



The Scottish  
Government

# Mapping The Third Sector in Rural Scotland: An Initial Review of the Literature

Voluntary Issues



**MAPPING THE THIRD SECTOR IN RURAL  
SCOTLAND: AN INITIAL REVIEW OF THE  
LITERATURE.**

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# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Context

- 1.1 This review has been undertaken in response to recent Scottish Government research which found that there is a pronounced knowledge gap surrounding the nature and extent of the third sector in rural Scotland.
- 1.2 This gap is particularly significant given ongoing public service reform which sees an ever greater role for individuals, communities and the third sector. It is therefore important to understand the contribution that the third sector (often supported by volunteers) are already making to the delivery of public services and the wellbeing of communities, to ensure that initiatives requiring further involvement are realistic and sustainable. It is also important to understand the likely impact of social and economic pressures on the third sector, and the activities that it undertakes.
- 1.3 This review is undertaken as an initial scoping of the extent of existing research on the nature and extent of the third sector in rural Scotland.
- 1.4 Specifically, the review aims to:
  - Identify and review existing qualitative and quantitative research undertaken which can help inform our understanding of the nature and extent of volunteering and the third sector in rural Scotland, in particular with reference to public service delivery.
  - Identify how far research suggests a distinct nature of volunteering and the third sector in rural Scotland, as distinct to more urban areas.
  - Identify key research gaps in our understanding of volunteering and the third sector in rural Scotland.

## Method

- 1.5 This review employs a large scale literature review in conjunction with the direct contact of key informants across Scotland and the UK more widely to ensure a comprehensive coverage of available research.
- 1.6 This review has been undertaken in the course of a three month internship with the Scottish Government. Given these constraints of time and resources it is intended as an initial scoping of key themes emerging from available literature and acts as a starting point for further research.

## Summary of findings

### ***Scotland's rural population: volunteering***

- 1.7 Whilst a great deal of volunteering is undertaken through and for other sectors, the reliance upon volunteers is a particularly significant characteristic of the third sector.
- 1.8 'Formal volunteering' generally refers to unpaid work undertaken through an organisation, group or club to help other people or to help a cause (such as improving the environment). In contrast, 'informal volunteering' refers to unpaid help given as an individual directly to people who are not relatives.
- 1.9 Scotland-wide surveys suggest that rates of formal volunteering generally increase with degree of rurality, and have done so consistently over time. This appears true even when controlling for individual factors such as income and education levels. However it is more challenging to identify how far *what* is done by volunteers in urban compared to rural areas is distinct, owing to low sample sizes.
- 1.10 Whilst it has been suggested on the basis of these surveys that there is no significant difference in terms of either the number of hours volunteered or the frequency of volunteering between urban and rural areas, it is not possible to assess whether there is variation in the number of organisations individuals volunteer for.
- 1.11 Smaller-scale research suggests that the formal volunteering of those in rural Scotland may be particularly 'broad' in nature, across a large number of organisations but for less time in each organisation compared to those in urban areas, whose profile of volunteering may be particularly 'deep': volunteering with fewer organisations but devoting a greater amount of time to each one.
- 1.12 Research suggests that those volunteers in rural areas may often be engaged in activity which may substitute the delivery of services, rather than or as well as activity which is 'additional'.

### ***Comparing the urban and rural third sector in Scotland***

- 1.13 Definition of the third sector is contested. It is often characterised as being composed of organisations that are formally organised, non-profit distributing, constitutionally independent from the state, self-governing and benefitting from some form of voluntarism.
- 1.14 Literature tends to argue there may be a distinct role for the third sector in rural areas in the provision of services given the distinct socio-economic and spatial characteristics of more rural areas.

- 1.15 In Scotland, it appears there are a higher number, per head, of charities in a number of rural LAs compared to urban areas.
- 1.16 Whilst this may begin to suggest a distinct character to the third sector in rural Scotland, further analysis of this data is required to identify more systematically what is done by charities in rural compared to urban areas. This would help identify, for example, how far the activities of charities in rural Scotland are additional or substitutional, and the implications this may have for public service delivery.

### ***The Scottish rural third sector: key areas of evidence***

- 1.17 There appear to be imbalances in rural third sector research quantity and quality. Particular foci include certain components (for example the 'regulated' sector, social enterprises) and certain geographical areas within Scotland (the Highlands and Islands). There also appear to be pronounced gaps in research regarding certain aspects of the third sector, for example direct urban/rural comparisons are very rarely made, and most research appears to focus on smaller scale case studies, generally at the local level. Information at larger scales appears lacking.
- 1.18 Thematically, there are several areas which appear to have drawn the most attention in terms of literature:
- 1.19 Infrastructure – including housing, fuel, health and communications – has been highlighted as a particular challenge for the population of rural Scotland. Case studies across rural Scotland have shown the third sector to have a strong role in addressing these concerns, in particular with regards to populations at a greater risk of social exclusion, such as older people.
- 1.20 Rural community facilities – such as village halls - have been shown to play a particularly strong role in rural areas, and in the overwhelming number of cases to be owned by the local community. They provide sites of social capital development, employment, voluntary activity and existing (and potential) sites of multi-service delivery.
- 1.21 It is impossible within the remit of this study to establish the extent to which there is a commonality of third sector activity in rural areas in comparison with more urban areas. It is also challenging to draw a causal link directly between rurality and the nature and extent of activity undertaken. There are however a wealth of case studies demonstrating the role of third sector activity in the fields of community energy projects, the provision of community owned and run services (including shops/post offices, gyms, transport, care homes), community land purchase and community woodlands delivered by organisations identifying themselves variously as development trusts, community interest companies, social enterprises, charities and/or voluntary organisations.

### ***The third sector in rural Scotland: the economic downturn***

- 1.22 Literature discussing the impact of the economic downturn on the third sector generally appears to suggest that the effects are likely to be unevenly felt across the sector.
- 1.23 Research suggests likely consequences of the economic downturn may include an increased demand for the services of third sector organisations, subsequent increasing demands on resources (financial, paid workers and volunteers) and an increased amount of competition for resources.
- 1.24 However the ways in which the organisations which compose the third sector have been influenced appears to vary by size and sphere of activity, with conflicting evidence regarding both of these components. Both the proportion of adults giving and the overall value of donations appear to be recovering in the UK post 2008/9.
- 1.25 The implications of reduced public sector budgets within Scotland and across the UK more widely have also been forecast to impact upon the third sector.
- 1.26 Research undertaken in the Scottish context presents a similarly mixed picture of challenges, uncertainty and opportunity.
- 1.27 Research assessing the impact of the economic downturn on the rural third sector - within or outwith Scotland – is lacking. However it has been suggested that the added resource requirements of operating in rural areas may exacerbate the impact of the economic downturn on the third sector in rural areas.

### **Conclusions**

- 1.28 This review should be treated as a starting point in the exploration of the third sector landscape in rural Scotland.
- 1.29 The research reviewed suggests that higher rates of volunteering are undertaken in more rural areas of Scotland, and that this volunteering may be particularly distinct in nature given the challenging service delivery landscape. Therefore, whilst high rates of formal volunteering in rural areas of Scotland may be a positive social indicator, attention may also need to be given to the motivations and nature of such activity to ensure any additional participation as a result of public service reform is sustainable.
- 1.30 The research shows that the number of registered charities would appear to be higher – per head of population – in a number of rural local authorities compared to urban local authorities. Whilst this may suggest that there is a greater presence of the third sector in more rural areas, little work has been undertaken to identify the roles of these charities, and whether there may also be a

substitutional/additional distinction between urban and rural areas to better inform understandings of their role in the delivery of services (or more generally).

- 1.31 This review also suggests that there is very limited existing research on which to draw conclusions regarding the impact of the economic downturn on the Scottish rural third sector.
- 1.32 It also identifies many gaps in research which need to be addressed if we are to more fully depict the current landscape of volunteering and third sector activity in rural Scotland, and the implications of public service reform for this.

### **Research gaps and future agendas.**

- 1.33 Research differentiating between urban and rural areas in Scotland in terms of the *function* of rural third sector organisations appears lacking. In addition, little research appears to exist regarding the number and value of third sector contracts and service delivery agreements with Local Government by rurality.
- 1.34 Therefore there appears a need for further work, sensitive to potential spatial variations in the volunteering and third sector landscape, to be carried out. This has the potential to include comparison between accessible rural and remote rural contexts, a more in-depth exploration of the nature and extent of volunteering and third sector activity specifically within rural areas, and between urban and rural contexts. This may allow the identification of how far spatially sensitive volunteering, third sector and public service reform governance may be appropriate.
- 1.35 Whilst rurality appears to increase the rates of voluntary activity reported, it is more difficult to robustly gauge how the *activities* of volunteers may vary. This could be beneficial as it would allow for the validation of a small body of work which suggests that the drivers for such activity may be more substitutional than additional in rural areas, which in turn may have implications for the sustainability of such participation in service delivery.
- 1.36 Research and literature with regard to rural Scotland appears particularly focussed on the Highlands and Islands. Case study evidence suggests that there is a great deal of third sector and rural community development activity undertaken elsewhere in rural Scotland and in order to obtain a well rounded picture of the rural third sector a greater amount of attention might be given to these areas.
- 1.37 Overall, in order to move beyond a case study approach to identifying the contribution of the third sector in rural areas of Scotland, a more comparable (in terms of data), coherent (in terms of scale) and joined up (in terms of subsectors) approach to researching the voluntary sector might be helpful.

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## 2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This review has been undertaken in response to recent Scottish Government research which found that there is a pronounced knowledge gap surrounding the nature and extent of the third sector in rural Scotland (Dachombe and Bach 2009).
- 2.2 This introductory chapter sets out the key aims of the review, the rationale, and the broader policy context within which this review takes place.
- 2.3 The aims of the review are to:
- Identify and review existing qualitative and quantitative research undertaken which can help inform our understanding of the nature and extent of volunteering and the third sector in rural Scotland, in particular with reference to public service delivery.
  - Identify how far research suggests a distinct nature of volunteering and the third sector in rural Scotland, relative to more urban areas.
  - Identify key research gaps in our understanding of volunteering and the third sector in rural Scotland.

### Rationale

- 2.4 This report builds on the work of Dachombe and Bach (2009) which examined the ‘evidence base for third sector policy in Scotland’. They find a “formidable amount of material that references the third sector in Scotland” in terms of scholarly, ‘grey’ and public sector research (ibid: 11). Findings are grouped around the five ‘strategic objectives’ of the Scottish Government: wealthier and fairer, smarter, healthier, safer and stronger, and greener. The strength of the literature and the proportion from each source of relevance to each objective was found to vary.
- 2.5 Overarching gaps were identified across the objectives (ibid: 2). One such example is that of the rural third sector. Although there were “strong themes” (ibid: 1) running through the literature with evidence relating to the third sector and its impact in Scotland often cutting across a number of the strategic objectives, this knowledge was inconsistent. To take the example of the ‘wealthier and fairer’ objective, it was suggested that: “...there is a clear discrepancy between the attention spent on the economic contribution in more populous, urban areas and in rural areas of the country... with the economics of the third sector in rural Scotland largely absent” (ibid: 29).
- 2.6 Dachombe and Bach argue that *relative* to research concerned with the third sector in more urban areas, given that: “Rural Scotland suffers from a number of unique social problems related to inequality... the evidence relating to the impact

of the rural third sector that is relevant to this (or indeed any) strategic objective was largely less extensive than the work dealing with the sector as a whole” (ibid: 30).

- 2.7 This is a finding supported by the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO 2003a), who find that “research into the voluntary sector’s rural dimension... is particularly weak”. Yet Hall and Skerratt (2010: 47) argue that “the work of the voluntary sector, in all its guises, is essential to the sustainability and resilience of rural communities”.
- 2.8 This is not to say, however, that residents of rural communities should be seen as passive recipients of third sector support. The more accessible parts of rural Scotland are in fact experiencing “rapid population growth” (Thomson 2010: 9-10, on the basis of GROS (2010) data) whilst members of rural communities in Scotland appear to exhibit higher levels of formal voluntary activity than those living in more urban areas (Scottish Government 2011c: 17) and consistently so. Therefore rural patterns of volunteering, and perhaps the third sector more generally, may be particularly dynamic.
- 2.9 In light of the findings of Dachombe and Bach, the Scottish Government are keen to identify additional sources of literature to better understand the nature of the third sector in rural areas.

### **Broader policy context**

- 2.10 There is a long history of the changing relationship between the state and the third sector<sup>1</sup>, with the third sector playing an increasingly central role in the provision of public services<sup>2</sup> and receiving an increasing amount of its annual income from statutory sources across the UK (Clark et al. 2009), a pattern borne out in Scotland (SCVO 2010).
- 2.11 In Scotland, in 2005, the then Scottish Executive set out a ‘vision for the voluntary sector’ which highlighted four areas in particular which would be supported: 1) the third sector as a service delivery partner; 2) the contribution of the third sector to building communities; 3) the role of the third sector in advocacy and developing policy thinking and 4) as an agent of change (Scottish Executive 2005a). In the “Enterprising Third Sector Action Plan 2008 - 2011” (Scottish Government 2008a), there appears a movement towards a more market oriented, service provision role:

*“The challenge to the third sector is to make the most of the opportunities that this presents. Firstly, to operate professionally, identifying markets or opportunities – for many organisations this will involve developing*

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<sup>1</sup> See for example Macmillan (2010); Harris and Rochester (2001)

<sup>2</sup> For particularly recent data suggesting this is the case in England, see IpsosMORI (2011).

*products and then competing for, and winning, contracts. Secondly, to demonstrate the unique contribution that the third sector provides. Thirdly, to develop better third sector organisations contributing to increased sustainable economic growth and a more successful country". (Scottish Government 2008a: 3)"*

- 2.12 The Scottish Government (2011b, e and f) continues to see the third sector as playing a key role in Scotland's economic development and in contributing to the public service reform agenda. Further partnership working with the third sector and the continued development of an enterprising third sector remain strong focuses of ongoing policy. In the Government Economic Strategy (2011f) volunteering is positioned as a means of delivering services, strengthening communities and building skills and employability.
- 2.13 Across the UK and within Scotland the third sector and voluntary activity have received an increasing amount of attention. In England and Wales 'Big Society' discourse entails a combination of social action, public service reform and community empowerment (Cameron 2010), the discourse of which "includes a strong focus on the delivery of public services by the formal and funded voluntary sector but also in terms of communities, more informal third sector activities and individual citizens" (McCabe 2011: 1). Within Scotland, the Christie Commission on the future of the delivery of public services in Scotland (Christie 2011) envisages a more central role for communities and the third sector in shaping and delivering services.
- 2.14 There are some tensions inherent in this, however. In the context of public service provision in rural Scotland EKOS (2009: 4) find on the basis of a literature review, national level consultations and local workshops that "rural areas have been exposed to significant centralisation of public and voluntary sector services. This has meant the loss of vital services (such as hospitals and schools) to locations a considerable distance away".
- 2.15 Further, Burt and Taylor (2009: 88) highlight that "being seen by service users to be independent of government is perceived to be important in engendering their trust in the organisation". One of the key strengths of the third sector is accessing those members of the population who may be less likely to engage with more formal services. Indeed this independence is seen to be of "pivotal importance".
- 2.16 Maintaining "independence" can be seen as challenging, and although it is not possible to review the range of discussions in the limited space available here, there exists a well developed body of literature which critically reflects on the relationship between, and positioning of, third sector organisations in relation to the state<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> See for example: Harrow (2009a, 2009b); Whittam (2009); Vincent and Harrow (2005); Fyfe (2005); Fyfe and Milligan (2003a, 2003b); Milligan and Conradson (2006); Harris and Rochester (2001)

- 2.17 In summary, the third sector has become increasingly high profile both across the UK and within Scotland. Some suggest there have been ever closer relationships forming between the third sector and the state, a process which appears to have accelerated significantly in recent times in light of economic and political conditions. This presents challenges and opportunities to the third sector.
- 2.18 Therefore, mapping the third sector in rural Scotland is important in understanding the contributions that the third sector and volunteers are already making to the delivery of services and the wellbeing of communities, the implications of an increased role for the third sector and communities in the public service provisioning process and the potential impacts of reduced public sector budgets on the abilities of third sector organisations to do this.

