

# **JOBS FOR THE BOYS... and Girls**

*A Jobs Survey of Dornoch Parish*



Dornoch  
Cathedral

Drawing by David Mahoney

## 1) Preface

*There has been a remarkable turnaround in the fortunes of Dornoch Parish during the last 15 years. Then we had 10% unemployment in the winter months; our secondary school roll had fallen to 42 and closure was imminent; our largest employer at that time, Grants of Dornoch, the slaughterhouse, went bankrupt and closed down; Skibo Castle had 17 holes in the roof and most of the furniture and paintings had been sold; the Eagle Hotel was shut.*

*Look around you now. There is virtually no unemployment, indeed workers from Easter Ross are commuting to Dornoch every day over the Dornoch Bridge. A building programme is underway to accommodate our increasing population. The new business park will soon be full up with local businesses. However, we have an acute shortage of skilled workers amongst our population of 2,000 in Dornoch parish. I would remind you that the population was 3,000 in 1850.*

*I therefore commissioned Russell Smith to carry out a survey in Dornoch Parish to find out what jobs there are in the area. We can then see how it may be possible to provide the necessary skills training for young people who wish to stay.*

*The idea for the survey came to me after hosting business lunches in Dornoch and Brora and listening to what employers had to say.*

Councillor Duncan Allan



## 2) Introduction

This report gives the results of a survey of businesses in Dornoch Parish carried out over the autumn of 2006. Businesses were asked about the number of people that worked there, what sort of jobs that they did and whether they were full or part time. The survey was predominantly carried out by telephone and businesses were assured of confidentiality. The results of the survey are put in context with trends in employment statistics and comparisons with other areas.

The area covered by the survey is the parish of Dornoch, rather than the Dornoch Firth ward and so does not cover Edderton but does include Embo, Clashmore, Whiteface and Skelbo. Some of the context statistics do refer to the Ward as this is the level at which they are collected and published: percentages and proportions should not vary greatly between the ward and the parish. A map of the area is attached at the end of the report.

There are a detailed set of statistics on Dornoch in the companion report "The Way We Are Today".



### 3) The Context of the Study

#### a) Population –

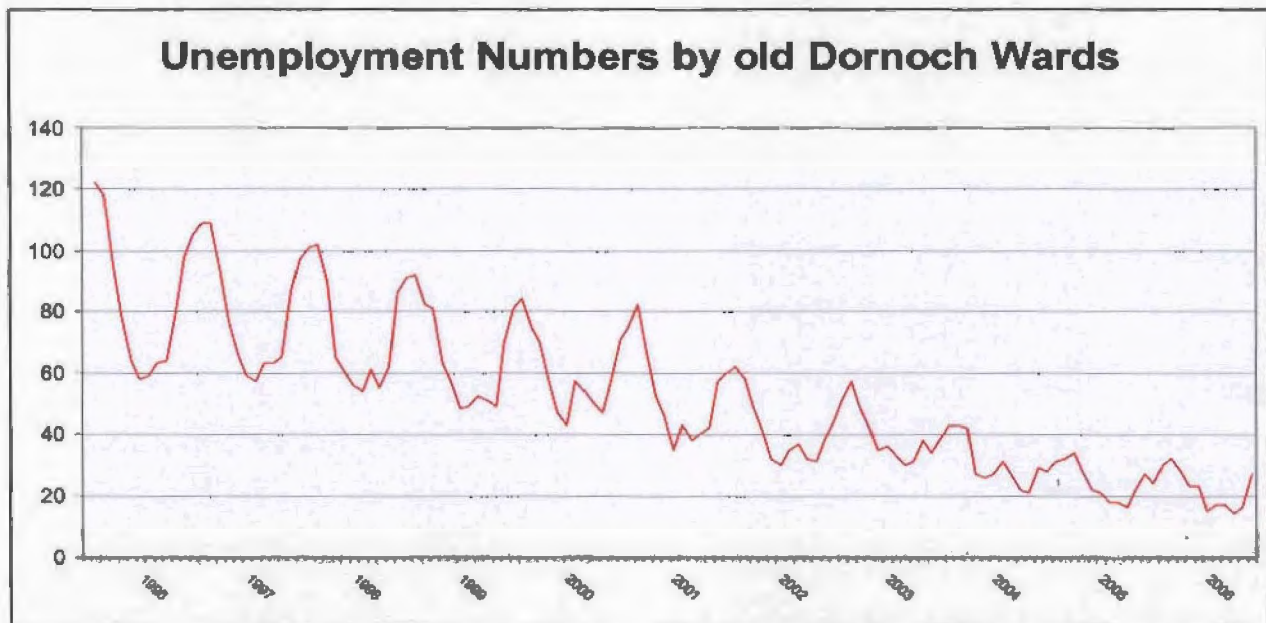
The population of Dornoch, Embo and Clashmore at 2004 is estimated at 2,373. Census results from 2001 for Dornoch itself show a population which is older than the Scottish average (30% over pensionable age v. 19% for Scotland) with median ages for men of 44 (v. 37 for Scotland) and 48 for women (v. 39 for Scotland). There are only about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the 16 to 44 year olds that you would expect.

