



# The Planning Inspectorate Yr Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

**Official Statistics**  
**23 September 2021**

## Introduction

This statistical release provides summary information on appeals, which represent the highest volume (in terms of number of cases) of the work of the Planning Inspectorate.

These statistics are produced each month and the focus is on timeliness, as that is an area in which stakeholders have an interest. Information on the decisions that have been made is also included; and on the number of Inspectors available to make those decisions.

### Consultation with our users – Proposed removal of virtual events data

In this statistical release we have been publishing data on the number of virtual events being held each month. The Planning Inspectorate recommenced face-to-face events for hearings and inquiries from Monday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021. There also continues to be significant concerns with the quality of the data collected on virtual events.

It is proposed that virtual events data will no longer be published in future statistical releases.

If you have any concerns or comments on this proposed change please can you email [statistics@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:statistics@planninginspectorate.gov.uk) by Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October. The results of the consultation will be published in the October 2021 release.

These statistics have been published to ensure everyone has equal access to the information and to support the Planning Inspectorate's commitment to release information where possible.

This statistical bulletin provides<sup>1</sup>:

- Appeals decisions and events held from September 2020 to August 2021
- The time taken to reach those decisions
- Number of open cases
- Number of Inspectors
- Number of virtual events

The data in this release is only applicable to England.

<sup>1</sup> See Annex A for breakdown of what has been included in recent releases.

## **The Planning Inspectorate**

The Planning Inspectorate makes decision and provides recommendations and advice on a range of land use planning-related issues across England and Wales. We do this in a fair, open, and timely way.

The Planning Inspectorate deals with planning appeals, national infrastructure planning applications, examinations of local plans and other planning-related and specialist casework in England and Wales. The Planning Inspectorate is an executive agency, sponsored by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government and the Welsh Government.

## **Summary**

### **Impact of Covid-19 pandemic**

This statistical release reflects that, as with everyone else, the Inspectorate has now been operating for over 12 months with the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Previous statistical releases have outlined the impact of the pandemic on the Inspectorate in three ways; events were suspended during the first national lockdown in Spring 2020, subsequent timeliness measures increased, and the number of open cases also increased.

### **Performance**

The mean average time to make a decision, across all cases in the last 12 months (Sep 20 to Aug 21), was 27 weeks. The median time is 23 weeks.

The median time to decide a case increased by 2.6 weeks between July and August 21, with the August median being 23.9 weeks.

Median timeliness by procedure type is shown in the summary table below.

Procedure type	Last 12 months	August 21
Written Representations	22 weeks	23 weeks
Hearings	47 weeks	44 weeks
Inquiries	61 weeks	89 weeks

Performance had been improving between November 20 and March 21. For inquiries, in the last three months, cases have taken longer to decide as a result of very old enforcement inquiry cases being decided.

Enforcement decisions made in the last 12 months had a median decision time of 35 weeks. Looking at the annual totals, the median and mean time to decision for specialist decisions have been broadly the same as for enforcement decisions, and longer than the median for planning decisions. Since February 21 there has been a change in this trend, with Specialist cases being quicker than Enforcement

The median time for planning appeals decided by inquiry under the Rosewell Process over the 12 months to August 21 is 34 weeks. This is quicker than other types of casework decided by inquiry.

### **Decisions**

The Planning Inspectorate has made 18,075 appeal decisions<sup>2</sup> in the last 12 months, an average of over 1,500 per month. The monthly breakdown shows fewer decisions for the months of August 20, April 21, July 21 and August 21. This is thought to be due to the impact of national lockdowns, in respect of August 20, and the impact of staff taking more annual leave in 2021 than in 2020.

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<sup>2</sup> The appeal types include planning & related appeals, Enforcement and Specialist casework (covering a range of casework types). Please note that some previous releases covered only Rights of Way orders within Specialist casework. Annex A details the scope of previous releases, Annex D the scope of this release and Background Notes has further information.

Written representations decisions had recovered to pre-pandemic levels between October and December 20 (pre-pandemic being between approximately 1,600 and 2,000 decisions per month). Decisions in July 21 (1,199) and August 21 (1,102) were low, with only April 21 (994) having less written representation decisions issued.

There were 623 decisions made on hearings during the last 12 months. Decisions for hearings since December 20 have ranged between approximately 40 and 80 per month. Pre-pandemic levels for hearing decisions were between 50 and 100 decisions per month.

There were 385 decisions made on inquiries during the last 12 months. Decisions for inquiries since December 20 have ranged between approximately 20 and 60. Pre-pandemic levels for inquiry decisions were between 15 and 90 decisions per month.