### **Structure of the report**

- 2.19 Chapter three outlines the approach taken to identifying relevant literature, and includes discussion of the ways in which ‘third sector’, ‘volunteering’ and ‘rural’ have been understood in this context.
- 2.20 Chapter four offers some brief demographic context regarding rural Scotland. It then goes on to identify the higher rates of formal volunteering in rural Scotland (as opposed to urban areas) and also its potentially distinct character. Chapter five continues the review of existing research and demonstrates the greater number of registered charities in rural compared to urban Scotland, whilst chapter six examines how far existing research suggests the third sector in rural Scotland is distinct in its roles compared to urban Scotland.
- 2.21 Chapter seven briefly reviews how far it can be said that the economic downturn has impacted on the rural third sector, whilst chapter eight concludes by drawing out the key themes of the review.

### **Summary**

- 2.22 This literature review aims to explore in more detail an apparent gap in our knowledge identified by previous Scottish Government research: the nature and extent of the third sector in rural Scotland.
- 2.23 The relationship between the state and the third sector is not new, however it could be argued that in light of current political and economic discourses it has received an increase in attention. This also requires an accompanying appreciation of the role of the individual volunteer in contributing to such activity.
- 2.24 This review therefore explores literature concerned with both volunteers in rural areas and the third sector, as well as examining what current research might be able to tell us about the implications of the economic downturn on such activity in the context of public service reform.

### 3 METHODOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 This chapter first discusses the approach taken to identifying existing literature and research. It then outlines the ways in which ‘third sector’ and ‘rural Scotland’ have been understood in the context of this review.

#### Review framework

- 3.2 This review employs: (i) wide-ranging literature review and (ii) the direct contact of a range of key informants across Scotland and the UK more widely.
- 3.3 Strand (i) includes the review of published literature within the UK, including books, journal articles and grey literature such as government reports and conference proceedings. It also includes research currently being undertaken (see appendix one for full details of academic and non-academic databases consulted). It did not impose restrictions in terms of date of publication.
- 3.4 Strand (ii) entailed contact with academic and non-academic stakeholders in the Scottish (and UK) third sector in order to better ensure comprehensive and accurate review. Informal interviews and/or email feedback identified further literature, ongoing research or specific case study examples which may be relevant.
- 3.5 Over fifty responses – via email and telephone – were received across the sector: 25 from academic sectors (including research groups and institutes) and 32 from outwith academia (including umbrella organisations/representative bodies in both England/Wales/Northern Ireland and those working in a specifically Scottish context, at the national, regional and local scales).
- 3.6 Where possible this review also draws on existing analysis of quantitative data to further enhance our understanding of the third sector in rural Scotland. A recent Economic and Social Data Service (ESDS 2010) report provides a helpful review of the principal national datasets of use to government in Scotland under the broad themes of i) employment and the labour market, ii) health, iii) crime, iv) identity and social capital and v) demography. The Scottish Household Survey and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) Scottish Charities Database are particularly useful here.
- 3.7 It is important to note that a review of literature and data available does *not* necessarily constitute a review of the key roles of the third sector in rural areas, rather it is of those areas about which there appears significant research/data collected. This review may therefore reflect the current priorities of stakeholders, as much as or more than the roles that are most characteristic of the third sector.

3.8 It should also be noted that this review was written as part of a broader internship programme, three months in duration. The review therefore was undertaken within the context of time and resource constraints<sup>4</sup>.

### **Defining the third sector**

3.9 Definition of the third sector is notoriously challenging<sup>5</sup> and a product of particular moments in time. It is also often used “almost interchangeably” with the terms “voluntary sector” and “social economy” (Rutherford nd), making definition of the sector more challenging still.

3.10 The definition employed by Salamon and Anheier (1997) is understood to be “almost a default for academic studies of the third sector” by Dacombe and Bach (2009: 17) and can be summarised as organisations which are: formally organised, nonprofit distributing, constitutionally independent from the state, self-governing and benefiting from some form of voluntarism.

3.11 The Scottish Government place the sector as being distinct from those in public or private spheres: “made up of a rich diversity of organisations with different legal forms and structures leading to some confusion about how the sector should be defined”. (Scottish Executive (2005a: 4). It is understood as “comprising social enterprises, voluntary organisations, co-operatives and mutuals” (Scottish Government 2011g).

3.12 SCVO (2009) state that the third sector is ‘non-profit driven, non-statutory, autonomous and those individuals who run the boards of [these] organisations do not get paid for doing so’. They also go on to diagrammatically represent the diversity of the sector with examples:

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<sup>4</sup> Given greater time and resources, this research would have benefitted from: a greater engagement at Local Authority level to identify existing knowledge; a stronger engagement with community development agendas; discussion with and analysis of grant making trusts and funders; direct engagement with large third sector service providers themselves; in-depth review and primary analysis of existing quantitative datasets; and the direct inclusion of the feedback from interviewees and respondents.

<sup>5</sup> See for example Alcock (2010); Dacombe and Bach (2009: 17); Grotz (2009); Halfpenny and Reid (2002); Vincent and Harrow (2005: 376).

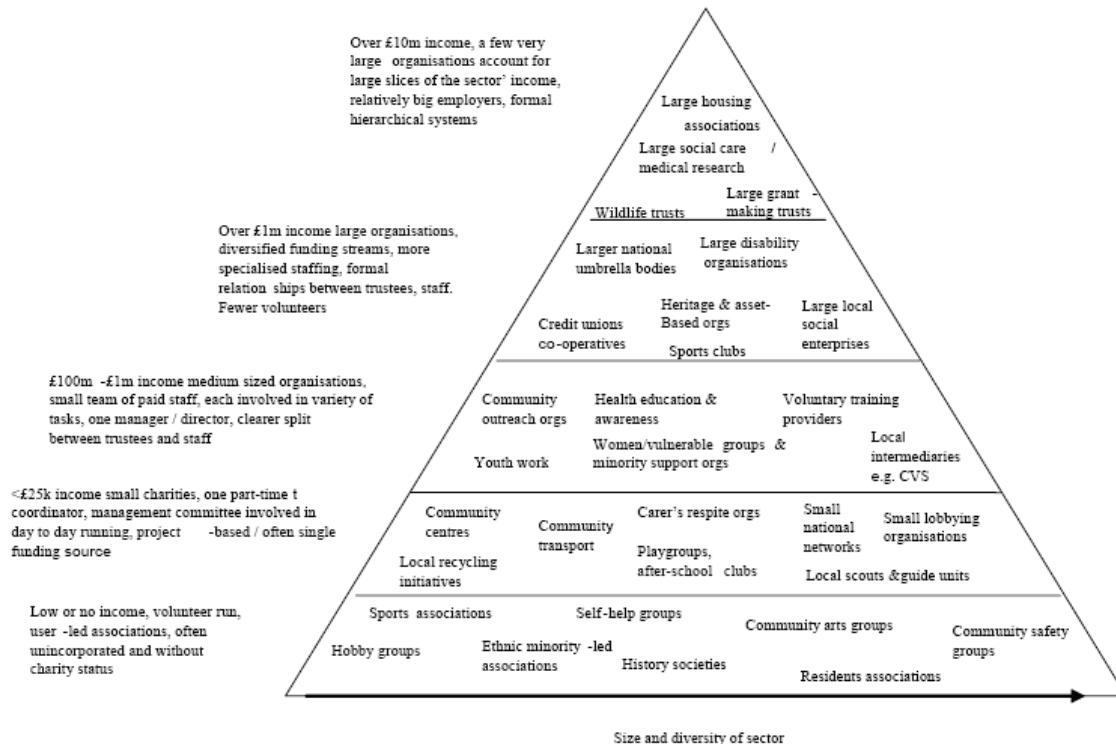


Figure 3.1: 'Diversity of the sector' (SCVO 2009)-reproduced with SCVO's permission..

- 3.13 The place of social enterprises<sup>6</sup> in the definition of the third sector is sometimes debated. For the Scottish Government they are central in achieving an 'enterprising third sector' (Scottish Government 2008a). However Sepulveda (2009) identifies three broad views regarding the place of social enterprises in relation to the sector, 1) as 'outsiders' to the sector – conventional profit driven businesses despite social goals, 2) as the 'missing link' between traditional organisations and markets, playing a role in the voluntary and third sectors or 3) as 'potent organisational devices to address social needs and problems' in a financially sustainable and businesslike way.
- 3.14 Employing the SCVO definition, the sector is composed of 1.2 million volunteers and 137,000 professional paid staff whilst the sector has an annual income of £4.4 billion (SCVO 2011a). Of the approximately 45,000 voluntary organisations in Scotland (SCVO 2010), a subset of around 23,000 are registered charities (Axiom 2010, reviewing OSCR data), with approximately two thirds of these being grassroots groups with incomes below £25,000 (SCVO 2010: 3).
- 3.15 SCVO (2010) report that the largest spheres of activity of the third sector are those of social care and development (44% of organisations); economic development (19%); culture and recreation (16%) and healthcare (6%). In terms

<sup>6</sup> Businesses driven by a social or environmental purpose, with the profits that they make reinvested into that purpose.

of income and in common with the UK more generally (Clark et al 2009: 23) the Scottish third sector has a very unequal distribution with the largest organisations (those with incomes of over £1 million per annum constituting 4% of the sector) receiving 78% of the income, whilst the smallest 65% (under £25 000 income per annum) of regulated voluntary sector organisations in Scotland receive 2% of total income (SCVO 2010: 3).

- 3.16 Overall, the range of third sector definitions available is overwhelming, and it is not the purpose of this review to contribute further to this diversity. Dachombe and Bach (2009: 18) adopted a definitional approach “not based on a particular, rigid approach” and whilst this report will build on the evidence presented by the authors to examine the rural context of the third sector more deeply, it too will not take a rigid approach to definition.
- 3.17 This review will remain sensitive to the range of activities which may, according to the definitions reviewed, constitute the ‘third sector’. It will use these criteria to review existing literature and identify those areas of the third sector in rural Scotland around which there appears most information, in discussion with individuals and organisations composing the sector.

### **Defining volunteering**

- 3.18 In the Volunteering Strategy 2004 - 2009, the Scottish Executive define volunteering as “the giving of time and energy through a third party, which can bring measurable benefits to the volunteer, individual beneficiaries, groups and organisations, communities, the environment and society at large. It is a choice undertaken of one’s own free will, and is not motivated primarily for financial gain, or for a wage or salary” (Scottish Executive 2004c: 7). This definition broadly encompasses ‘formal volunteering’ as opposed to ‘informal volunteering’ which is “unpaid help given as an individual directly to people who are not relatives” (Scottish Government 2011d: 116).
- 3.19 Volunteer Development Scotland (VDS) also distinguish between ‘formal volunteering’ (“Volunteering undertaken through an organisation, group or club to help others”) and ‘informal volunteering’ (“volunteering undertaken as an individual to help others”) (VDS 2007: 6). Both the definitions of the Scottish Government and VDS draw on the UN definition of volunteering developed as part of the 2001 International Year of Volunteers (United Nations: 2001).
- 3.20 In Scotland, rates of formal volunteering (at least once in the last 12 months) have been measured by the Scottish Household Survey and have fluctuated between 20% and 26% between 1999 and 2006, before increasing to between 28% and 31% between 2007 and 2010, with the most recent data suggesting the rate is 30%<sup>7</sup>. Informal volunteering has been measured by VDS in Scotland,

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<sup>7</sup> Scottish Government (2011d; 2010b; 2009b; 2008b); Scottish Executive (2007; 2006b; 2005c; 2004b; 2003; 2002; 2001).

using a smaller sample size, between 2003 and 2006. They report that rates declined from 81% in 2003 to 74% in 2006<sup>8</sup>.

- 3.21 It is important to note that whilst much formal volunteering is undertaken within third sector organisations, these are not the only organisations within and through which formal volunteering can take place. Volunteer Development Scotland (2004b) identify that in 2003 76% of their sample of volunteers in Scotland volunteered through voluntary/charity/community/churches/religious organisations, whilst 25% volunteered in the private sector, 4% through their place of work, and 6% through other means (with some volunteering for more than one organisation, giving an overall percentage greater than 100%).
- 3.22 In the English context, Ellis Paine et al. (2007) summarise comprehensively the state of research regarding the contribution of volunteering to government policy agendas, finding a wide range of research supporting the personal and societal benefits of voluntary action. These were grouped around “development” (economic and sustainable); “communities” (safer and stronger); “social inclusion” (economic support and social support); “quality of life” (contentment and satisfaction, mental and physical health) and lifelong learning (skills development; achievements for education)<sup>9</sup>.
- 3.23 There are therefore well-established benefits to the individual and to wider society of formal voluntary activity, which have been engaged with by policy makers across the UK and within Scotland.
- 3.24 This review remains sensitive to data collected within the UK exploring both formal and informal volunteering in more rural areas, and whilst volunteering may be particularly characteristic of the third sector, it should be noted that much voluntary activity is undertaken in other sectors.

### **Defining rural Scotland**

- 3.25 Blackstock (2008), in reflecting on trends and developments in rural research, notes:

*Whether rural is a ‘useful’ scientific category is still debated, and there is a divide between researchers who see rural areas as a container for processes of interest (such as health, economic development) and those who are interested in the discursive construction of rurality itself.... (Blackstock 2008: 4).*

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<sup>8</sup> See Volunteer Development Scotland (2007; 2006; 2005; 2004a).

<sup>9</sup> Further wide-ranging reviews include those of Rochester (2006) and Brodie et al. (2009).

- 3.26 It is outwith the remit of this study to review the construction of ‘rural’: how the experience and understanding of rural spaces and places might vary depending on multiple factors including socio-economic, geographic, demographic and cultural backgrounds. However it is important to recognise the term is contested.
- 3.27 The Scottish Government ‘Urban-Rural Classification 2009 - 2010 systematically categorises areas at datazone (slightly larger than postcode area) level employing both ‘settlement size’ and ‘accessibility based on drive time’ factors to give an overall urban/rural categorisation. It is produced with both six and eight categories to give a varying degree of sensitivity. The ‘core definition of rurality’ employed by the Scottish Government defines settlements of three thousand people or less as being ‘rural’. This distinguishes in the case of the six fold definition between categories one to four as “urban”, and five to six as “rural” (see appendix two for further information).
- 3.28 Taking the six fold Local Authority (LA) table (Scottish Government 2010c: 14), collapsing the ‘accessible rural’ and ‘remote rural’ categories into one and re-ranking them by percentage of population allows us to rank LAs in terms of the percentage of their population who can be said to live in a ‘rural’ context. Therefore, it can be said that there are seven Local Authorities with fifty percent or more of their population resident in rural areas (see table 3.1, and for full table see appendix three).