17% of the population was born in England (v. 8% for Scotland as a whole).

For the ward, 55% of the population is of working age, compared to 61% in Highland and the rest of Scotland.

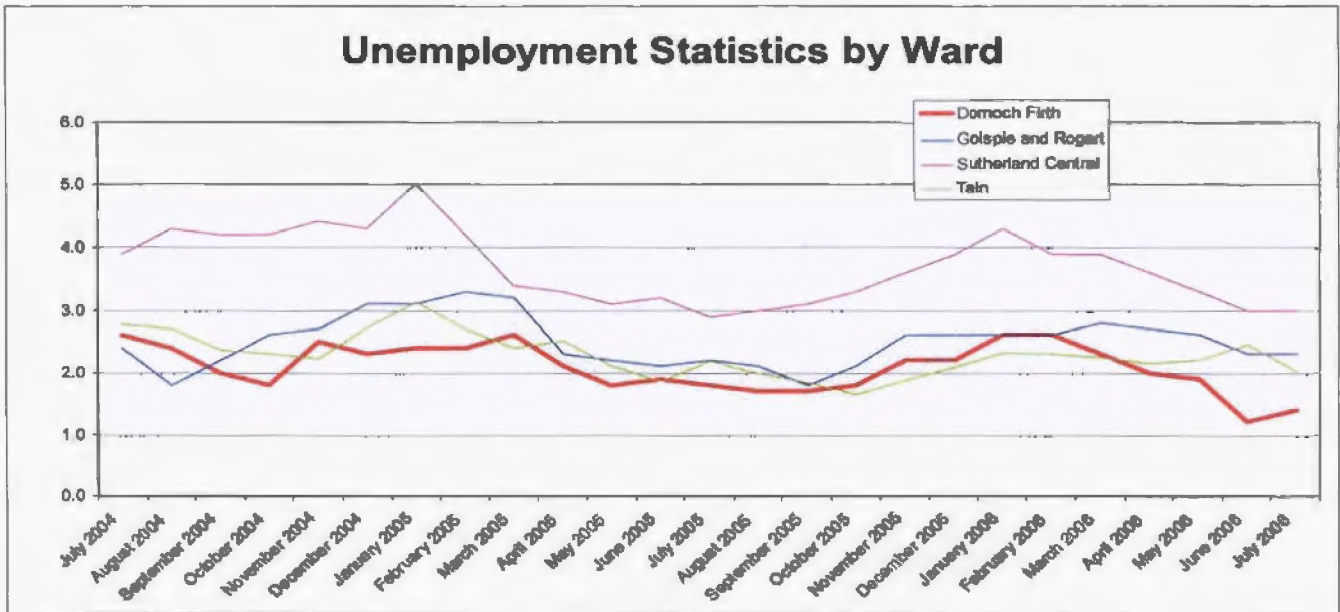
#### b) Unemployment trends

Unemployment has been steadily decreasing over the last 11 years as the graph below shows. Note the marked seasonality as unemployment drops in the summer when jobs in tourism are available. Unemployment currently runs at around 2% as measured by the count of people claiming job seekers allowance (who must be under pensionable age, available for work and actively seeking work).



