

Scottish Natural Heritage

NATURAL HERITAGE INDICATOR

February 2010

N2 Built development

Scotland's population of 5.17 million (2.31 million households) in mid-2008 is projected to rise to 5.54 million in 2033. Glasgow, with 0.58 million people is the largest city (General Register Office for Scotland). Around four fifths of the Scottish population live in settlements. Those with more than 3,000 people (171 settlements) extend across 1,445 km² of Scotland, or 2% of the land area. Settlements are distinctive components of the built landscape, beyond which transport, energy and communications infrastructure, as well as industry and housing, extend much more widely throughout Scotland.



City of Dundee ©P&A Macdonald / SNH

Evidence

The analysis of built development is based on seven spatial datasets (see commentary) obtained from Ordnance Survey (OS) and SNH. The distribution and intensity of built development is shown in the map below. The number of development components in one kilometre squares is colour coded to show the areas of no development (0) to highly developed (5, 6). The extent of impermeable development (e.g. buildings, roads, paved-over areas) provides an indication of soil sealing and the 'physical footprint' and this is presented in the associated table.

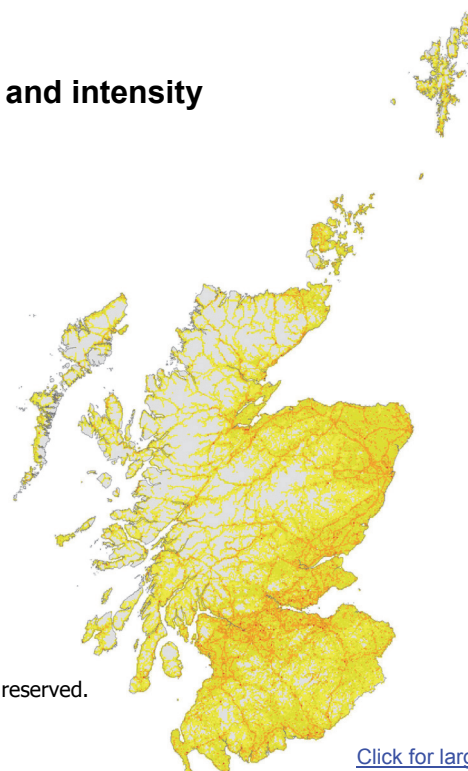
Built development, 2009

Soil sealing

Year	Coverage	% of Scotland
2008	121,375 ha	1.54%
2009	122,498 ha	1.55%

Distribution and intensity

No. of Components



© Crown copyright and database right [2010]. All rights reserved.
Ordnance Survey Licence number 100017908

[Click for larger image](#)

Assessment

- Between December 2008 and December 2009, soil sealing increased, from 121,375 to 122,498 ha; an increase of 0.01% the area of Scotland.
- In 2009, one or more types of development were present within 56,496 kilometre squares (66% of squares in Scotland); an increase of 393 squares (<1%) from 2008.

TREND

Increased

DATA CONFIDENCE

High



<http://www.snh.gov.uk/indicators/>

natural
scotland
SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

Commentary

The spatial analysis results for 2009 and the change from 2008 are shown in the table below. These are taken mainly from Ordnance Survey MasterMap (a commercially available map and database of fixed features of a few metres and larger). Wind farm sites for 2008 were obtained from the BWEA website and for 2009 from SNH records.

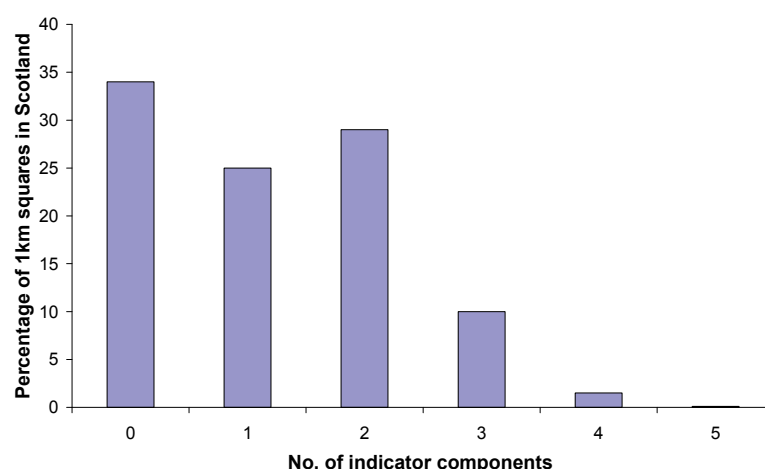
Dataset	2009	Change from 2008
commercial and domestic properties	2,577,498	41,201
roads (km)	135,099	1,548
overhead lines (km)	6,058	7
tall structures (masts, pylons)	4,791	-17
extraction industries (sites)	7,617	-2
camping and caravanning sites	902	89
wind farm sites	73	26

Built development mainly increased between 2008 and 2009 but the proportion of 1km squares with built development was little changed. Roads were present in 66% of 1km squares in Scotland; properties 36%; overhead lines 8%; extraction industries 7%; tall structures 3%; camping and caravanning sites 1%; and wind turbines less than 1%.

The chart below shows the percentage of 1 km squares in Scotland that contain different types of development components. As indicated above the percentages are the same for both 2008 and 2009.

Percentage of 1km squares in Scotland containing different numbers of development components, 2008 and 2009.

- 25% of 1km squares for 2008 and 2009 contained only one type of development. This is often a road.
- 29% of 1km squares contained two types of development; most likely to be roads and buildings.



Source data and updates

Scotland Statistics - <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/statistics/population.html>

British Wind Energy Association - www.bwea.com

Data are mainly from [Ordnance Survey](#) (under licence) and can now be updated annually.

UK Indicator

No equivalent.

References

SNH 2010. [Built development indicator - 2009 update](#). GIS methodology.