Rank	LA	Accessible	Remote	Combined
1	Eilean Siar		78.9%	78.9%
2	Shetland Islands		70.9%	70.9%
3	Orkney Islands		67.2%	67.2%
4	Aberdeenshire	36.8%	16%	52.8%
4	Argyll and Bute	7.6%	45.2%	52.8%
5	Highland	10.5%	40.6%	51.1%
6	Scottish Borders	39%	12%	51%

*Table 3.1: LAs with a greater than 50% Population living in ‘accessible rural’ and ‘remote rural’ areas (six fold ranking provided in Scottish Government (2010c: 14))*

- 3.29 The Scottish Government definition of rural is employed both within and outwith the organisation<sup>10</sup>. This study is framed by the Scottish Government definitions from a pragmatic point of view, but remains sensitive to work that falls outwith these boundaries. This provides a small number of ‘case study’ Local Authorities to act as areas within which to identify research within the confines of this review.
- 3.30 Whilst LA level urban/rural definition is inevitably very broad, it is also helpful to the current review. The infrastructure to support the third sector in Scotland has

<sup>10</sup> See the Scottish Government commissioned report by Granville et al. (2009) for discussion of the use of this definition.

altered significantly recently, with third sector interfaces now operating in each local authority area. These interfaces seek to develop a single point of contact within each LA which offers “support to voluntary organisations operating in the area, both local and those national organisations that deliver services at the local level; support to and promotion of volunteering; support and development of social enterprise; [and a] connection between the CPP and the third sector” (Pearson 2009). This brings Volunteer Centres, Councils for Voluntary Service, social enterprise networks and Community Planning Partnerships together<sup>11</sup>.

- 3.31 A number of respondents in rural areas felt that this restructuring presented particular challenges to the areas in which they worked, given the issues of transport and accessibility to a single point of contact in large rural LAs.
- 3.32 To summarise, it is therefore with reference to the Scottish Government urban/rural definition at the LA level that rurality is understood in this review.

## Summary

- 3.33 This review draws on academic and non-academic databases, review of online resources, and the direct contact of key informants and organisations at UK-wide, Scotland-wide, regional and local levels.
- 3.34 There is no consistent definition of ‘third sector’, with debate over whether such a definition is possible or desirable. In common with the Dachombe and Bach (2009) report on which this review builds, a rigid definition is not employed. Instead a broad review of research is undertaken, with distinctions in definition highlighted where necessary.
- 3.35 Whilst recognising that ‘rural’ can be contested, this study employs the Scottish Government rural/urban categorisation in identifying those LAs which are home to a particularly large percentage of rural population. There are clear limitations to this approach in that almost all Local Authorities will contain a rural population component however pragmatically, within the constraints of this review, it is employed here.
- 3.36 A definition based around Local Authority rurality is also helpful given the recent development of Local Authority-wide Third Sector Interfaces.

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<sup>11</sup> Prior to this, there existed 32 Volunteer Centres (VCs) in Scotland supported by VDS (Volunteer Development Scotland), one organisation in each LA sometimes working out of more than one office. This was in addition to 56 CVSs (Councils for Voluntary Service) across Scotland supported by SCVO, again with at least one in each LA.

## 4 SCOTLAND'S RURAL POPULATION: VOLUNTEERING

4.1 This chapter explores what existing research can tell us about patterns of volunteering in rural areas of Scotland, given the increased emphasis on the voluntary participation of individuals in light of public service reform. It first contextualises this within current socio-economic trends in rural Scotland. It then goes on to identify the difference in *rates* of volunteering between urban and rural Scotland before finally identifying its potentially distinct *nature*.

### Scotland's rural population: strengths and challenges

4.2 A number of key socio-economic trends are evident in rural Scotland (Scottish Government 2011c), summarised in figure 4.1:

- Nationally, between 2001 - 2008 Scotland's population has increased with remote and accessible rural areas seeing the greatest percentage point increase.
- 18% of Scotland's population live in remote rural or accessible rural areas, and these areas account for 94% of Scotland's land mass.
- The age distribution of residents is different in rural areas compared with the rest of Scotland. Rural areas have a much lower percentage of the population in age bands 16 – 24 and 25 – 34 but a higher proportion in the older age bands, especially pension age and over.
- Rural areas have a higher proportion of residents from elsewhere in the UK, and of households in which one or both occupants are retired. They are less likely to contain households with a single adult or with three or more adults. On average rural areas are slightly more likely to host large family households.
- Those living in remote and accessible rural areas are more likely to rate their neighbourhood as a fairly or very good place to live and less likely to report personal experience of all neighbourhood problems except abandoned/burnt out cars in accessible rural areas.
- Those in remote rural areas are less likely to live within a 15 minute drive to key services (eg shopping facilities, petrol station). Those in both remote and accessible rural areas are less likely to live within 15 minutes travel by public transport to these services.
- A higher proportion of those in rural Scotland are economically active. In remote rural areas, 'agriculture, forestry and fishing' (17%) is the largest source of private sector jobs followed by 'hotels and restaurants' (13%). In accessible rural areas, 'agriculture, forestry and fishing', 'private sector education, health, social work and other community, social and personal services', and 'financial intermediation, real estate, renting and business activities' are the most significant sectors; each has a 12% share of employment in accessible rural areas. Median hourly rates of pay for all employees are highest in accessible rural areas at £12.30, potentially a function of the proportion commuting from here into urban centres. This compares to £10.77 in the rest of Scotland, with the lowest rates in remote rural Scotland at £10.70 an hour.

Figure 4.1: Key characteristics of the Scottish rural population. Summarised from Scottish Government (2011c)<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Based on data from: Annual Population Survey in Scotland, General Register Office for Scotland, Scottish Household Survey, Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation and using the Scottish Government six fold urban rural classification and core rural definition. All figures relative to 'rest of Scotland'.

- 4.3 The OECD (2008: 12-13) confirm that rural areas of Scotland have been net receivers of population, whilst on average, rural areas in Scotland show higher levels of 'liveability, neighbourhood security and home ownership' and 'higher levels of tertiary educational attainment' as well as having higher levels of household income in 2005 compared to the rest of Scotland.
- 4.4 It is important to note however that 'remote rural' and 'accessible rural' areas exhibit particular characteristics and face unique challenges, meaning a significant divide between the two areas. It is found that whilst those in 'accessible rural' areas are often young couples, young families and/or of a professional occupation (with 52% of the accessible rural population commuting to urban areas), "the situation is very different in many remoter rural regions, which lag behind on some indicators and are qualitatively different because of their sparse population... many suffer from lower income, employment, skills and health, as well as inadequate infrastructure, higher costs of key inputs and lower access to services".
- 4.5 The OECD (2008: 15 – 16) report summarises the strengths of rural Scotland as including:
- "[an] abundant land area as well as rich natural and cultural resources; higher standards of living and a distinct social capital and cultural traditions; a stable and relatively diversified economy, with good employment and entrepreneurship indicators"*
- 4.6 Whilst "weaknesses" included:
- "...relatively lower and stagnant levels of GDP per capita, higher costs of living, transport and housing; car dependency and lower access and quality of services..."*
- 4.7 EKOS (2008) in a report exploring 'Rural communities and economic development' find that small rural economies themselves represent an important constituent part of Scotland's economy, with key growth areas of the rural economy being renewable energies, food and drink and tourism.
- 4.8 "Scotland's population is ageing, and ageing fast" (Thomson 2010: 12). Thomson goes on to emphasise both that the history of in-migration to rural areas is necessary and that this needs to be supported. It is also suggested that nine out of the ten local authorities with the largest populations of aged people can be classified as rural (the authors also include Dumfries and Galloway, Angus, Perth and Kinross, Moray, East Ayrshire, Stirling, South Ayrshire and Aberdeenshire in their definition of rural local authorities).
- 4.9 It should be noted however, that an older population may also act as a particularly strong asset in more rural communities (see for example O4O 2011; Atterton 2006; Le Mesurier 2006; Baines et al. 2004; Moreton et al. 2004), providing a time-rich and experienced resource.

4.10 Therefore, there appears a mixed picture regarding the socio-economic landscape of rural Scotland of both strengths and challenging circumstances, which vary between accessible and remote rural areas.

### Higher rates of formal volunteering in rural Scotland

4.11 In undertaking PhD research funded by VDS and the ESRC Timbrell (2006b: 62-63) finds pronounced gaps in our knowledge surrounding geographical variations in volunteering in the UK. She finds that there is less known about variations at the sub-national and sub-regional level, particularly in Scotland which is “often treated as one generic study area” in national studies. She also identifies that although there is some research at the sub-national level, this is largely quantitative and “does not explicitly consider... rural or urban location”.

4.12 The Scottish Household Survey (SHS) is the largest scale national survey which includes questions about volunteering within its remit in Scotland. Hurley et al. (2008) summarise the fluctuations of formal volunteering<sup>13</sup> across the six fold urban/rural classification from 1999 – 2006 on the basis of SHS data (Figure 4.2).

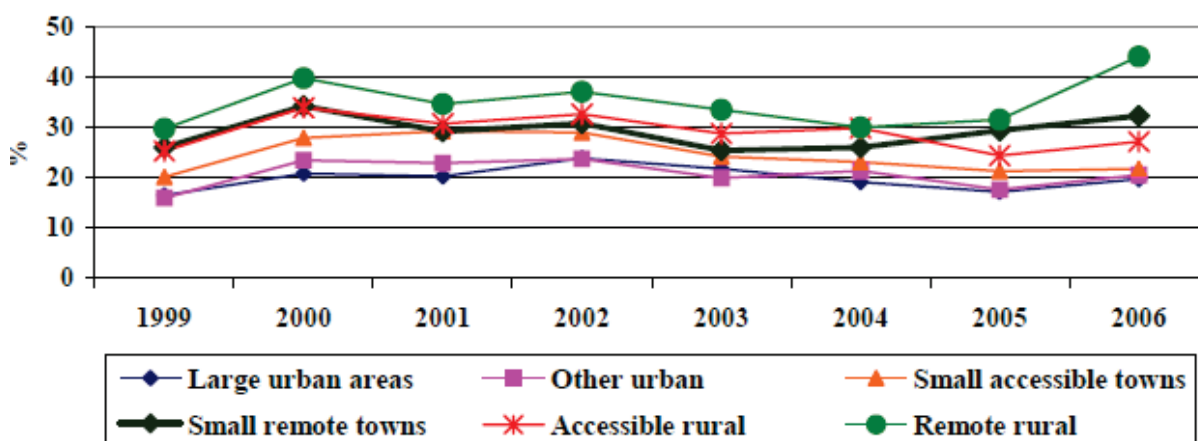


Figure 4.2: % adults reporting having formally volunteered at least once in the preceding twelve months (Hurley et al 2008).

4.13 It appears that generally, as degree of rurality increases, so does the reported rate of formal volunteering. There are also apparently distinctions between remote and accessible rural areas, with remote rural areas exhibiting higher

<sup>13</sup> For adults (over sixteen). This question has been the subject of change – including a move away from the use of ‘voluntary’ toward ‘unpaid help’ - over the time period summarised. See for example Scottish Government (2009d).

levels of formal volunteering relative to the more accessible rural areas<sup>14</sup>. This pattern also continues to hold in more recent years<sup>15</sup>.

- 4.14 Harper and Rutherford (2011) find on the basis of regression analyses of SHS data that rurality remained a significant explanatory variable, even controlling for a number of socio-economic characteristics including age, income and sex.
- 4.15 VDS have also collected data<sup>16</sup> regarding spatial variations in formal volunteering. Although not directly analogous to 'rurality', over the course of the years 2004 – 2006 there appear geographical variations in patterns of participation. In the North levels appear higher than average, in the West levels follow the national average, and the East and South of Scotland exhibited markedly lower levels of formal voluntary activity<sup>17</sup>.
- 4.16 It is also possible to begin to outline patterns of participation by LA grouping. Whilst sample sizes in each LA grouping are not large (hence the LAs being grouped rather than separate), it can be seen (figure 4.3) that those with high levels of voluntary activity appear also to often be individual local authorities which have more than half of their population in 'rural' areas<sup>18</sup>.

Hurley et al. (2008) review the Scottish Household Survey 1999 – 2006. The small sample sizes available when disaggregating organisations volunteered for make it challenging to state with any certainty a unique character of activity in rural areas. This is similarly the case for specific volunteering activity (see appendix four). It is also found that there is no significant difference between rural and urban areas with regard to hours volunteered per month, and an inconsistent urban/rural pattern with regards to frequency of activity per year. This would appear to suggest that rurality has the greatest influence on likelihood of being a formal volunteer. Qualitative research suggested that volunteers were more likely to cite transport problems as barriers to volunteering in rural areas than urban areas.

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<sup>14</sup> Whilst employing an incomparable definition of rurality, and comparing only 'rural' and urban' rates of formal volunteering, the pattern of higher rates of formal volunteering in rural areas also appears to hold in the case of England and Wales (DCLG 2010).

<sup>15</sup> See Scottish Government (2011c; 2010a; 2009a; 2008c). Earlier analysis of the variations in participation by urban/rural category can be found in Scottish Government (2007b) and Scottish Executive (2006a; 2005b; 2004a).

<sup>16</sup> Adopting a slightly different methodology and with a sample size of approximately 1,000 individuals.

<sup>17</sup> 'North' refers to the LA groups of the Highlands and Islands, Grampian, Tayside and Central. 'West' refers to the LA groups of South and North Lanarkshire, Glasgow, Dunbartonshire, Ayrshire, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde. East/South refers to the LA groups of Lothian, Southern Scotland, Fife and Edinburgh. (See VDS 2007; 2006; 2005; 2004a).

<sup>18</sup> It should be noted however, that it would be helpful to control for deprivation in this analysis. It is generally the case that levels of formal volunteering have an inverse relationship with deprivation levels – as deprivation increase, levels of formal voluntary activity tend to decrease.

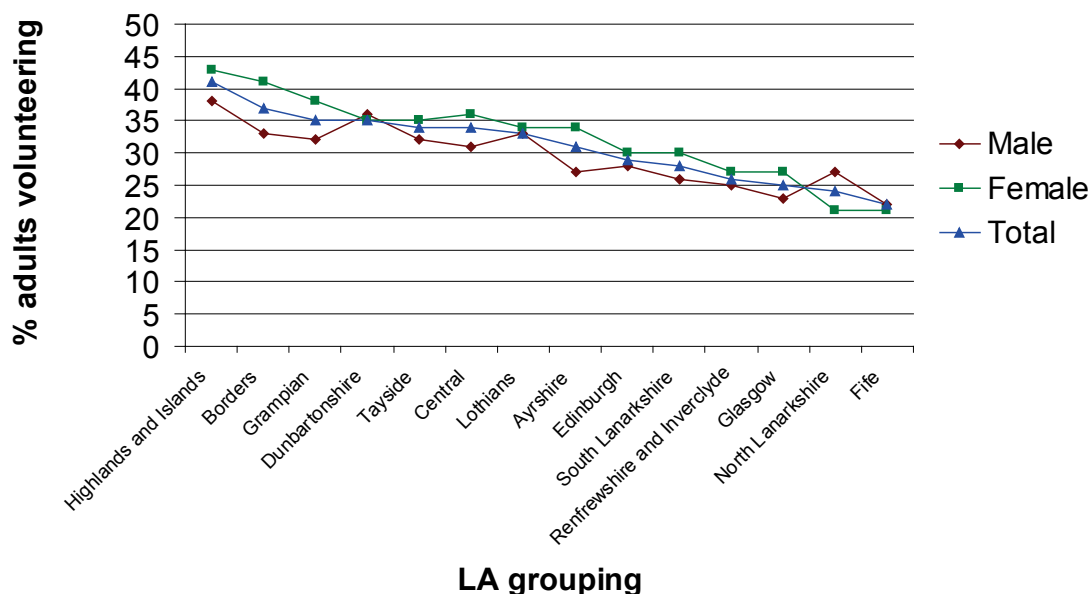


Figure 4.3: Whether provided unpaid help to organisations or individuals in the last 12 months by gender and local authority grouping: Scottish Household Survey 2007/8 (Scottish Government 2009c)<sup>19</sup>

4.17 Information regarding levels of volunteering in Scotland is also collected by bodies operating below national level. Highland Council found that 29% of respondents 'indicated that they volunteer in some capacity' compared to 27% in 2007 and 2008 (Sneddon Economics 2009)<sup>20</sup>. There was a slight variation in geography, with those in Skye, Ross and Lochaber slightly more likely to volunteer (34%).