#### c) Comparative unemployment

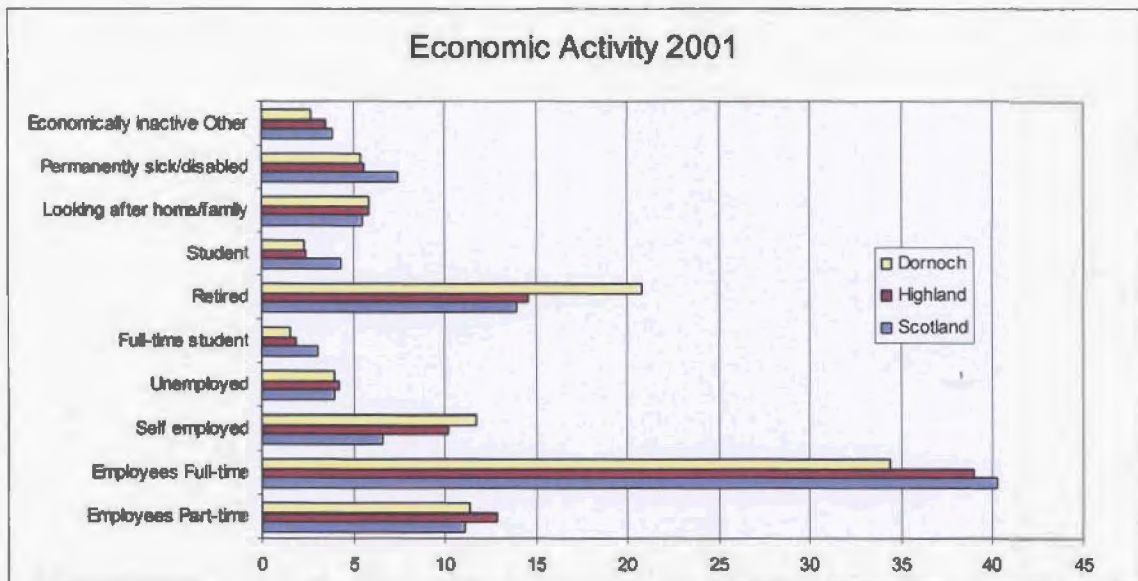
The following graph compares unemployment in the Dornoch Firth against unemployment in neighbouring wards. Dornoch has a generally lower rate than Central Sutherland and Golspie and around the same as Tain. Again this is based on the numbers receiving Job Seekers Allowance.



