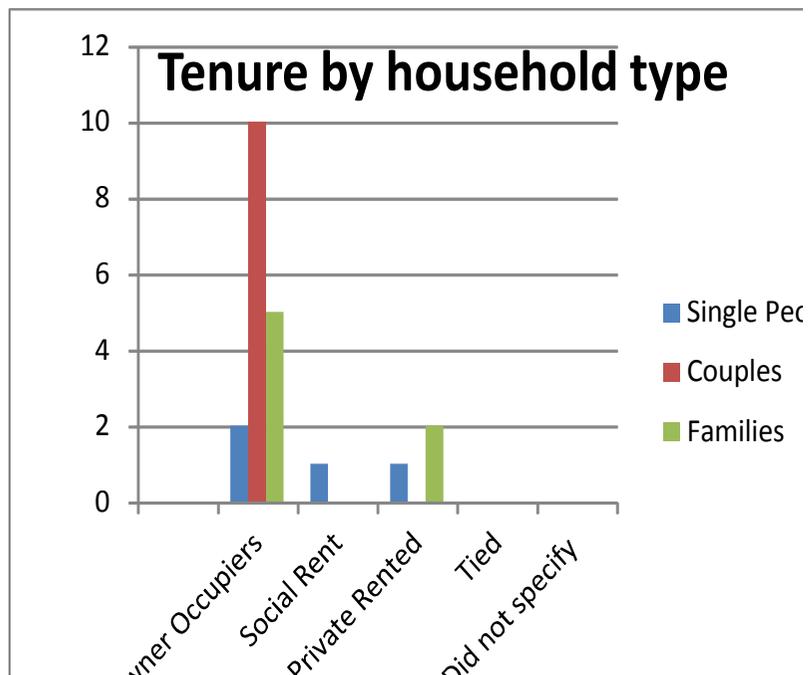
"It is too expensive for young people to live here and afford housing."

3.2. Tenure

- Tenure by Household Type

Number	Single People	Couples	Families (all-adult & with dependent children)	Other	Did not specify	Total	Age 60+
Owner Occupiers	2	10	5	1		18	13
Social Rent	1					1	
Private Rented	1		2			3	2
Tied							
Did not specify					3	3	
Total	4	10	7	1	3	25	
Age 60+		10	2	1			

The largest group of respondents were owner-occupier couples (40%) all of whom were over 60. All families but 2 that answered the survey were owner-occupiers. Two single people and two families represented the social and private rental market in the survey. From the table, we can see that the majority of respondents were over 60.



3.3. Social Rented Housing in Glendale

Only one respondent to the survey said that they rented social housing from Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association.

According to our own database comprising of stock lists from the relevant housing associations and councils, Glendale boasts just 5 social rented homes. In theory, our one social renter respondent represents a fifth of the social rented market.

3.4. Housing Need

None of the respondents were on the waiting list for council or housing association housing. However, 64% said that they knew of someone that had had to leave the area due to lack of housing and the same percentage said that there was a need for affordable housing to be developed.

According to the Highland Council SHIP, there were 505 applicants in housing need on the island as a whole.⁹

3.4.1. Private Tenants

The private tenants with housing needs comprise:

1 single person household

⁹ Highland Council Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2011-2016

2 family households (1 all-adult, 1 with dependent children)

The single person household stated that their current home was **too big**, there was **no insulation**, it was **too expensive to heat** and they were **unable to maintain the garden**. They also revealed that they need **to be closer to family** and that they **have health/mobility problems**.

The family household with dependent children revealed that their current private rental home was unsuitable due **to disrepair, poor heating, no insulation** and that it was **too expensive to heat**.

"No shower fitted, very old, old heating system, not current, up-to-date, needs major cash injection which is very unlikely".

The final private tenants, a couple, did not complete Part Two of the survey therefore do not see themselves as having housing need.

- **Housing Preference (Private Tenants)**

While the couple household had no housing need, the other two households in private rented housing stated that they are both in need of affordable rented housing. The family would require a 2 bedroom property and the single person would require a 1 bedroom rented property. They could afford to pay £300-400 per month in rent whereas the family could afford £500-600 per month.

3.4.2. Social Housing

Only one respondent to the survey lived in social rented housing as already stated in this report. They rented from Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association. According to our database, there are 5 council/housing association homes in Glendale.

This respondent knew of people that had had to leave the area due to lack of housing and that they saw a need for affordable housing from a housing association to be developed in the Glendale area.

Their current rented home has **poor heating; it is too big and too expensive to heat**. It will become more unsuitable if bedroom tax is passed.

- **Housing Preferences (Social Tenants)**

The one social tenant that responded to the survey would require a one bedroom property. An affordable rent for this respondent would be up to £300 per month.

Generally, a quarter of respondents to the Glendale Community Survey disagreed that there was adequate social housing in the area.¹⁰

¹⁰ Glendale Community Survey Report, May 2011

3.4.3 Owner Occupier

Most Glendale residents are in owner occupation; 56 out of 91 households own their own home. 18 out of the 25 households that responded to our survey were in owner occupation (72%).

The most negative response to affordable housing development in the area came from couples in owner occupation.

Facts that can be drawn from the respondents in owner-occupation:

- Only one of the properties in owner-occupation was a 1 bedroom property.
- 60% knew of someone that has had to leave the area due to lack of housing
- 65% saw a need for affordable housing development in Glendale
- 65% of owner-occupier respondents were over 60 years of age

COMMENTS FROM THOSE IN OWNER OCCUPATION

"Housing is required to attract young people and families".

"It's too expensive for young people to live here and afford housing. Rented accommodation or shared equity. There are no kids".

"Affordable 1, 2 and 3 bedroom houses for families and workers".

"1 bedroom housing for single people".