4.18 Furthermore, SQW (2002) found in the course of assessing the social economy of the Highlands and Islands that there were 8,142 social economy organisations<sup>21</sup>. Whilst less than half of the organisations (45%) reported employing one or more paid members of staff (full or part-time), 85% employ at least one volunteer full or part-time. It found that "many of the organisations are small and run entirely by volunteers".

<sup>19</sup> Bases: Highlands and Islands – 1,918; Borders – 665; Grampian – 1,115; Dunbartonshire – 487; Tayside – 837; Central – 789; Lothians – 802; Ayrshire – 864; Edinburgh – 919; South Lanarkshire – 570; Renfrewshire and Inverclyde – 830; Glasgow – 1281; North Lanarkshire – 613; Fife – 843.. Scotland: 12,533. (Scottish Government 2009c).

<sup>20</sup> 11,000 households were contacted with a postal questionnaire. After 100 questionnaires were returned to sender, a response rate of 17% (1,807 individual responses) was reported. It should be noted that it is unclear how this question was asked.

<sup>21</sup> 369 questionnaires were returned (from a sample of 1,000) by organisations within the social economy ('neighbourhood and self-help... community enterprises... other social enterprises' with purposes separated into 'social groups... community development groups [and] enterprise groups') across the Highlands and Islands.

4.19 A further study (GEN/Insight 2007) focuses on “Volunteering in the Highlands and Islands”<sup>22</sup>. The authors separate ‘volunteering’ into ‘service delivery’ roles and those volunteers who serve on a committee. 72% of organisations surveyed provided opportunities for service delivery with 66% of this ‘service delivery’ activity falling into the ‘providing a service or offering support’ category. The diversity of this voluntary activity in the Highlands and Islands is demonstrated in figure 4.3:

Type of opportunity	Number of opportunities	Average per organisation
<i>Total service delivery</i>	3,723	45
Providing a service or offering support	1,814	40
Organising/helping run events	602	26
Helping with sports/recreational activities	335	56
Fundraising	262	11
Administration or office duties	53	5
Environment work	9	5
Campaigning or advocacy	8	8
Other	8	4

Figure 4.3: Service delivery opportunities in the Highlands and Islands (GEN/Insight 2007: 15).

4.20 In terms of informal volunteering, little comparative (between urban and rural) research appears to have been undertaken. However Farmer et al. (2011) do identify that levels of both formal and informal volunteering vary between four rural Scottish communities. They find that the community in question, health<sup>2H</sup>, access to transport<sup>2I</sup> and educational achievement<sup>2I</sup> all influence participation.

4.21 Therefore, where urban and rural comparisons are possible, it appears that rates of formal volunteering generally increase with degree of rurality. It also appears that this is the case even when controlling for other factors such as age, income and sex. The SHS appears the only study to confirm this directly in Scotland, whilst a great range of other smaller scale studies suggest that rates of formal volunteering are particularly high in rural areas without comparing them to more urban areas.

<sup>22</sup> On the basis of 120 telephone interviews with voluntary organisations across the HIE area, selected from the SCVO database to replicate as far as possible the profile of the social economy as identified by the SQW report above. This was commissioned by Highlands and Islands Enterprise.

<sup>2H</sup> Higher self-reported levels of health suggested an increasing amount of both informal and formal volunteering, whilst lower self-reported levels of health suggested that respondents were more likely to be the recipient of this informal volunteering.

<sup>2I</sup> Access to transport appeared to influence positively the likelihood of more formal participation.

<sup>2I</sup> Higher levels of education appeared linked to more formal participation.

## A distinct nature of volunteering in rural Scotland

- 4.22 This therefore moves us to think about how, beyond the quantitative extent of formal volunteering, its qualitative nature might also be distinct in rural Scotland.
- 4.23 Timbrell (2006a; 2006b) confirms through in-depth local level case study work that there appear a higher proportion of residents engaged in formal volunteering in more rural areas of Scotland. Further, whilst those in urban areas were shown to undertake a greater *intensity* of volunteering (more than four hours a week), those in rural areas were more likely to be active with a greater *range* of organisations. This leads Timbrell to characterise the differing cultures of volunteering as “broad” in the case of rural volunteering and “deep” for urban activity. Grieve et al. (2007: 5) also find, in the English rural context, that “those who do volunteer are frequently active in more than one group or project: overlapping membership and multiple involvement appear to be major features of rural community action”<sup>21</sup>.
- 4.24 Having identified the significant influence of rurality on reporting having volunteered in the preceding twelve months, Harper and Rutherford (2011) suggest - also on the basis of regression analyses of SHS data - that the number of hours volunteered, and the frequency of volunteering does not appear to vary significantly between urban and rural areas. The data was not able, however, to identify whether the number of organisations volunteered for (the ‘breadth’ of activity) was distinct in more rural areas). It would therefore appear that rurality exerts a strong influence on likelihood of having volunteered, but not necessarily on the total amount of hours spent volunteering, or the frequency.
- 4.25 It is possible that the drivers for rural volunteering may be distinct, and this may have implications for the capacity of rural communities to respond further to challenging public service contexts. Timbrell (2007) highlights the sometimes problematic relationship between volunteering and the provision of services. Whilst many volunteers (in more urbanised areas in particular) might become involved for a range of personal and wider societal reasons as a result of a ‘cost-benefit’ decision process, she suggests those in areas less well served by public services might have a different perspective. “Sandy Isle” is one of the four case study areas, located in a deprived “remote rural” area. It is found that:

*“On Sandy Isle volunteers provide services that would otherwise not exist and volunteers and Volunteer Coordinators recognise that their situation is different to “other areas”. This process is not, however,*

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<sup>21</sup> Further, this leads Timbrell to argue that this is a challenge to some existing studies (Shucksmith and Philip 2000; Yates and Jochum 2003) which refer to the problem of volunteer ‘burnout’ in rural areas (where volunteers are asked/obliged to undertake more activity than is sustainable for them). She suggests that whilst the patterns of participation may indeed be distinct: “very intense involvement with just one organisation could be as demanding, or even more demanding, than less hours being spent across a variety of organisations” (Timbrell 2006b: 4).

*described as positive or empowering and instead the feeling is one of resentment. There is no reference to volunteers increasing the range of services available or having an opportunity to “buy” their way out of their volunteering roles. It is therefore difficult to see this as evidence of what Salamon et al describe as the “plus” (2000:25): the process through which voluntary involvement in service delivery can increase choice. Voluntary service delivery on Sandy Isle was quite clearly most commonly substitutional rather than additional (Pickering, 2003) to statutory provision” (Timbrell 2007: 3-4).*

- 4.26 In support of the link between a challenging service delivery landscape and higher levels of volunteering the SCVO ‘Voices from rural Scotland’ report (SCVO 2008b: 66<sup>2i</sup>) finds that “Rural communities are critically reliant on the efforts of volunteers who provide transport for those who need it to local facilities, who deliver local services, who run community facilities such as village halls, and who generally compensate for inadequacies and gaps in service provision in rural areas... [Benefits]... include the delivery of services that would not otherwise exist. They also deliver services which fill the gap in the provision of statutory services” (SCVO 2008b: 66).
- 4.27 In addition, in England, Philimore et al. (2010: 4) undertook 29 key informant interviews with network organisations and individuals with expertise about small scale voluntary and community activity. One emerging finding was that “rural respondents commented that community groups were increasingly ‘filling the gaps left when statutory services withdraw from (rural) areas’”.
- 4.28 Volunteering data has also been collected at the sub-LA level, but is often dependant upon funding availability and/or the availability of volunteers to undertake such research. It is subsequently not always current, however as it is collected by those working on a daily basis in the voluntary sector it may uncover “below the radar”<sup>2i</sup> activity which might otherwise go unrecognised. Whilst it is outwith the remit of this brief project to systematically review data collection regarding the third sector in Scotland at all levels<sup>Gj</sup> and it would be challenging, given differences in methodology, to draw comparisons between data gathered at this local level, three examples of this data are offered:
- a. Voluntary Action Orkney (2002: 3) note that “The Voluntary Sector in Orkney has traditionally played an important role in the community. Until now, this has mainly been substantiated with either Highlands and Islands wide research or local anecdotal evidence”. With the support of Orkney Enterprise VAO distributed questionnaires to the 597 organisations in its community directory, receiving a 27% response rate. The 166 responding

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<sup>2i</sup> This study undertook a web-based survey (295 respondents), telephone interviews (20 organisations) and focus groups (8 across Scotland) with key stakeholders in the sector – professionals/paid workers, volunteers and community members.

<sup>2i</sup> McCabe et al. (2009); see also the ‘Beyond flat earth’ project - Mohan et al. (2010).

<sup>Gj</sup> See SVA (2010) and Rocket Science (2009) for information surrounding the ‘Managing Intelligence’ initiative and associated review of existing data collection methods across Scotland.

groups reported involving 2,018 volunteers in their activities. This represented 10% of the Orkney population at the time (therefore if a similar level of involvement was reported by all organisations contacted this could translate to approximately 36% of the population of Orkney volunteering, a figure similar to that provided for remote rural areas in the 2001/2 SHS data reviewed earlier).

- b. Argyll CVS (2002) reviewed – with support from the Scottish Executive, Communities Scotland and Argyll and the Islands Enterprise – the voluntary sector in Argyll and Bute. Using a similar methodological approach with a 36% (424 organisations) response rate it was reported that 92% of the responding groups had a voluntary management committee whilst 69% of the organisations were run entirely by voluntary effort, with volunteers contributing approximately just under a million (993,000) hours a year equating to almost £5 million a year at the basic rate of £5/hour.
- c. Finally, with the support of Highland Council and Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Voluntary Action Lochaber (2009) assessed the ‘Value and impact of the voluntary sector in Lochaber’ and reviewed 196 local community and voluntary associations. It was found that within the 196 groups, 1,250 volunteers were involved as committee members, whilst just over 1,000 volunteers contributed in service delivery and/or support roles<sup>3€</sup>.

4.29 Therefore, in addition to higher rates of formal volunteering in rural areas, on the basis of the limited research available it would also seem that there may be a distinct nature to this formal volunteering. It may, for example, be undertaken across a greater number of groups but for less time within each group than in urban areas. It may also be particularly strongly characterised by substituting a gap in service provision.

### **Summary: Scotland’s rural population: volunteering in rural Scotland**

- 4.30 Rates of formal volunteering consistently appear higher amongst rural populations than urban populations over time. It also appears to hold that even controlling for a number of socio-economic factors, rurality influences the rate of volunteering.
- 4.31 Those in remote rural areas appear generally more likely to report having undertaken formal volunteering than those in accessible rural areas.
- 4.32 Formal volunteering may be undertaken in rural areas as a result of the lack of public service provision.
- 4.33 Research suggests that the volunteering of those in rural areas may be particularly “broad” in nature, across a large number of organisations but for

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<sup>3€</sup> These figures are susceptible to double counting, however.

less time in each organisation compared to those in urban areas, whose profile of volunteering may be particularly “deep”: volunteering with fewer organisations but devoting a greater amount of time to each one. The degree to which the overall amount of time spent volunteering and the frequency of volunteering varies between urban and rural areas is contested.

- 4.34 Informal volunteering is not examined at a robust or consistent level which would allow rural/urban comparisons in Scotland. Given the above suggestion that formal volunteering, by virtue of being a necessity in the face of more challenging public service delivery, may be more necessary for rural communities it may be possible that levels of informal volunteering are also higher.
- 4.35 High levels of rural formal volunteering can be seen as being a positive social indicator, and potentially signifying a great deal of third sector activity (discussed in the following chapters). However initiatives which call on rural communities to volunteer their time may also need to be sensitive to existing multiple voluntary commitments that members of communities may already have, and motivations for these.

## 5 COMPARING THE URBAN AND RURAL THIRD SECTOR IN SCOTLAND

5.1 This chapter identifies how far current research suggests there is a distinct character to the rural third sector more generally, before examining how far direct comparisons between urban and rural areas have been made within Scotland specifically.

### The rural third sector in the UK

5.2 Grieve (2007) outlines how “although rural communities share many of the same needs as people living in urban areas, there are also times when, because of their location, needs are different or different approaches are needed”. The principle differences she outlines are summarised below (figure 5.1):

- Rural populations are spread over larger areas than in towns and cities, which can result in greater time and travel costs for people and the organisations that serve them.
- People may have to travel to towns to access public and private services as these services have increasingly left villages.
- Those without access to private transport may be marginalised because public transport infrastructure is often weak.
- Deprivation does exist in rural areas, but because of its dispersed nature it is often hidden and may not be recognised by urban deprivation measures. It can be hard to tackle because many people do not seek support, as demonstrated by the low take-up of fuel poverty grants in rural areas. It has been suggested that this may be caused by a range of factors including the traditional ‘self-sufficiency’ of rural communities, the fear of stigmatisation associated with accepting help and problems of confidentiality.
- Rural communities often have a different demographic make-up to urban areas, for example with higher proportions of older people.
- Rural areas are diverse, ranging from ‘chocolate box’ villages to former industrial communities. It will be important to consider the particular characteristics of the rural areas you serve and how these affect the impact of your work.
- The smaller populations mean that there are fewer people available to volunteer and the ageing volunteer base raises sustainability concerns.
- Due to their small size, limited resources and rural factors such as the difficulties of reaching dispersed communities, rural VCOs may need more time and resources to build into local networks and partnerships. They are less likely to be in contact with VCS infrastructure bodies, which can mean that their support needs are unmet.
- Rural VCOs may work closely with their parish council, especially because cross-membership between parish councils and local VCOs is common.

*Figure 5.1: Voluntary and Community Organisations in rural England. (summarised from Grieve 2007: 3-4).*

5.3 DEFRA (2003: 4-5) extend this to suggest that “...community capacity building and volunteering are disproportionately important in rural areas, both in their

own right and as a significant underpinning to service delivery”, highlighting that in their opinion “rural is different” with particular characteristics including: geographical dispersion, high costs of infrastructure, fewer potential volunteers, the differing nature of service delivery due to the more dispersed nature of social exclusion. This, they suggest, leads to higher levels of self-help/community delivery of services being required/expected – for historical reasons and in order to make services viable. In addition, they suggest that communities have particular needs with reference to networking, support and training as well as requiring more appropriate methods of service delivery.

- 5.4 Grieve et al. (2007: 5) argue that “the decline in the delivery of some basic services has led to the [voluntary] sector taking on a range of roles more traditionally associated with the public and private sectors” and NCVO (2003: 4) claim that “in many cases the role adopted by the sector in rural areas is that of bridging the access gap for those members of the community who are unable to access mainstream services”. Qualitative focus groups and case study exemplars identified by NCVO in English rural areas suggest that the voluntary and community sector is “characterised by a high number of smaller organisations, with very low incomes, highly reliant on a small number of volunteers”.
- 5.5 NCVO (2002) recognised that “very little information is currently available about the sector in rural areas” (echoed by de Lima 2009) and in undertaking case study research found that there appear to be a greater number of voluntary or community organisations per head in both the more remote rural area (eleven organisations per 1,000 of the population) and the less remote rural area (six organisations per 1,000 of the population) compared to the national average at the time (three organisations per 1,000 of the population) whilst rates of volunteering (measured as number of unpaid workers per 1,000 of the population) are also found to be higher in these areas compared to the national average.
- 5.6 Therefore, literature suggests that there are distinct characteristics of rural areas which may influence the nature, roles and extent of the third sector. This therefore suggests that there may be a particular set of opportunities and challenges for seeking further participation from the third sector and communities in the delivery of public services.