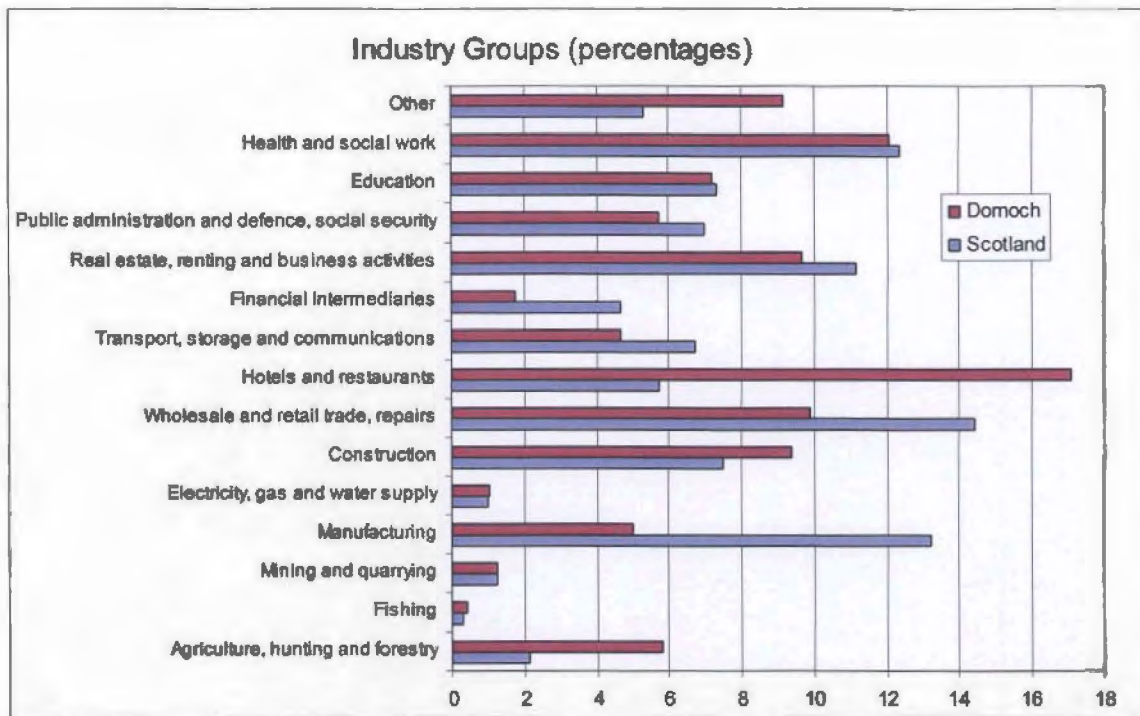
#### d) Types of jobs

The following three graphs look at the sorts of jobs done by people living in the Dornoch Firth Ward as recorded in the 2001 Census.

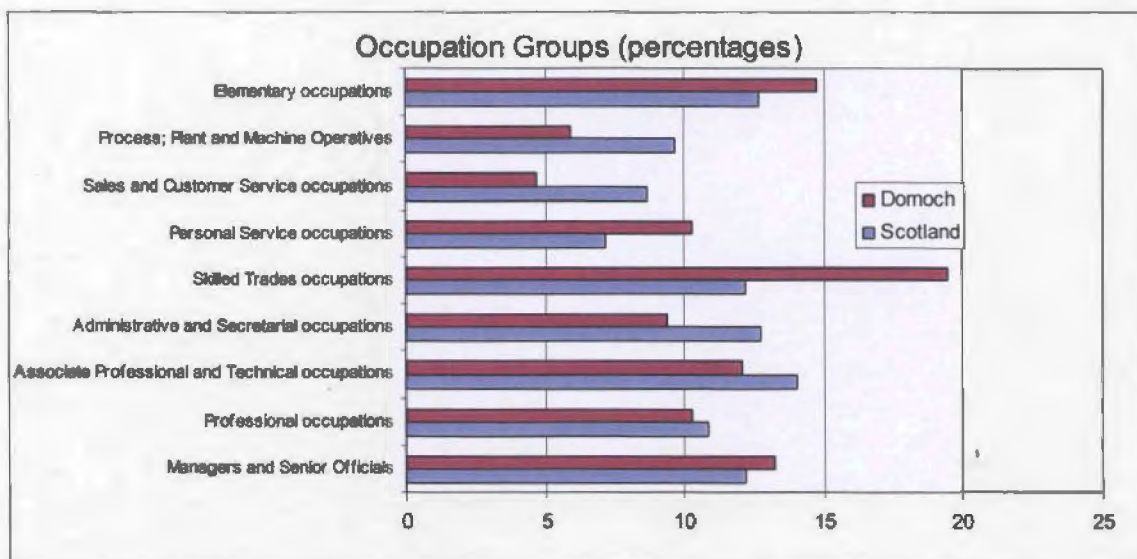
The Economic Activity graph again shows that there is a larger proportion of retired people compared to Scotland or the Highlands. There are fewer full time employees and more self employed (almost twice the proportion as in Scotland).



If we look at the industries that people living in the ward work in, we see that hotels and restaurants are hugely significant and that agriculture, hunting and forestry are much more significant than in Scotland. Construction is also relatively more important. In contrast, manufacturing and wholesale and retail are less important.



The analysis of occupations ties in with the breakdown of industries: skilled trades and personal services (including hotels) are proportionately more important in Dornoch than the rest of Scotland. Admin and plant operatives are less important.



#### e) Travel to Work

Note that the Census statistics do not compare directly with results of the survey since the survey looks at *jobs* in Dornoch (regardless of where the job holder lives) whereas the Census looks at *people* who live in Dornoch (regardless of where they work). The two sets of numbers will not necessarily reconcile.