3.4.4 Overall

The overall views expressed by respondents to the survey are therefore:

- Rental housing is required
- There is a need in the area for 1 bedroom houses for single people and perhaps a care home for the elderly
- There is no housing for young families in the area

4.0 GENERAL VIEWS

The survey left room for respondents to express their views on the housing needs in Glendale and the type of development required.

Statements made included:

- **Supporting further housing development**

"1 bed housing for single people needed."

"Affordable 1 bedroom houses (rental) and homes for young families."

"We are aware of young families needing homes in the area, which are currently not available at an affordable rent."

"Small cheap houses for first time buyers, cheap affordable houses to rent for couples and families."

"Glendale tends to cater mostly for retired people coming in- so make more accommodation for elderly people."

"Affordable 1, 2, &3 bedroom houses for families and workers."

"We are a business and have lost staff, as they were unable to source affordable accommodation locally. Range of housing required."

"Small family 2/3 bedroom houses and 1 bedroom houses for single people."

"There are little or no options for renting houses in Glendale. I am glad something is being done to highlight the need for housing developments in Glendale."

- **Statements against development**

"Enough empty houses already whereby suitable accommodation could be negotiated. For example, Three Chimneys renting 13 Upper Milovaig for staff."

"Before housing needs, surely suitable work needs to be available. O hour contracts (seasonal) are no basis for house buying/renting."

"No point in building affordable housing unless there are jobs to be had- and transport. The only people who would benefit at the moment are people on benefits."

"What is the point of providing affordable housing in an area with no jobs or public transport?"

- **The Three Chimneys on Affordable Housing**

We asked the biggest employer in the area, The Three Chimneys, for an observation on potential affordable housing from their point of view.

"Local housing has not always been a problem, but the demographic of the whole area has changed beyond recognition from what it was in the 80s and 90s. The fact that there are less young people growing up in the immediate area and more retired people settling in the area also bears a direct effect upon the availability of local people to work at The Three Chimneys. Local families already have secure homes and housing is not an issue for them. The more people we bring to Skye to work, the more housing we require.

I have constantly worked towards helping new staff who come to live in Skye in order to further their careers at The Three Chimneys, to find suitable housing. The Company has acquired a house for staff to live in and also, has rented additional accommodation for staff members at different times over the years. It is a constant difficulty for the business and reflects upon our ability to recruit and retain staff, without a single doubt.

I am unsure about the direct benefits to The Three Chimneys of the future of affordable housing for buying or renting in the immediate area. Any potential staff will always need to compete with others who already live and work in the area... Unless the Company was able to hold a permanent lease on the housing available, then we have no control over who is able to live in it. It would not necessarily solve any problems for us.

One of the greatest difficulties is that older property is increasingly rented as self-catering holiday accommodation. " **Shirley Spear, Owner/Director of The Three Chimneys and The House Over-By**

5.0 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Housing Need

The survey has highlighted need for social rented housing in Glendale. The majority of those in favour of housing development believe there is a need for affordable rental accommodation, particularly one bedroom accommodation.

The need to attract young families and to retain them in the area was highlighted and it should be mentioned that, with 32% of respondents stating that elderly/disabled housing is required and comments supporting it, a care home or sheltered housing options should also be looked into.

6.0 Recommendations

6.1. Housing for Rent

There is a need for the development of **affordable rented housing** in Glendale

From the 'statements in favour of development', we can see that the residents of Glendale clearly see a need for small affordable rental homes to be built in the area. There is significant need and recommendation from the respondents for 1 bedroom homes to cater for single people but there it is also necessary to develop in order to **retain** and **attract** families to an area that has an ageing population

Around 3/5 of respondents said they knew of someone who has had to leave the area due to lack of housing supports this argument

6.2 Croft House Grant Scheme (CHGS)

This particular grant scheme was designed to maintain the population of the Highlands and Islands. The grant is available for crofting tenants or for crofters who have owned their land for 7 years or less for new builds or for rebuilds and improvements.¹¹ However, the individual crofts which make up the Glendale Estate are described as 'Freehold Land' meaning they do not qualify for the grant scheme thus making it difficult for those who could potentially have utilized self-build as an option.

28% of survey respondents' suggested that affordable plots for self-build/crofts were needed in the area.

6.3 Care Home and Retirement Housing

The report has concluded that housing for the elderly is required. This type of housing would call for staff i.e. nurses and carers which would in turn create jobs and then generate a need for suitable accommodation in the area. 7 out of the 25 respondents stated that they see a need for Elderly/Disabled housing while the highest number

Glendale is not the only village with an ageing population, there is a need nationwide for retirement housing. It is estimated that the UK needs to build around 250,000 homes per year to cope with the population growth.¹²

6.3 Micro Crofts

The Local Development Officer is working on plans for 'micro crofts' in the Glendale area whereby people could rent their house on which essentially comes with a small piece of crofting land for the tenant. This ties in with the tradition of crofting in a Highland settlement; tenants renting their home would be able to run their croft in conjunction with their full or part-time work or as a sideline hobby.

6.4 Further analysis

One respondent suggested that the scope of the questionnaire should be expanded to include the Dunvegan area where the children attend primary school. Considering those outside of Glendale would give more detail relating to numbers of families or people on the waiting list for social housing and those that wish to move or return to Glendale.

¹¹ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/farmingrural/Agriculture/grants/BDandM/CHGS>

¹² www.theguardian.com

As the response rate to the August 2013 survey was quite low, it is recommended that residents should be encouraged to either speak to RHS or the LDO by means of another housing needs surgery or a follow-up survey is completed. The question is,; is Glendale looking to expand on existing housing supply or is Glendale looking to regenerate the area by means of providing affordable accommodation ?