### **The Scottish rural third sector: national urban/rural comparisons**

- 5.7 This section will examine how far existing research has directly compared the Scottish urban and rural third sectors. SCVO (2003a) state that “Research into the voluntary sector’s rural dimension... is particularly weak”. Data is therefore fragmented and collected by a variety of different actors at a variety of different scales.

5.8 On the basis of the ‘Scottish Voluntary Sector Database’ 40% of ‘regulated voluntary sector organisations’<sup>3F</sup> lie in rural areas. Shetland, Orkney, Highland and the Western Isles have a higher number of organisations per 1,000 of the population than the City of Edinburgh, which has just under 8 organisations per 1,000 of the population (SCVO 2003a). The report makes several qualifications<sup>3G</sup>, however also observes that the high levels of registered organisations in rural areas may in part be the result of population distribution, “where more organisations are needed for... fewer people in order to provide adequate access”. Conversely, it is also suggested the figures could under-represent the true number of registered organisations, potentially owing to the

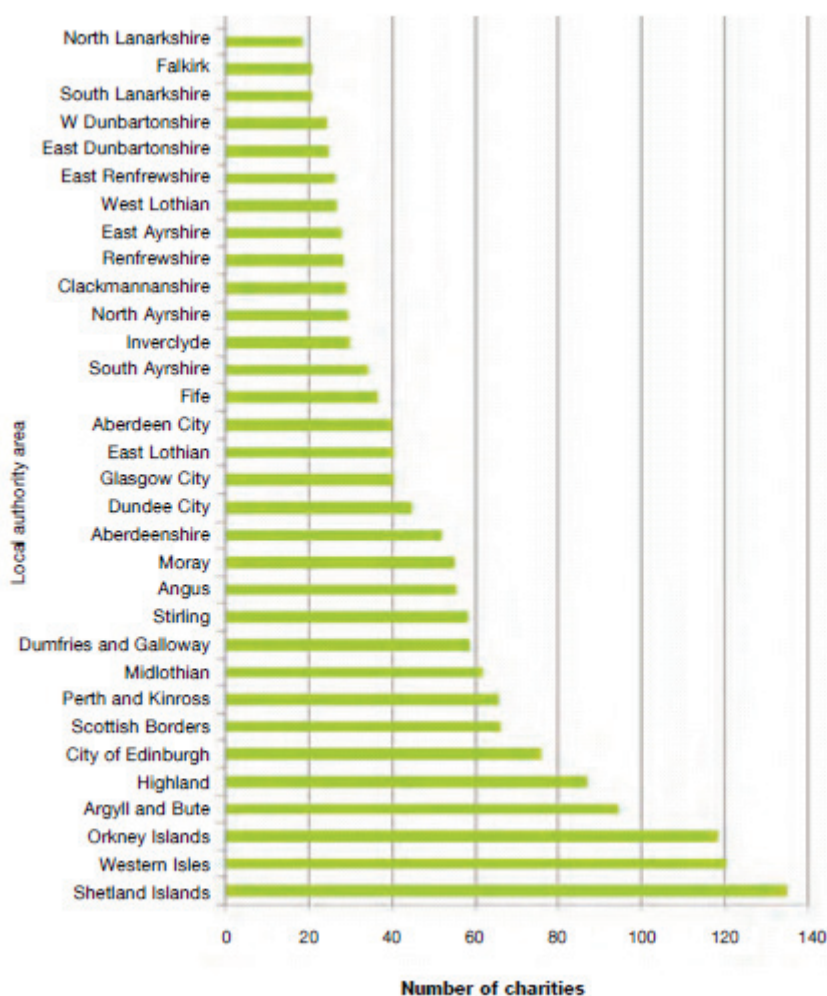


Figure 5.2: Number of charities in Scotland per 10 000 of population by local authority - cross border charities included (OSCR 2008: 14 )- reproduced with OSCR’s permission.

<sup>3F</sup> Registered charities, plus housing associations, plus credit unions (SCVO 2003a).

<sup>3G</sup> Within rural areas, the Highlands & Islands stand out with a significantly higher concentration than the other rural areas. The high concentration of rural voluntary organisations may be a function of distance, where more organisations are needed for a fewer number of people in order to provide adequate access. Correspondingly, the disproportionately higher organisation count in the Highlands is most probably due to the especially large geographic area covered by this local authority”. Furthermore, the presence of “a large charitable trust” may influence the nature of the Orkney charity landscape (SCVO 2003a).

high number of national organisations in large cities, whereas rural areas may hold a larger number of branches and a smaller set of separately constituted organisations than non-rural areas. The pattern is similar with reference to more recent OSCR data of charities per 10,000 of population (figure 5.2).

- 5.9 Social enterprises in Scotland may be more likely to engage in trading with rural areas, however this must be understood in the context of i) the self-definition of rurality and ii) the greater rural component of the Scottish landmass more generally, in comparison with England. The 2009 survey of a sample of Social Enterprise Coalition (SEC) members<sup>3H</sup> found that in Scotland 77% of the sample traded in or with rural areas. This places Scotland third behind only Northern Ireland and the South West of England, ahead of eight English regions (Leahy and Villeneuve-Smith 2009: 29)<sup>3I</sup>.
- 5.10 In addition, across the UK 40% of those social enterprises with a turnover of less than £10,000 worked rurally, whereas 50 – 60% of those in all other bands did so, suggesting that smaller operations may tend to function less in or with those in rural areas (ibid: 28). Resource constraints may therefore influence the nature of enterprising third sector activity in rural areas.
- 5.11 Overall there appears to be support for there being a particularly high number of registered charities (a large constituent part of the third sector) per head in rural areas of Scotland. It is challenging, however, to link this high number of charities to rurality causally.

## Summary

- 5.12 The distinct social, economic and spatial characteristics of rural areas may influence the role of the third sector in these areas.
- 5.13 In Scotland, there appear higher numbers of charities per head in a number of rural LAs compared to urban LAs.
- 5.14 Data regarding the potentially distinct activities of these organisations in rural areas is profoundly lacking however.
- 5.15 Evidence therefore suggests the third sector in rural areas may have a significant role in providing services, and in Scotland is particularly large in terms of the number of organisations per head. However the lack of analysis of the functions of these charities makes it difficult to identify whether these charities provide a substitutional service or an additional function.
- 5.16 Chapter six examines smaller scale studies to identify key areas in which the rural third sector may contribute.

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<sup>3H</sup> An England, Northern Ireland and Scotland as a whole (the survey, based on telephone interviews with a random sample of 962 with senior figures within social enterprises from a dataset of 5,355 social enterprises, excludes Wales)

<sup>3I</sup> It should be noted however that this was on the basis of a relatively small sample size of 82 interviewees in Scotland.

## 6 THE SCOTTISH RURAL THIRD SECTOR: KEY AREAS OF EVIDENCE

- 6.1 This chapter examines what existing research can tell us about the *nature* of the third sector's activities in rural Scotland to build on the findings so far presented.
- 6.2 SCVO (2010) identify on the basis of the results of their 2008 – 2009 panel survey that it is in the fields of social care and development, economic development and culture and recreation that there are the largest number of 'regulated' voluntary sector<sup>31</sup> organisations.
- 6.3 However there appears little coherent evidence around the nature of the services delivered by larger third sector organisations in rural areas. The greatest body of evidence appears to be around smaller-scale community activity.
- 6.4 Hall and Skerratt (2010: 42) identify that: "Community-level participation projects have been taking place in many forms for decades across rural Scotland, through voluntary activity, social enterprises, community ownership and/or management of assets, participatory service design and business planning. There is little systematic evidence about the impacts for rural Scotland as a whole, since much is local level, individual and distinct. This hampers understanding".
- 6.5 In order to take a thematic approach in drawing together this local level activity, it is around the bodies of case study evidence which appear most developed that this chapter is organised.

### Service delivery

- 6.6 Pickering (2003: 1) in work discussing "innovative methods of service delivery in rural Scotland" states that "there is no 'ideal' way of providing services - a diverse range of joined-up approaches to service delivery, designed to complement one another, are required to meet the needs of rural Scotland" if the "...role that voluntary organisations and communities can play in the provision of services..." is to be realised. Pickering suggests that the sharing of premises, the use of mobile facilities, the use of new technology and the development of community-run services are all potentially helpful ways of employing innovative methods in service delivery, offering case studies to support these claims. Indeed, discussion around the nature of service provision in rural areas has been ongoing<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> Defined as 'voluntary sector charities, plus housing associations, plus credit unions'.

<sup>31</sup> See for example the series of 'Scottish Rural Services' conferences hosted by SCVO 2001; 2002; 2003b; 2004; 2005 and the 'Voices from Rural Scotland report (SCVO 2008b)), whilst literature on

## **Rural community buildings**

- 6.7 One means to achieve this has been through the community led provision of spaces for rural communities to gather - spaces central to the sustenance of vibrant rural communities such as GPs, primary schools, a shop and a community hall (Philip et al. 2003). With regards to spaces in rural communities in which the third sector has a role, the literature appears most well developed in the area of 'community facilities'. Those who use and run them argue that they are a 'lifeblood to the village' and a 'heart to the community' (Rural Partnerships 2006). Indeed, the Halls for All campaign (SCVO 2008a) was specifically formed to urge the recognition of the importance of village and community halls in rural Scotland.
- 6.8 Skerratt et al. (2008) define rural community facilities (RCFs) as "local assets which serve as central points or "hubs", and as venues for service provision, from within and outwith the community, sometimes providing for the co-location of multiple services".
- 6.9 In establishing the use, provision and condition of these facilities in Scotland<sup>3i</sup> it is found that around 80% of RCFs are owned by the local community, with just under 80% registered as charities. ACRE (2010) similarly find in a national survey in England that 90% are registered charities, whilst a national study for DEFRA puts this slightly lower at 82% (Rural Partnerships 2006).
- 6.10 Skerratt et al. (2008) also find that just under 40% of those RCFs responding to the survey employed no staff, relying entirely on volunteers (equally however, the majority did employ at least one member of staff – full or part time – a role "not inconsequential" in rural communities). The recruitment and retention of volunteers was often a challenge, longer term business planning was not common, and almost one third of facilities reported operating with a budget deficit.
- 6.11 The authors (ibid) also find that many RCFs have difficulty in recruiting and retaining volunteers, apparently due to perceived bureaucracy and legislative burdens, as well as a more general reluctance to be involved. In addition, there appear particular challenges of sustainability, with less than 25% of RCFs preparing a business plan in the last five years.
- 6.12 The authors argue that "many RCFs could be called "social enterprises" in that they "trade" and market their facilities to a wide range of users, whether individuals from the area or groups or service providers. They are a venue for a range of activities, some of which generate at least some income for the RCF".
- 6.13 There are clear challenges for RCFs in terms of sustainable funding streams, long term management and the maintenance of the buildings themselves.

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various initiatives to address this includes SEERAD (2002; 2006) and Scottish National Rural Partnership (2002).

<sup>3i</sup> Employing a postal survey (sample of 861,322 responses), nine telephone interviews with organisations supporting RCFs and six RCF case studies

However the authors identify a possible way forward: “less than one-fifth were used for public services (such as a library, local authority services, a post office, a GP surgery or other health services)...there may be scope for innovative ways of providing greater access to health services through these buildings. It may be worthwhile considering whether there could or should be greater partnership between public sector service providers and rural community facilities”. (See also NPP DESERVE 2008).

### ***Community retailing***

- 6.14 In a further example of the role of third sector activity providing services, the Community Retailing Network (2011) provides illustrations across Scotland of the community purchase and management of retailing services in the face of closure. The Eid Community Co-Op, Shetland, for example, was established following the closure of the only shop in the community in 2002. Subsequently the community voted to take on and run the shop itself, now with a manager, four part time staff and four after school helpers. The shop also provides a location in which the local Post Office is run.

### ***Community energy***

- 6.15 Community Energy Scotland (Community Energy Scotland 2011) profile a wide range of case studies in which they have provided “free advice, grant funding and finance for renewable energy projects developed by community groups to benefit their community”.
- 6.16 The Knoydart Foundation for example, a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity which was primarily formed to facilitate community buyout in this remote rural Highland community, accessed the services of Community Energy Scotland to upgrade the hydro-electric scheme which supplied energy to the local community.
- 6.17 The Community Owned Isle of Gigha established trading arm Gigha Renewable Energy Limited accessed support in establishing a community wind farm which is grid-connected and community owned, providing for the energy needs of the Island and exporting the surplus thereby generating income.
- 6.18 The Isle of Eigg Heritage Trust, a further example of the community purchase of land, undertook the electrification of the entire Island employing hydro-electric, wind and solar energy. Subsequently ‘Eigg Energy’, a subsidiary company of the Trust, was established.
- 6.19 With regard to community energy projects, a wealth of information is available from the individual websites of such groups. Take for example the “Here We Are” project (a charity and company limited by guarantee) providing a range of resources including information and education via a heritage centre for the local community and visitors to Cairndow, Argyll, which has established the ‘Our Power’ CIC to trade as a biomass plant heating water by burning locally

felled and chipped wood for a local salmon hatchery with the aim of making the wider activities of 'Here We Are' financially sustainable within 5 years.

### ***Community recycling***

- 6.20 The Community Recycling Network for Scotland provides a number of examples of the enterprising activity being undertaken in rural Scotland regarding this emerging element of the sector.
- 6.21 For example, it offers as a case study the Highland area in which nine social enterprises are engaged by the Highland Council, diverting almost 4,000 tonnes of waste away from landfill (8% of the total recycling and composting). This is in addition to the social benefits of these social enterprises which during 2009 – 2010 will employ more than 130 FTE staff and provide 205 training places each year (Community Recycling Network Scotland 2009b).
- 6.22 Indeed in 2008/9 Community Recycling Network Scotland had 125 members, handling 72,945.2 tonnes of material. There appears a particularly strong presence of members in rural LAs, with the greatest number of organisations per head found in Orkney Islands, Western Isles, Shetland Islands, Highland and Moray (Community Recycling Network 2009a: 2).

### ***Community transport***

- 6.23 Transport has been shown to be consistently ranked as the primary "immediate priority for improvement" in all levels of rurality (Commission for Rural Communities 2010). Further, the 'Voices from Rural Scotland' report (SCVO 2008b) found that there was pronounced dissatisfaction with transport in rural Scotland, and suggests "...that the problem with service provision in rural areas is not one of dissatisfaction with the services themselves. The critical issue is one of accessing such services".
- 6.24 There appears a strong presence of community transport organisations in rural areas. However, the evidence of this is severely limited. An example of data which has been collected is that of the Community Transport Association which has mapped its member organisations in Scotland and those associations of which it is aware but are not members (see appendix six). Whilst this clearly only maps 'on the radar' activity, and does not provide information about the size of each organisation, it demonstrates recognition of the need to undertake such activity.