We do know from the 2001 Census for Dornoch Parish that 59% (808) workers and students travel less than 5 kms, 32% (441) people travel over 5 kms and that a further 8% (109) have no fixed workplace, work abroad or work offshore. But we don't know

the distance travelled by those people who live outwith Dornoch and travel in to work.

#### 4) The Dornoch Employment Study

##### a) Businesses

The study was carried out by telephone to businesses in the area under study. A database of businesses was constructed drawing on various business directories and websites, the local telephone directory, and from local knowledge. A total of 162 businesses were identified which were trading at the time of the survey.

Estimates were added for 12 self catering establishments and caravan sites were identified via VisitScotland. This gives total of 174 businesses in the Parish ranging from one person working for a few hours a week to major businesses employing a large number of people full time. Numbers were estimated for a small number of businesses which were known to exist but could not be contacted.

According to the Millennium Parish Appraisal, there are 126 crofts in the parish: no estimate has been made of the number of people employed in these businesses as we do not know how many are amalgamated, run jointly or are not worked. There may well be another 20-30 part time agricultural jobs in this sector.



The turnover was particularly high in one person and lifestyle businesses. Self employed people working for companies outside the area were particularly difficult to identify. There is no account taken of the black economy and anybody working for themselves and not advertising will not be included. Businesses were asked about the number of people working at the time of the survey in the autumn: a survey in the summer peak would come up with more jobs in tourist businesses. The planned move of The Highland Council from Dornoch to Golspie will affect the overall number of jobs in the Parish though not the employment levels of people living in the parish.

The list will not be complete but any omissions are likely to be small. The figures can be assumed to be a conservative estimate of the total number of jobs in the Parish.

##### b) Jobs

The study has identified 1,164 jobs of which 700 are full time (63%) giving an approximate full time equivalent of 950 jobs. This compares to a working age population of 1,310 in the Dornoch area in 2004 (some of whom will be in full time study). These numbers are consistent but, as stated previously, need not tie in exactly because of the movement of people living in Dornoch but working elsewhere and people living elsewhere and working in Dornoch. It suggests (but does not prove) that as many people travel in to Dornoch to work as travel out of Dornoch.

### c) Industry and occupation

The following graph shows the industries that create the jobs. Most jobs are in the tourism, hotels and catering sector. Public services (water, local government) are next most important. Primary (agriculture and forestry) are relatively more important in Dornoch than elsewhere in Scotland. Education and Care (nursing homes) are both also relatively important in Dornoch. This analysis shows us where most of the jobs lie but not what sort of jobs they are.



The table below gives a broad categorisation of the jobs: most jobs involve providing a service eg in hotels, shops or nursing homes. The next largest category is the skilled manual category which includes tradesmen. Managers and professional jobs are less numerous compared to Scotland (see section 3c) above). There are very few apprentices or trainees.

category	jobs	% jobs
retail / hospitality / service	484	42%
skilled manual / trades	298	26%
manager / professional	176	15%
manual	108	9%
clerical	92	8%
apprentice	6	1%
TOTAL	1164	

The commonest occupations are shop workers, hotel employees, and care home staff. If we group all the various hotel workers together (waiting, housekeeping, catering, reception etc) then this is the largest single occupation. Plant operators (which includes heavy machinery drivers and employees in the slaughterhouse and water treatment plant) is about 5% of the total. Foresters and teachers form other significant groups (3% each) along with estate workers / groundstaff. Tradesman have been classified by their different trades so none of them feature prominently by themselves. Self catering and B&B operators form about 3%. Office workers also comprise about 3% of the jobs which is significantly less than the Scottish average.

#### d) Types of businesses and hours worked

81% of the jobs identified are employees and 19% are self employed, partners or family workers, bearing out the analyses in section 3d). There is a greater proportion of self employed in Dornoch due to the higher numbers of small businesses (in construction, retail, B&Bs) and correspondingly fewer big employers. This places a large emphasis on the small number of big employers that there are: Carnegie Club, Royal Dornoch Golf Club, Meadows Nursing Home, The Highland Council, Forest Enterprise, Dornoch Hotel, North Highland College, Dornoch Academy, Oversteps Residential Home and the abattoir. The future of Dornoch is bound up with these employers. The Highland Council is planning to move the jobs currently in Dornoch to Golspie.

