

### Why is it inappropriate to separately look at male and female household representative rates (HRRs)?

An issue raised by Barton Willmore (BW) is that the method used by GL Hearn to increase HRRs will suppress the household formation of females. They observe this because in returning rates back to 2001 levels, the rate for females will decrease (although the rate assumptions for males increase by a greater amount). Their suggested approach seeks to return to 2008-based household formation rates.

The BW view however fails to recognise both the reality of household formation and also the methodology underpinning the CLG Household Projections. The *Household Projections 2014-based: Methodological Report* published by CLG in July 2016 is clear (see page 12) that *'the eldest male is taken as the household representative in the Stage One methodology'* with *'the oldest female taken if there is no male.'* The implication of this is that:

- Male and female household formation rates are clearly related to one another and should not be considered separately;
- In any household with more than one adult, the CLG methodology will automatically see the male assume the role of the household representative person (HRP).

In simple terms, if the HRPs of males increased relative to trends, then it would be reasonable to expect a decrease in the number of female HRPs relative to trends unless a change in the underlying household structures was expected.

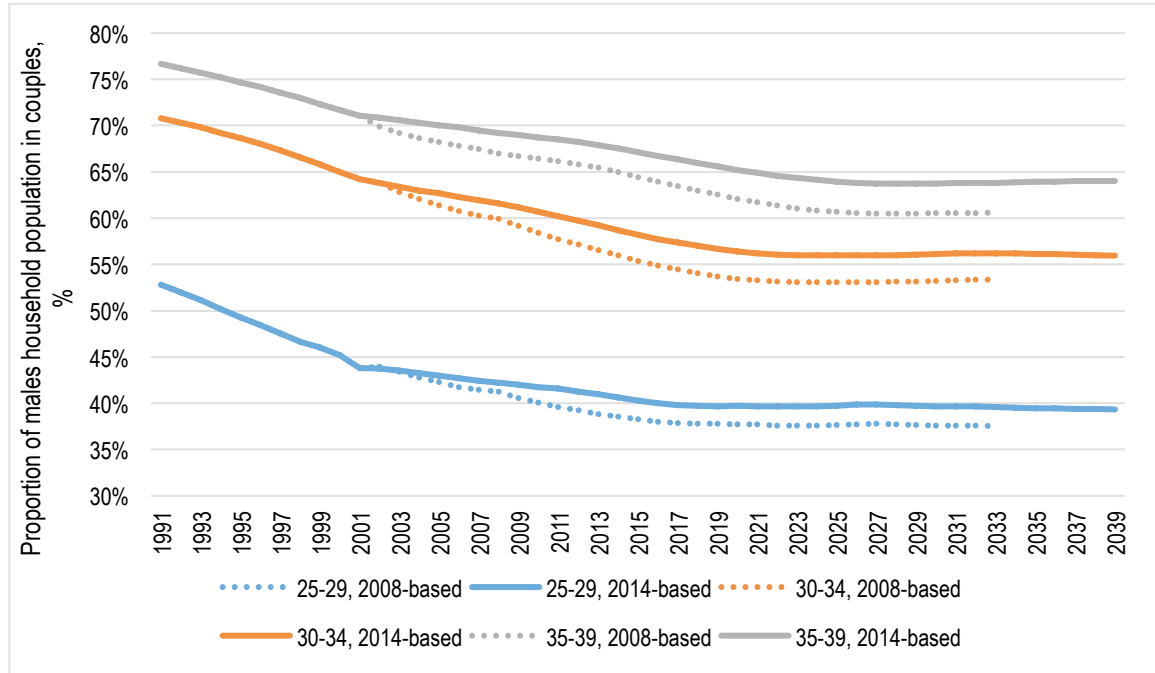
An increase in both male and female HRPs would only be seen (which is what Barton Willmore appear to be suggesting) if more people were expected to live alone and/or more women were expected to live in households without any adult men. There is no evidence suggesting that this is the case.

2008-based Household Projections were prepared prior to the 2011 Census data. They thus did not take account of what the 2011 Census showed about household formation trends since the previous census in 2001.

If we look at more recent information, whilst the proportion of younger people living in couples has been falling, the 2011 Census data shows that this has been levelling off. A higher proportion of younger people in their 20s and 30s are expected to live in couples in the 2012-based Household Projections than in the 2008-based Household Projections. This is a demographic / social trend which has been seen since the late 1990s, and there is no evidence this this (and the differential between the 2008- and 2012-based household formation rates) reflects suppressed female household formation.

Looking at Warwick District, this is evident from the graph below. This is an important factor in understanding why the household representative rate is lower for women in the 2008-based Household Projections than the 2012-based Household Projections in a number of the age groups shown in Barton Willmore's analysis (e.g 30-34 and 35-39). It highlights why the 2008-based rates are an inappropriate benchmark and a return to them would be unjustified.

**Proportion of the male household population living in couples, age groups 25-39 – Warwick**



Whilst the UAoHN looks at the 25-34 group in its totality, given the inter-relationship between the genders in the CLG model, and the clear evidence of a levelling off of the decline in the proportion of couple households, it would be entirely inappropriate to adjust upwards the headship rates for men and women independently. The interactions between the genders means that an increase in the male household formation rate would invariably result in some counter-balance effect resulting in a downward impact on the female household formation rate.

An assumption that both male and female HFRs would increase, with Barton Wilmore’s analysis seeming to suggest both would return independently to 2008 rates, would only happen if the modelling was to assume significantly more people were to live alone or in male-only and female-only households. Once the interactions between the genders is properly understood, it is clear that the GL Hearn analysis is not suppressing household formation.

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