### **Development Trusts and community land purchase**

- 6.25 Development Trusts are "owned and managed by the local community; aim to achieve the sustainable regeneration of a community or address a range of economic, social, environmental and cultural issues within a community; are independent but seek to work in partnership with other private, public and third sector organisations; and aim to reduce dependency on grant support by

generating income through enterprise and the ownership of assets. All trading surpluses are principally reinvested in the organisation or the community” (DTAS 2011)

6.26 DTAS have applied the Scottish Government eight-fold rural/urban classification of rurality to its data and, as of 2009, calculated that “just over 70% of our membership is located in rural communities” (DTAS: personal communication). DTAS currently has 179 full and provisional members across Scotland.

Development Trusts perform a very wide range of functions in addition to purely ‘service’ related roles. DTAS (2011) list a selection of the activities undertaken and services provided by development trusts (figure 6.2).

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental education</li> <li>• Visitor attractions</li> <li>• Community shares</li> <li>• Arts/crafts</li> <li>• Crofting/agriculture</li> <li>• Community hubs</li> <li>• Reuse/recycling</li> <li>• Local markets</li> <li>• Energy conservation</li> <li>• Community housing</li> <li>• Events/festivals</li> <li>• Land buy-out</li> <li>• Green space</li> <li>• Cafes/pubs</li> <li>• Environmental improvements</li> <li>• Youth services</li> <li>• Harbours/pontoons</li> <li>• Theatres/cinemas</li> <li>• Business Support</li> <li>• Post offices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retail business</li> <li>• Visitor accommodation</li> <li>• Renewable energy</li> <li>• Grant schemes</li> <li>• Childcare</li> <li>• Historic buildings</li> <li>• Workspaces</li> <li>• Local food</li> <li>• Sports/recreation</li> <li>• Play parks</li> <li>• Nature conservation</li> <li>• Forestry/woodland</li> <li>• Paths/cycleways</li> <li>• Tourist information</li> <li>• Petrol stations</li> <li>• Care services</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• History/Heritage</li> <li>• Training/employment</li> </ul>
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Figure 6.2: ‘What is a development trust?’  
(DTAS 2011)

6.27 There appears to be no ‘typical’ development trust. It is not possible to search by rurality, and any case studies offered here cannot be said to be representative however case studies operating in rural areas can be identified.

6.28 There is a strong emphasis on community land purchase, one example which summarises the breadth of activity often undertaken by these organisations is the ‘Assynt Foundation’, with the following extract taken from its DTAS entry:

*“The Assynt Foundation was established as part of the community land buy-out of the Glencanisp and Drumrunie Estates, in the parish of*

*Assynt in the North-West Highlands of Scotland. In June 2005, the community of Assynt bought these estates, 44,500 acres of land under provisions of the 2003 Land Reform (Scotland) Act. The area includes mountains, moorland and woodland, an old Victorian hunting Lodge other even older houses and semi-derelict farmsteads and shielings and a wildlife-rich world of lochs, lochans, rivers and hills. The aim of the Assynt Foundation is to help ensure the sustainability of the community, which has suffered significant losses in employment in recent years due to a downturn in traditional staple industries of agriculture and fishing, by creating new employment and encouraging more business opportunities, whilst at the same time safeguarding the natural and cultural heritage of the land for future generations and the enjoyment of the wider public. The Foundation set up Assynt.Biz, which is a trading company wholly owned by the Assynt Foundation, to undertake the income generating activities which currently are: 1) Deer stalking and venison sales 2) Commercial letting of property and land for holiday, residential and business use 3) Residential & Specialised "Activity" courses/breaks (e.g. writers and artists retreats) and 4) Sale of fishing permits and the rental of fishing and other sporting equipment. We are also investigating an affordable housing initiative and a potential renewable energy project".*

- 6.29 Indeed there appears an increasing 'community land purchase' movement in Scotland (see Skerratt 2011 for an in-depth examination of seventeen such land trusts in remote and rural Scotland). In addition to the examples above there are a range of further examples of this activity available from a number of sources including the Scottish Community Land Network: (SCLN 2011) and Community Land Trusts (CLT 2011). Morris (2010) reviews Sleat Community Trust which formed in 2004 in response to the need for a local community organisation to receive a proportion of the income from a local windfarm which was planned (but has yet to be taken forward). Nevertheless the Trust has, in response to the threatened closure of the local filling station and post office taken on the running of these services and is looking toward renewable energy options and the purchase of a nearby forestry plantation.
- 6.30 There also appears a significant community woodland movement across Scotland. In recognition of the recreational, biodiversity and conservation, economic development, renewable energy and social inclusion potential for woodland an increasing number of communities are taking on the management and development of their woods either as entirely volunteer run organisations or in conjunction with paid workers to build 'sustainable, flourishing, creative, resilient and vibrant communities' (Community Woodland Association 2011b). Although it is not possible to summarise the distribution of these woodlands by rurality, with a sizeable number in urban areas as well as rural, the Community Woodlands Association have mapped their membership across Scotland which suggests the movement appears particularly well represented in the Highlands and Islands (Community Woodlands Association 2011a).

## **LEADER and rural community development in Scotland.**

- 6.31 LEADER, a European funded community initiative and part of the Scottish Rural Development Programme, aims to “increase the capacity of local rural community and business networks to build knowledge and skills, innovate and co-operate in order to tackle local development objectives”, is administered through Local Action Groups (LAGs), is eligible to the ‘whole of rural Scotland’ and open to ‘constituted community groups, micro or small businesses, voluntary organisations or public sector bodies with a project idea that will benefit the rural community’ as well as in some cases “individuals who have public support for their project” (Scottish Government 2007a: 2). The “approach rather than a programme” has a six year budget of just under £60 million starting from 2006 (Hall and Skerratt 2010: 49)
- 6.32 There is, therefore, a key role for the third sector in ‘... the development of new and innovative approaches to rural service delivery, including establishing resourced and sustainable community based delivery organisations that can take forward important local projects...’ (Chris Parkin, Lanark Rural Development Trust, cited in Hall and Skerratt 2010: 49). These might start with community led plans and local action plans which begin to help residents identify key concerns and means of addressing them from within the community. Each of the LAGs (of which there are 20) has a web presence which can be accessed via the SRDP website (Scottish Government 2011a) – these LAGs do not always correspond with LA boundaries, recognising that there can be areas of pronounced rurality within LAs which may have a predominantly rural population. Though not consistent across all groups, a number of LAGs offer databases of those projects which have received LEADER support from which case studies might be drawn.

### **Specific populations**

- 6.33 Third sector activity also appears to be effective at targeting defined sectors of the population. By way of example, the O4O (Older people for Older people) project – an EU Northern Periphery Programme - worked in a number of remote and rural locations across Finland, Greenland, Sweden, Northern Ireland and Scotland. It aimed to support and develop services for a particular sector of the population. Specifically, it aimed to:
- Identify their needs for services to help maintain older people living at home.
  - Identify gaps in service provision that would help statutory providers to keep older people living in their homes and communities.
  - Develop new ways of providing supporting services involving community members.
  - Assist in the development of volunteering, social organisations and social enterprises.

- 6.34 It focussed in particular on community transport, community-owned supported housing for older people, helping schemes, friendship schemes, volunteering to support older people and history and culture projects (O4O 2009a, 2009b).
- 6.35 In the Scottish context, the areas of Tongue (community transport), Assynt (remote rural residential care), SW Ross (neighbourly support) and Ardersier (oral history) have participated in the project in Highland.
- 6.36 In Tongue, the community transport group (originally set up as a subgroup of a local community development company and now considering moving toward forming as a separate social enterprise) operates at three levels: 1) coordination of informal lift sharing, 2) a community car scheme and 3) a “transport service which is designed to meet community need but can also generate income”. On the basis of the ‘sense of place and increased confidence’ generated as part of the Ardersier project a community company to develop community assets and services has also been founded (O4O 2010).
- 6.37 Voluntary and third sector activity may therefore be particularly effective at achieving multiple goals of social inclusion, improved health and wellbeing and improved services, as evidenced by this example in rural and remote rural areas, tackling the ‘silo thinking’ of conventional methods of service delivery (Osborne et al. 2011).

### **Specific areas**

- 6.38 Again it is the Highlands and Islands which form the basis for an in-depth examination of local level third sector activity. SQW (2002) research the social economy of the Highlands and Islands and on the basis of the identification of 8,142 groups, separate them into a number of categories according to the area in which they function. They find that ‘sports groups’ appear to be the most numerous, with those falling into the ‘arts, culture and music’ then ‘social care’ and ‘social groups’ categories also being particularly great in number.
- 6.39 Literature at the local level is also helpful in offering examples of such activity. The Highland Voluntary Sector Forum (2007) set out examples of the way in which the third sector is contributing strongly in areas of equalities, environment, rural transport, mental health services, children’s services, young carers, counselling services, elderly people, employment, drugs and alcohol, culture and volunteering. Annual reports of volunteering and third sector infrastructure organisations can also be helpful in providing case study evidence of local third sector service provision activity. Finally, The ‘Rural Gateway’ resource, as the online presence of the Scotland National Rural Network (SNRN 2011), provides a great range of examples of rural community development. The SNRN aims to build a social network, connecting rural Scotland and promoting rural development through building an online and offline community inspired by projects already underway and informed by advice on funding sources and contacts.

## Summary

- 6.40 It is of fundamental importance to repeat that this is a review of *existing research which has been undertaken* on the roles of the rural third sector in Scotland, not a review of the nature of activity as exists. Therefore, the themes which have emerged may be as much a function of research interest or policy focus, as of importance to rural communities.
- 6.41 There may be – on the basis of earlier chapters – a particular role for the rural third sector in supporting certain activity: for example transport, housing, community energy, community asset ownership, health care and so on. Evidence for this, however, is generally case study-by-case study, and it is challenging to develop a coherent picture. Equally, whilst this chapter has aimed to draw together the key areas of case-study evidence regarding third sector activity in rural areas, it cannot be said that these are *more* characteristic of rural areas than urban areas.
- 6.42 There has also been a focus here on local level third sector activity, rather than an examination of the larger scale service delivery of third sector organisations through contacts at the Local Authority level. Again, this is absolutely not to suggest that such activity is insignificant. Indeed as we have seen the sector is receiving an increasing amount of income from statutory sources, which in the Scottish sector has seen a marked decrease in grants and a corresponding increase in contracts and service level agreements. More research exploring existing data, and more freely available data regarding the nature and extent of this activity is needed so that a fuller understanding of the activities undertaken and services provided by both community-level organisations and larger national voluntary organisations in rural areas might be gained.
- 6.43 Nevertheless, thematically there are several areas of literature which appear to be greater in size than others. Rural infrastructure – including transport and energy – has been highlighted as a particular challenge for the population of rural Scotland. Case studies across rural Scotland (however again focussing in the Highlands and Islands) have shown the third sector to have a strong role in addressing these concerns. Rural community facilities may play a particularly strong role in rural communities, and in the overwhelming number of cases to be owned by the local community. They provide sites of social capital development, employment, voluntary activity and as existing (and potential) sites of multi-service delivery.
- 6.44 There are a wealth of case studies demonstrating the role of rural third sector activity in the fields of community energy projects, the provision of community owned and run services (including shops/post offices, gyms, transport, care homes), community land purchase and community woodlands as well as smaller scale rural community development projects delivered by organisations identifying themselves variously as community trusts, community interest companies, social enterprises, or charities.

6.45 There is a great diversity to the Scottish rural third sector. It is impossible to review the whole of the sector given the constraints of this project. The creation of a comprehensive view of this element of the sector which does the sector justice is, however, hampered by a number of further factors. These include a lack of consistent definition, a lack of research which allows direct comparison between urban and rural areas, umbrella organisations which represent sub-sectoral elements relying on membership to make estimates regarding distribution, the challenge posed with regard to resources for local level bodies attempting to collect data on their immediate areas, and the challenge posed in untangling the influence of 'rurality' in influencing the nature and extent of the third sector landscape in rural areas as distinct from other socio-economic factors.

## **7 THE ECONOMIC DOWNTURN AND THE SCOTTISH RURAL THIRD SECTOR**

7.1 From the second quarter of 2008 to the end of 2009 the UK was in recession. Here, a brief summary of the emerging research themes and agendas regarding the impacts this, and the wider economic downturn, might have had on the rural third sector is offered. This is summarised first in terms of the third sector generally, and second the rural third sector specifically.

### **The economic downturn and the third sector**

7.2 This section provides a brief overview of research regarding the impact of the recession on the third sector across the UK and within Scotland. Having provided this context, the following section examines the extent of the research base regarding the impact of the recession (and economic downturn more generally) on the rural third sector.

7.3 For the UK, the representative body NCVO (2008: 1) find that “a generally thin, conflicting evidence base leads us to conclude that any impacts will be mixed”, with some organisations failing, and others emerging stronger in the face of changing demands and funding/cost. Mohan and Wilding (2009) agree that the impacts of the recession will have diverse implications depending on the position of the organisation in question, and emphasise that given the changing role of the sector, we have created a situation in which it “cannot be allowed to fail” with a structured programme of support required.

7.4 In the UK, Davies (2009) undertakes a literature review on behalf of UNISON of “Government policy, recession and the voluntary sector”, and in conjunction with interviews, focus groups and questionnaires with/from UNISON members, argues demand for the services of charities is increasing whilst at the same time funding remains static or is decreasing. It is suggested that medium sized voluntary organisations may feel the most severe impacts as a result of changed funding regimes, with a greater reliance on state funding (than larger voluntary organisations) and a lower capacity for independent fundraising.

7.5 In England and Wales, 1,010 telephone interviews were carried out with a random sample of charities in early 2010 on behalf of the Charity Commission (2010). Amongst the key findings were that:

- 59% of charities reported being affected by the economic downturn, compared to 56% in August 2009 and 38% in September 2008.
- Health, international development and social services charities were most likely to say that they had been affected.

- Small community-based charities<sup>31</sup> were least likely to say that they had experienced a drop of income related to the downturn, and most likely to predict that their income would remain stable in the coming 12 months.
- Over a quarter of all charities expected income to decline in the coming 12 months, 29% have seen income from fundraising fall in the last 6 months and 62% had seen income from investments decline in the last 6 months.
- Approximately a third of all charities had seen an increase in demand for their services in the last 12 months.
- However 84% of all charities were optimistic when looking to the next 12 months.

- 7.6 NCVO and CAF (2009) review the impact of the recession on charitable giving specifically, and find on the basis of the annual UK Giving study that from 2008 – 2009 charitable giving had declined from 56% to 54% of the UK population reporting having donated to charity in an average month in comparison to 2007 – 2008. This level is equivalent to the 2006 – 2007 percentage, however the total amount donated (adjusted for inflation) is lower. It is also suggested that although the recession is likely to impact on charitable donations, as with the impact on the sector more generally, it appears that not all causes will be affected equally. CAF (2011) also suggest that it is the larger rather than the smaller charities in England and Wales that have seen their charitable donations decrease most significantly between 2007 and 2009.
- 7.7 The most recent data published by NCVO and CAF (2011) finds that the proportion of adults giving has increased from 54% in 2008 – 2009, to 56% in 2009 – 2010 and 58% in 2010 – 2011. The report suggests therefore that ‘the proportion of adults giving has returned to pre-recession levels’, with the relative stability of giving between 2004 – 2005 to date ‘more striking than the variations’. It is also suggested that with regards to the amount given, ‘since 2008/09, charitable giving has grown by 6.1% in real terms. Given the difficult financial climate over the same period, a clear conclusion is that the public’s determination to give to charity has remained strong during recession’.
- 7.8 Cowley et al. (2011)<sup>HJ</sup> however, argue that “giving is largely recession-proof” in long term perspective. They are unable to comment beyond 2008, but do note that giving “appeared more volatile in the current recession than in the previous ones” (ibid: 3).
- 7.9 The implications of the economic downturn have been linked to both public service reform and significant reductions in expenditure by the public sector. Recent research by NCVO (2011) suggests that the voluntary and community sector will not be immune from these cuts. It is found that the UK voluntary and community sector will be faced by funding cuts of £2.8 billion between 2011 – 2016. It is argued that these figures are likely to mask variation within

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<sup>31</sup> Classified as charities with an income of £10,000 per year or less.