63% of jobs are full time, 36% part time and there are a few casual jobs. Some of these jobs will vary seasonally: some part time jobs may be full time in the summer. The graph in section 3d) shows that, for Scotland, about 80% of employees are full time so we have a significantly greater number of part time jobs in Dornoch Parish. Some people may hold 2 part time jobs which could add to 1 full time equivalent but the survey has not examined this.



#### e) Summary

From the foregoing analyses of jobs identified in Dornoch parish, we can see that

- jobs are predominantly in the service sector (hotels, care homes, shops etc) and in skilled manual (foresters, construction, greenkeepers etc)
- unemployment (as measured by people on Job Seekers allowance) is at an historically low level
- jobs are seasonal, with more jobs available in the summer tourist season
- there are few apprentices or trainees
- there are proportionally more small businesses, many family owned and run
- there are proportionally more part time jobs.

These results have implications for education and training and this is discussed in section 6 below.

#### 5) Recruitment

As part of the study, some businesses were asked whether they had had any problems recruiting staff. The answers are anecdotal but show the broad areas of concern -



- there are shortages of full time service staff (waiting, cleaners, catering) for hotels and caravan sites: at least one hotel is recruiting from abroad
- school children and students fill a lot of the service jobs in the holidays and evenings
- shortage of qualified chefs was mentioned by a couple of businesses, which was not being met by North Highland College locally



- there are shortages of people for traditional manual jobs like foresters, plant operators and livestock haulage. Comments were “I would employ 20 locals tomorrow”, “those who want to work are working”, “they don’t want to get their hands dirty”. Again there is recruitment from abroad to fill gaps
- some companies provide their own training to overcome shortages of skilled labour though one company mentioned the lack of literacy and IT skills
- transport was mentioned as an issue: preventing people commuting into the area and stopping people getting to outlying businesses
- getting staff for low wage, part time jobs was especially difficult
- there was a comment from one employer that difficulty in recruiting was down to “a lack of people”.

## 6) Implications for education and training

The comments in section 5 along with the previous analyses suggest the following actions -

- Raise the profile of hospitality jobs – hotel jobs are a mainstay of the area but are rarely seen as a career. Waiting staff can be as important as chefs in the success or failure of a restaurant. We need to make the full range of hotel jobs attractive – waiting, reception, housekeeping. With North Highland College, The Carnegie Club and top class hotels in the area there is the basis for a centre of excellence in teaching hotel trades.
- Create more apprenticeships – only 6 have been identified in the survey. It needs to be easier for trades and businesses to take on apprentices and trainees with less restrictions on pay and conditions.
- Co-ordinate training responsibility for the provision of training is splintered between a number of different agencies such as secondary schools, North Highland College, Caithness and Sutherland Enterprise, Careers Scotland. Dornoch Academy is starting to do more vocational training and this needs to be encouraged. Training should be focused on the skills that are required now so that current vacancies can be filled by the local people who want to stay in the area.
- Build more housing for families on lower incomes – the low unemployment rate and the evidence of recruitment problems suggests that lack of labour is holding back the development of the area. Labour is being imported because of the unavailability of local people who are willing to work in the jobs that are available. More affordable housing could provide the people to fill the gap. This will become more of a problem in the future as the people who are retiring into the area need to be looked after as they get older.
- Make sure transport links are there – some businesses reported difficulties in recruiting because staff couldn’t get to and from the place of work. Transport needs to run at times which suit shift patterns.
- Make our school leavers more employable – non academic skills are equally important as academic qualifications in making a success of a job. We need to make sure that all pupils leave school with an enthusiastic attitude, a sense of responsibility, good timekeeping and the ability to adapt.