<sup>HJ</sup> Drawing on the ONS Living Costs and Food Survey

the sector, with certain departments such as the NHS potentially increasing their funding for the sector, whilst other departments may cut their spending more drastically.

- 7.10 Research has also been undertaken by representative bodies at the regional level, such as Voluntary Organisations Network North East (VONNE 2009). In the case of the North East of England present a picture of a sector “Surviving not Thriving” in the face of recession with an increase in demand for services and greater uncertainty regarding funding. The report also found on the basis of 105 responding organisations in late 2009 that those that classified themselves as working solely in rural areas also reported seeing the greatest decrease in funding. VONNE (2010) on the basis of 141 survey responses from third sector organisations in the North East of England, find that 62% of organisations had seen a decrease in funding, whilst 69% had seen an increase in demand.
- 7.11 A number of smaller scale studies of the impact of recession on the third sector are evident. It should be noted that sample sizes tend to be limited, and therefore the extent to which patterns identified are representative of the wider third sector is not clear. For example local level studies in England have been commissioned (Kitchen 2009; Simpson et al. 2009) and generally suggest that the picture is unclear with regards to the impact of recession on the third sector, with it being too early to discern what the major elements of the impact might be and where this is assessed the picture tends to be mixed, with both opportunities and challenges.
- 7.12 In the Scottish context, it also appears to be the case that the majority of research has been undertaken by representative bodies. Lees (2009) reviews the financial state of the sector for SCVO. He highlights the cases of Citizen’s Advice Scotland (identifying a 70% increase in debt cases compared to the previous year), Carers Scotland (88% of carers experiencing increased debt problems largely as a result of the economic downturn) and Shelter Scotland (experiencing a 127% increase in new cases from calls to the charity’s helpline over the Christmas and New Year periods in comparison to the previous year).
- 7.13 SCVO (2010: 1) note that “a healthy gap between income and expenditure is vital to ensure sustainability of voluntary sector services in the light of future uncertainties”. It is found that on the basis of the SCVO panel survey this gap is 2.8% of total income.
- 7.14 SCVO (ibid) go on to find that on average during 2008 – 2009 charities with an income of below £12,500 report an operational deficit, whilst those in the income band of £25,000 - £100,000 per annum report aggregate deficits (though this is, of course, subject to funding cycles). Worry over using reserves to fund activities “as public funders appeared to expect more work for less money” is borne out by informal conversations referred to by de Lima (2009: 8) in the Scottish Highland context.
- 7.15 Furthermore, SCVO (2011a) find on the basis of a sample of 983 organisations that funding is reported to be static during 2009-2010, whilst a

smaller sample of 275 organisations highlights experiences and expectations regarding finances, staffing, demand for services and future planning in the current economic climate (SCVO 2011b).

- 7.16 Osborne et al (2011) note in the first year report of a longitudinal study exploring ‘the opportunities and challenges of the changing public services landscape for the third sector in Scotland’, that even before the recession third sector organisations had faced a challenging financial environment with funding not keeping pace with inflation. They find a mixed picture with some third sector organisations reporting that funding cuts are affecting their existing contracts to deliver services whilst others suggest that there could be opportunities for innovation and reduced dependency on public sector funding. The full effect of cuts has yet to be felt but concerns are voiced about their potential impact. The report also demonstrates how organisations are adapting and diversifying in different ways to meet these financial challenges.
- 7.17 At the more local level, Glasgow CVS (GCVS 2009) have undertaken two surveys of its members to “ascertain the severity of the economic downturn and its effect on Glasgow’s voluntary organisations and community groups”. Drawing on a small sample of 61 organisations, in the case of the most recent study<sup>40</sup> a picture emerged of “voluntary organisations in Glasgow... facing real and continuing problems and that morale amongst staff and service users is at an all-time low. Essential services and support are being lost at a time when they are needed most”. The report documents changed working practices (cancellation of services and decreased amount of time spent with service users for example) as a result of an increased demand for services.
- 7.18 Harrow (2009a: 30) in her review of the relationship in Scotland between third sector organisations themselves, and the third sector and the government in light of the economic downturn speculates “that in the face of over-generalised policy initiatives and continuing reliance on known funding sources (public services contracts) in Scotland, the sector will become even more differentiated and separated within itself, with organisations competing for grants and contracts, chasing the same staff if not the same donors and private funders, ‘going up’ or ‘going down’ according to reserves levels”.
- 7.19 Therefore there appears agreement that the third sector has been influenced by the economic downturn. Generally, demand appears to be increasing whilst funding is decreasing. However the ways in which the organisations which compose the third sector have been influenced appears to vary by size and sphere of activity, with conflicting evidence regarding both of these components. Evidence regarding the impact of the most recent economic downturn on charitable giving in the UK appears to suggest that both proportion of adults giving and the overall value of donation are now recovering post 2008/9.

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<sup>40</sup> Of GCVS’ membership of circa 600 organisations, 61 responded.

## The economic downturn, the third sector and rural areas

7.20 The Commission for Rural Communities (IpsosMORI 2010) finds that those in rural areas appear to feel that the area in which they live has been less affected than the rest of England<sup>41</sup>. It should be noted however that when respondents were asked about the extent to which they and/or their households had been personally effected by the recession, results across urban and rural areas were broadly similar.

7.21 In rural Scotland de Lima (2009: 7) evaluates 'The impact of the economic downturn on the 'rural voluntary sector' in Scotland' and finds that:

*"there is little or no reliable information on the revenue streams (i.e. Public, private and voluntary/foundation) of the rural voluntary sector taking into account their diverse geographies... there is little evidence on the specific impact of the economic downturn on the rural voluntary sector and much of what exists is anecdotal at present"*.

This poor evidence base therefore makes the task of disentangling the impact of the economic downturn in rural areas challenging.

7.22 de Lima (ibid: 12 – 13) goes on to outline four issues which should be addressed in order to better develop our understanding, which can be briefly summarised as:

- **Definitional issues:** constructing a clear definition of the 'rural voluntary sector' recognising the contested nature of both elements.
- **Finance:** address the gaps in information about the funding flows to (and generated by) rural voluntary organisations.
- **People resources:** There is a small pool of volunteers and staff from which the sector can draw in rural areas and a feeling that recruitment requirements of volunteers are too onerous for small organisations. Issues of training and capacity building need to be addressed.
- **Structural capacity:** Limited contact with other organisations and the potential for collaboration appears to be under-developed in rural areas: the economic downturn may provide an opportunity to network more strongly to overcome shared difficulties.

7.23 de Lima and Brauholtz-Speight (2010) have examined the impact of the recession on a number of third sector organisations in Helmsdale, in East Sutherland. They find that: "Lower levels of funding at regional and national levels appear to be the main impact of the recession on the third sector in the study area. There is a perception that public sector funding is already tightening. However, the main financial impacts are likely to be felt in the medium-term, as current funding agreements run out". (ibid: 3). For some this

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<sup>41</sup> 38% of those in urban areas felt their area had been affected much more or slightly more by the recession than other parts of England, compared to 25% of those in rural England.

has resulted in seeking funds from new sources, or sharing resource with other third sector organisations. For others, reducing or cutting service provision entirely was a possibility, however.

- 7.24 The authors (ibid) go on to suggest that “The recession may serve to compound already existing challenges associated with the sparsely populated nature of the area. For example:
- The high cost of fuel and energy was mentioned frequently.
  - Poor public transport provision was reported as creating extra burdens for organisations and their clients
  - Keeping up with policy and legislative changes that directly affect their work can be time consuming for small organisations”
- 7.25 Osborne et al. (2011) identify the influence of rurality on the operation of third sector organisations. They cite dispersed geography, longer travel times and less comprehensive public transport infrastructure as increasing the cost of operation, whilst economies of scale were not available to small rural services compared to larger urban counterparts.
- 7.26 In summary, there appears little coherent evidence on the nature of the impacts the economic downturn may have had on the sector in rural areas. It is possible that operating in rural areas may exacerbate the challenges posed by the downturn for third sector organisations more generally, a theme which requires further research.

## **Summary**

- 7.27 Literature discussing the impact of the economic downturn on the third sector generally appears still in its infancy. The research that has been undertaken suggests the effects are likely to be unevenly felt across the sector. There is a strong diversity of research with regards to scale: national level surveys and local community/area studies all feature strongly, although are of varying quality.
- 7.28 Literature suggests that key changes in the third sector landscape as a consequence of the economic downturn include an increased demand for the services of third sector organisations, subsequent increasing demands on resources (financial, paid workers and volunteers) and an increased amount of competition for resources. This increase in demand presents opportunities and challenges for the third sector.
- 7.29 However the ways in which the organisations which compose the third sector have been influenced appears to vary by size and sphere of activity, with conflicting evidence regarding both of these components.

- 7.30 The influence of previous economic downturns on charitable giving appears relatively minor and short term. Both the proportion of adults giving and the overall value of donation appear to be recovering in the UK post 2008/9.
- 7.31 The third sector is likely to be profoundly influenced not only by the economic downturn, but also by reduced public sector spending. The effects of this appear likely to be unequal with reference to both size of organisation and area of activity, as well as local authority area.
- 7.32 Research undertaken in the Scottish context presents a similarly mixed picture of challenges, uncertainty and opportunity.
- 7.33 In the rural context, there appears a pronounced lack of research undertaken to establish the extent to which there may be a unique effect of the economic downturn in rural areas. Research conducted in England suggests that those living in rural areas are not significantly likely to feel that the recession has affected them any differently compared to their urban counterparts, although the extent to which this is also the case in Scotland is not known.
- 7.34 In the Scottish rural context evidence is lacking. The available research suggests that operating in rural areas (and the associated demands on resources this entails) may accentuate the impacts of the economic downturn on these third sector organisations.

## 8 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 This report has presented an initial review of the available research regarding the nature and extent of volunteering and the third sector in rural Scotland.
- 8.2 There appear pronounced gaps in research around these areas. There are definitional challenges with regard to both 'rural' and 'third sector' as well as difficulties in data collection, comparability and focus.
- 8.3 Nevertheless there are a number of key themes emerging from the literature reviewed in each chapter, which are summarised below:

### **Scotland's rural population: volunteering**

- 8.4 Scotland-wide surveys suggest that rates of formal volunteering generally increase with degree of rurality, and have done so consistently over time. However it is more challenging to identify how far *what* is done by volunteers in urban as opposed to rural areas is distinct, owing to low sample sizes.
- 8.5 Smaller-scale research suggests that the formal volunteering of those in rural areas may be particularly 'broad' in nature, across a large number of organisations but for less time in each organisation compared to those in urban areas. Conversely, the profile of volunteering in urban areas may be particularly 'deep'; volunteering with fewer organisations but devoting a greater amount of time to each one. However the influence of rurality on the amount of time given overall, and the frequency of volunteering, appears less significant.
- 8.6 Research also suggests that those volunteers in rural areas may often be engaged in the substitutational delivery of services.
- 8.7 High rates of volunteering could be seen as a positive social indicator, and a potential resource for the further development of community led solutions to shared challenges. However it appears important to consider that i) the degree of existing activity being undertaken may mean that capacity to undertake any further activity as a result of public service reform is limited, and ii) the nature of and motivations for this activity may be more as a result of a lack of service provision, which may have implications for the ongoing sustainability of this participation.

### **Comparing the urban and rural third sector in Scotland.**

- 8.8 Literature tends to suggest a distinct role for the third sector in rural areas in the provision of services in particular socio-economic and spatial contexts.
- 8.9 In Scotland, it appears there are a higher number, per head, of charities in a number of rural LAs compared to urban areas.

- 8.10 It could therefore be tentatively suggested that the nature and extent of third sector activity may be distinct in rural Scotland compared to urban Scotland, however further analysis of this data is required to identify the activities of charities in rural Scotland. It may be helpful, for example, to examine how far the role of charities appear additional or substitutional compared to more urban areas, and the opportunities and challenges that this may present in light of public service reform.

### **The Scottish rural third sector: key areas of evidence**

- 8.11 Research differentiating between urban and rural areas in Scotland in terms of the *function* of rural third sector organisations appears lacking. It appears generally case study based at the more local level.
- 8.12 Case study based research in England suggests that there is a particularly strong role for the rural third sector in the areas of transport, social inclusion and service delivery.
- 8.13 Geographically, most research regarding the third sector in rural areas of Scotland appears focussed in the Highlands and Islands. This work suggests a sector contributing significantly to the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the region. Key sub-sectors include those of sport, arts, culture and music, and social care. Data collected by local infrastructure organisations presents a picture of a diverse sector and reinforces national level studies which suggest the majority of voluntary and community sector organisations are small in size and generally run entirely by volunteers.
- 8.14 Rural community facilities may play a particularly strong role in rural communities, and in the overwhelming number of cases appear to be owned by the local community. They provide sites of social capital development, employment, voluntary activity and as existing (and potential) sites of multi-service delivery.
- 8.15 It is impossible within the remit of this study to establish the extent to which there is a commonality of community-based third sector activity in rural areas in comparison with more urban areas, and the extent to which it is rurality in particular that has shaped these differences. There are however a wealth of case studies demonstrating the role of third sector activity in rural areas in the fields of community energy projects, the provision of community owned and run services (including shops/post offices, gyms, transport, care homes), community land purchase and community woodlands delivered by organisations identifying themselves variously as community trusts, community interest companies, social enterprises, charities and/or voluntary organisations.

### **The economic downturn and the Scottish rural third sector**

- 8.16 The economic downturn appears to be resulting in an increased demand for the services of third sector organisations, subsequent increasing demands on

resources (financial, paid workers and volunteers) and an increased amount of competition for resources.

- 8.17 However the ways in which the organisations which compose the third sector have been influenced appears to vary by size and sphere of activity, with conflicting evidence regarding both of these components. The influence of previous economic downturns on charitable giving appears relatively minor and short term, and both the proportion of adults giving and the overall value of donation appear to be recovering in the UK post 2008/9.
- 8.18 In addition, research highlights that significant public sector spending reductions will be felt by the sector, and will be differential in their impacts.
- 8.19 Work undertaken in the Scottish context presents a similarly mixed picture of challenges, uncertainty and opportunities, with the effects felt unevenly across the sector.
- 8.20 Generally, work identifying the impact of the economic downturn on the third sector in rural areas appears rare.
- 8.21 The research which has been undertaken suggests that the challenges of operating in rural areas for third sector organisations may have been accentuated in light of the economic downturn, particularly with regard to resources for example.

### **Research gaps and future agendas**

- 8.22 The third sector clearly performs a great many diverse roles in rural areas. The rural third sector appears generally less comprehensively understood compared to the urban third sector and Scotland's third sector appears generally less comprehensively researched than the English third sector. Indeed, the extent to which there is a distinctly 'rural' third sector is somewhat under researched. The creation of a comprehensive view of this element of the sector is hampered by a number of specific factors. These include a lack of consistent definition, a lack of research which allows direct comparison between urban and rural (and accessible rural and remote rural) areas, umbrella organisations which represent sub-sectoral elements relying on membership to make estimates regarding distribution, the challenge posed with regard to resources for local level bodies attempting to collect data on their immediate area.
- 8.23 Therefore there appears a need for further work, sensitive to potential spatial variations in the volunteering and third sector landscape, to be carried out. This has the potential to include a more in-depth exploration of the nature and extent of volunteering and third sector activity within rural areas specifically, and comparison between urban and rural contexts. This may allow the identification of how far spatially sensitive volunteering, third sector and public service reform governance could be appropriate in Scotland.