## **7) Acknowledgements**

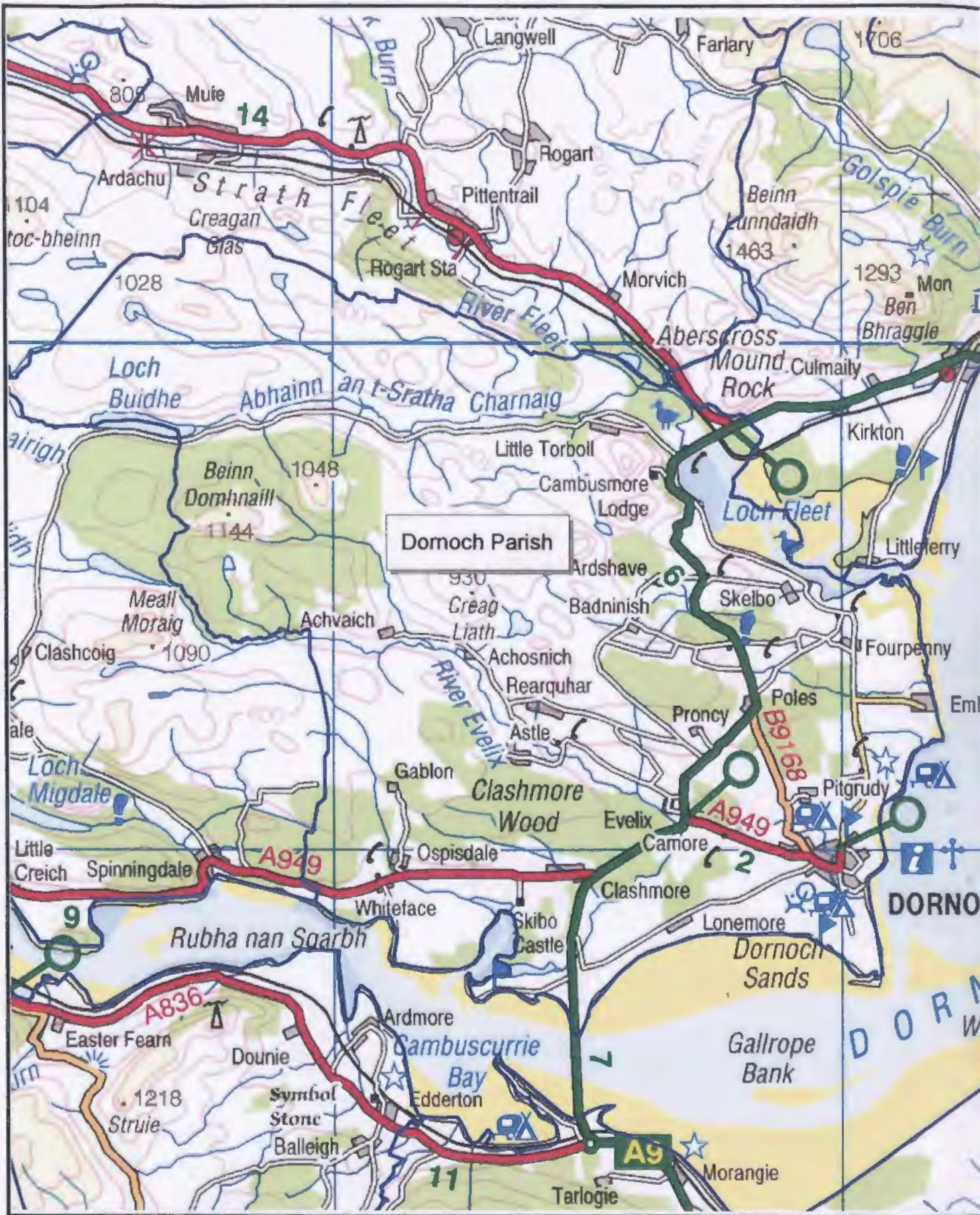
I would like to thank Councillor Allan and Caithness and Sutherland Enterprise for funding the project. I am also very grateful to the businesses in Dornoch who kindly took the time to answer my questions despite being busy with their own work.

If anyone has any comments or would like more information, please contact me.

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## DORNOCH PARISH (CIVIL)

SUPPLIED BY THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

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