- 8.24 Whilst the amount of voluntary activity can be said to vary between urban and rural (and remote and accessible rural areas), it is more difficult to reliably and robustly gauge how the *activities* of volunteers vary. This could be beneficial in considering how far voluntary activity is 'service' in nature, clarifying how far volunteering in rural areas is specifically a function of a lack of service provision (substitution) or a more general form of community participation (addition). Similarly, there is significant scope to use existing data regarding Scottish charities to explore the spatial distribution of charitable purposes in order that geographical variations in the role of charities be identified.
- 8.25 It appears that there is little available coherent research assessing the spatial distribution of larger-scale (beyond case-study or community-level) third sector service delivery which would allow for a more complete picture of the role of the third sector in more rural areas.
- 8.26 Research and literature with regard to rural Scotland is particularly focussed on the Highlands and Islands. Case study evidence clearly suggests that there is a great deal of third sector and rural community development activity undertaken elsewhere in rural Scotland and in order to obtain a well rounded picture of the rural third sector further attention could also be given to these areas.
- 8.27 Overall, in order to move beyond a case study approach to valuing the contribution of the third sector in rural areas of Scotland, a more comparable (in terms of data), coherent (in terms of scale) and joined up (in terms of subsectors) approach to researching the sector might be helpful.

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## **GLOSSARY AND APPENDICES**

### **Glossary**

CAF: Charities Aid Foundation  
CLG: Company Limited by Guarantee  
CIC: Community Interest Company  
CLS: Company Limited by Share  
CLT: Community Land Trusts  
CTA: Community Transport Association  
CVS: Council(s) for the Voluntary Sector  
DEFRA: Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
DESERVE: Delivering SERVICES in remote and rural areas  
DTA: Development Trusts Association  
DTAS: Development Trusts Association Scotland  
ESRC: Economic and Social Research Council  
GROS: General Register Office for Scotland  
HOCS: Home Office Citizenship Survey  
IPS: Industrial and Provident Societies  
IVR: Institute for Volunteering Research  
LA: Local Authority  
LAG: Local Action Group  
NCVO: National Council for Voluntary Organisations  
NGO: Non-Governmental Organisations  
O4O: Older people for Older people  
OECD: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development  
OSCR: Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator  
RCF: Rural Community Facility  
SAC: Scottish Agricultural College  
SCLN: Scottish Community Land Network  
SCVO: Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations  
SEERAD: Scottish Executive Environment and Rural Affairs Department  
SHS: Scottish Household Survey  
SNRP: Scottish National Rural Partnership  
SRDP: Scottish Rural Development Programme  
SVA: Supporting Voluntary Action  
TSRC: Third Sector Research Centre  
UHI: University of the Highlands and Islands  
VC: Volunteer Centre  
VCS: Voluntary and Community Sector  
VDS: Volunteer Development Scotland

## **Appendix one: databases interrogated**

### *Academic:*

Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts (ASSIA)  
Criminal Justice Abstracts  
Google Scholar  
Scopus  
Social Science Research Network  
Social Services Abstracts  
Sociological Abstracts  
Web of Knowledge

### *Policy/practice*

Idox

### *Third sector*

The SCVO Third Sector Evidence Library

### *General:*

The National Library of Scotland  
The library of the University of Dundee  
The library of the University of St. Andrews

## Appendix two: six and eight-fold urban/rural classification

Class	Class Name	Description
1	Large Urban Areas	Settlements of over 125,000 people.
2	Other Urban Areas	Settlements of 10,000 to 125,000 people.
3	Accessible Small Towns	Settlements of between 3,000 and 10,000 people, and within a 30 minute drive time of a Settlement of 10,000 or more.
4	Remote Small Towns	Settlements of between 3,000 and 10,000 people, and with a drive time of over 30 minutes to a Settlement of 10,000 or more.
5	Accessible Rural Areas	Areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and within a 30 minute drive time of a Settlement of 10,000 or more.
6	Remote Rural Areas	Areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and with a drive time of over 30 minutes to a Settlement of 10,000 or more.

Class	Class Name	Description
1	Large Urban Areas	Settlements of over 125,000 people.
2	Other Urban Areas	Settlements of 10,000 to 125,000 people.
3	Accessible Small Towns	Settlements of between 3,000 and 10,000 people, and within a 30 minute drive time of a Settlement of 10,000 or more.
4	Remote Small Towns	Settlements of between 3,000 and 10,000 people, and with a drive time between 30 and 60 minutes to a Settlement of 10,000 or more.
5	Very Remote Small Towns	Settlements of between 3,000 and 10,000 people, and with a drive time of over 60 minutes to a Settlement of 10,000 or more.
6	Accessible Rural Areas	Areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and within a drive time of 30 minutes to a Settlement of 10,000 or more.
7	Remote Rural Areas	Areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and with a drive time of between 30 and 60 minutes to a Settlement of 10,000 or more.
8	Very Remote Rural Areas	Areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and with a drive time of over 60 minutes to a Settlement of 10,000 or more.

*The Scottish Government six and eight fold urban/rural classification (Scottish Government 2010c: 5).*

### Appendix three: Scottish local authorities ranked by % rural population

Rank	LA	Accessible rural(%)	Remote rural (%)	Combined (%)
1	Eilean Siar		78.9	78.9
2	Shetland Islands		70.9	70.9
3	Orkney Islands		67.2	67.2
4	Aberdeenshire	36.8	16	52.8
=	Argyll and Bute	7.6	45.2	52.8
5	Highland	10.5	40.6	51.1
6	Scottish Borders	39	12	51
7	Dumfries and Galloway	25	21.9	46.9
=	Perth and Kinross	30.2	16.7	46.9
8	Moray	29.1	14.2	43.3
9	Stirling	27.1	7.5	34.6
10	East Lothian	24.7	2.9	27.6
11	Angus	26.7	0.8	27.5
12	East Ayrshire	18.5	8.6	27.1
13	South Ayrshire	17.8	4.3	22.1
14	Fife	17.8		17.8
15	Midlothian	17.3		17.3
16	Clackmannanshire	14.2		14.2
17	South Lanarkshire	11	1.3	12.3
18	North Ayrshire	5.7	4.9	10.6
19	West Lothian	9.8		9.8
20	Falkirk	9.1		9.1
21	North Lanarkshire	6.8		6.8
22	East Dunbartonshire	5.7		5.7
23	Inverclyde	5.6		5.6
24	Renfrewshire	4.4		4.4
25	East Renfrewshire	4		4
26	Aberdeen City	1.6		1.6
27	West Dunbartonshire	1.3		1.3
28	City of Edinburgh	1.1		1.1
29	Dundee City	0.4		0.4
30	Glasgow City	0.2		0.2

*% Population living in 'accessible rural' and 'remote rural' LAs according to the six fold ranking provided in Scottish Government (2010c: 14)*

Appendix four: Type of volunteering activity by urban/rural classification.

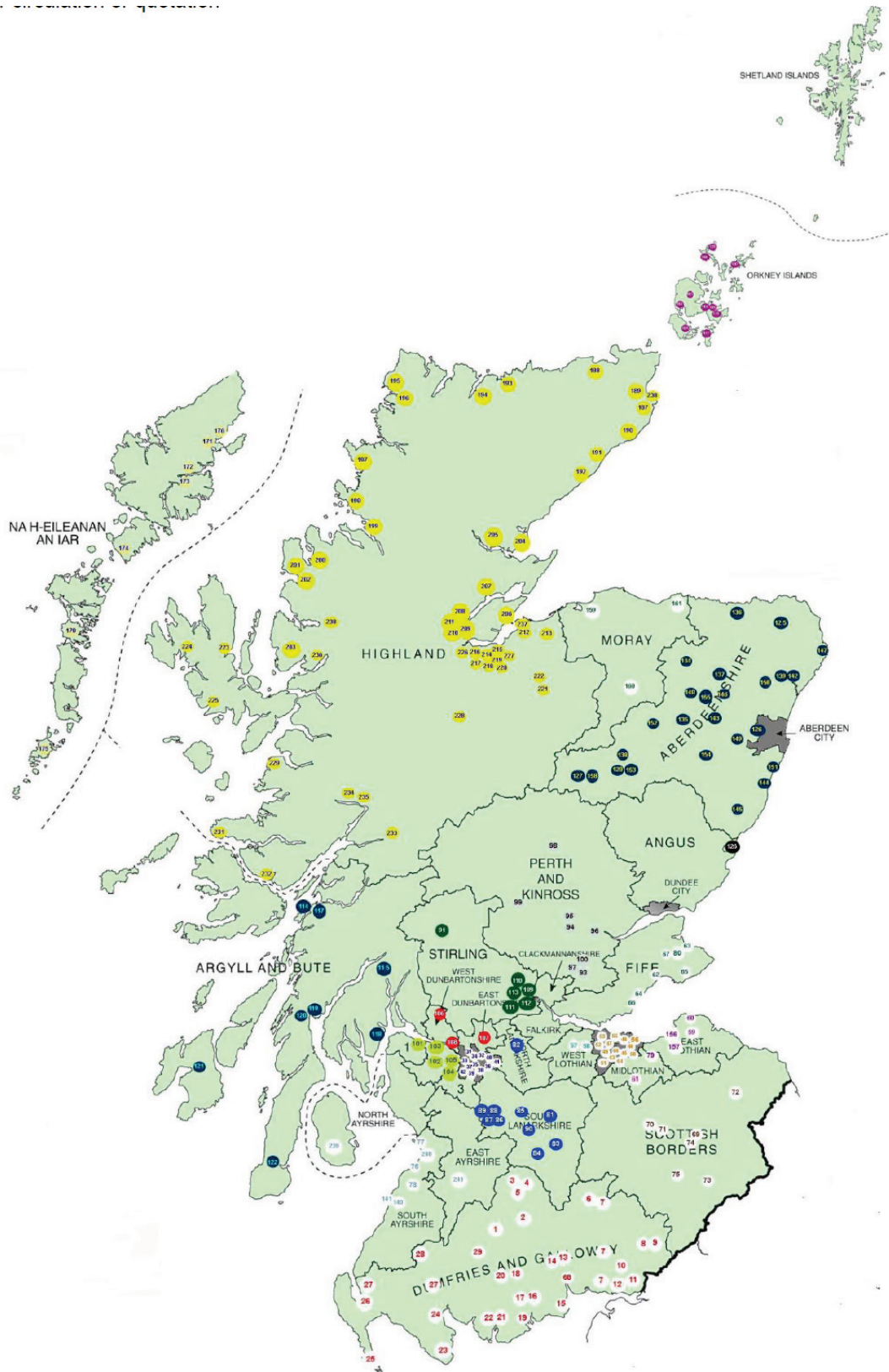
Type of Activity	Urban/Rural Classification					
	Large Urban Areas	Other Urban	Small Accessible Towns	Small Remote Towns	Accessible Rural	Remote Rural
Raising money (547)	20.0% (17.0 to 23.0)	32.4% (28.3 to 36.6)	28.6% (22.7 to 34.4)	31.7% (21.4 to 41.9)	35.1% (29.7 to 40.5)	28.6 (22.0 to 35.6)
Committee work (510)	20.2% (17.2 to 23.1)	25.6% (21.7 to 29.4)	23.5% (18.0 to 29.9)	22.8% (13.5 to 32.0)	36.1% (30.7 to 41.6)	35.9% (28.7 to 43.1)
Office work or administration (255)	12.2% (9.8 to 14.6)	14.9% (11.7 to 18.0)	9.5% (5.7 to 13.3)	7.6% (1.8 to 13.4)	13.7% (9.8 to 17.6)	15.3% (9.9 to 20.7)
Providing advice or assistance to others (302)	15.8% (13.1 to 18.5)	17.2% (13.8 to 20.5)	14.3% (9.8 to 18.8)	6.3% (1.0 to 11.7)	13.0% (9.2 to 16.9)	12.9% (7.9 to 18.0)
IT support (43)	2.8% (1.6 to 4.1)	1.9% (0.7 to 3.1)	0.9% (-0.3 to 2.1)	3.8% (-0.4 to 8.0)	2.0% (0.4 to 3.6)	1.2% (-0.4 to 2.8)
Education or training or coaching (255)	12.6% (10.2 to 15.1)	12.0% (9.1 to 14.8)	10.4% (6.5 to 14.4)	21.5% (12.5 to 30.6)	13.4% (9.5 to 17.2)	15.3% (9.9 to 20.7)
Advocacy (34)	2.3% (1.2 to 3.4)	1.9% (0.7 to 3.1)	2.2% (0.3 to 4.1)	0.0%	1.0% (-0.1 to 2.1)	0.6% (-0.6 to 1.7)
Campaigning (70)	3.6% (2.2 to 4.9)	4.3% (2.5 to 6.1)	2.6% (0.5 to 4.7)	0.0%	3.7% (1.5 to 5.8)	2.9% (0.4 to 5.5)
Providing transport or driving (102)	4.4% (2.9 to 5.9)	6.0% (3.9 to 8.1)	4.8% (2.0 to 7.5)	6.3% (1.0 to 11.7)	5.0% (2.5 to 7.5)	5.9% (2.3 to 9.4)
Visiting, buddying or befriending people (145)	8.4% (6.3 to 10.4)	8.1% (5.6 to 10.5)	5.2% (2.3 to 8.1)	7.6% (1.8 to 13.4)	6.7% (3.8 to 9.5)	4.1% (1.1 to 7.1)
Counselling (78)	3.5% (2.2 to 4.9)	5.0% (3.0 to 6.9)	3.9% (1.4 to 6.4)	2.5% (-0.9 to 6.0)	3.0% (1.1 to 4.9)	4.1% (1.1 to 7.1)
Helping to organise or run events or activities (483)	18.9% (16.0 to 21.8)	24.8% (20.9 to 28.6)	29.9% (24.0 to 35.8)	25.35% (15.7 to 34.9)	28.1% (23.0 to 33.2)	28.8% (22.0 to 35.6)
Providing direct services (181)	9.5% (7.3 to 11.7)	8.7% (6.2 to 11.2)	6.9% (3.7 to 10.2)	11.4% (4.4 to 18.4)	8.4% (5.2 to 11.5)	12.4% (7.4 to 17.3)
Representing others (66)	3.3% (2.0 to 4.6)	3.3% (1.7 to 4.9)	2.2% (0.3 to 4.1)	0.0%	4.4% (2.0 to 6.7)	5.3% (1.9 to 8.7)
Generally helping out (512)	24.3% (21.1 to 27.4)	28.1% (24.1 to 32.1)	25.5% (19.9 to 31.2)	35.4% (24.9 to 46.0)	23.4% (18.6 to 28.2)	24.0% (17.6 to 30.4)
Doing whatever is required (432)	21.7% (18.7 to 24.7)	21.1% (17.4 to 24.7)	20.9% (15.6 to 26.1)	27.9% (18.0 to 37.7)	19.7% (15.2 to 24.2)	23.5% (17.2 to 29.9)

SHS 2005 data summarised in Hurley et al. (2008).

Figures are percentage in each area reporting helping each group, 95% conf. intervals bracketed.

## Appendix five: Known distribution of Community Transport providers in Scotland.

Source: Scottish Government, 2010



The distribution of known Community Transport providers in Scotland (CTA 2010).

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