### **Open Cases**

At the end of August 21, the Planning Inspectorate had over twelve thousand five hundred cases open<sup>3</sup> (12,526).

### **Planning Inspectors**

There were 346 Planning Inspectors employed by the Inspectorate in August 21 – with a full-time equivalent of 307.8.

### **Virtual Events**

The Inspectorate are continuing to carry out events ‘virtually’. There were 26 cases involving Virtual Events during August 21. There continue to be concerns about the quality of the data on virtual events: there appears to be under-recording despite the introduction of system changes aimed at improving the quality of data.

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<sup>3</sup> Open cases are any that have been received but on which a decision has not yet been made/ issued. Cases included comprise Planning, Enforcement, and the following Specialist cases: Common Land, Environment, Purchase Notice and Rights of Way, Tree Preservation Orders, Hedgerows and High Hedges cases.

Note that previous publications excluded Tree Preservation Order, Hedgerow and High Hedge cases from open cases totals. See Background Quality report for more information.

## Decisions, Events & Open Cases

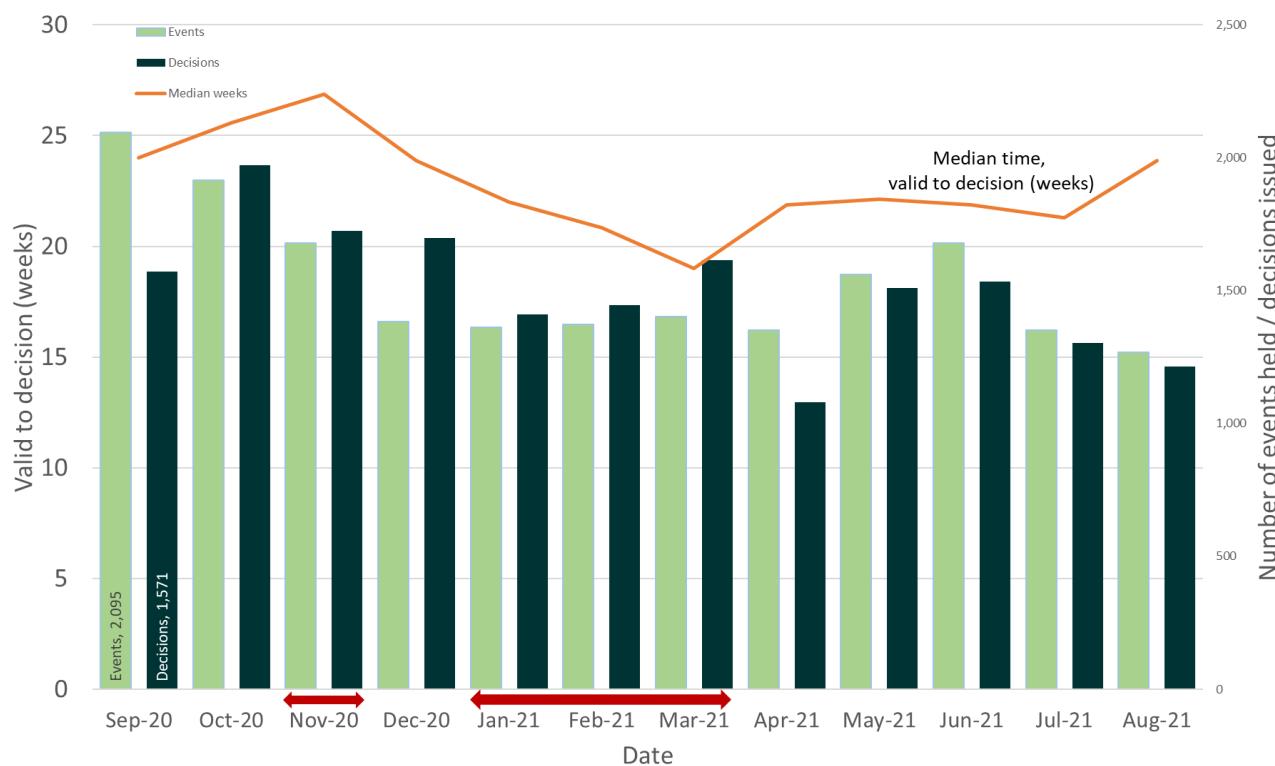
The number of decisions issued in August 21 was 1,267. This was 7% lower than the previous month. The number of decisions in August 21 was also lower than the average 1,500 decisions issued each month, over the last 12 months. The other months that had decision volumes lower than 1,500 were August 20, April 21 and July 21.

The number of events held in August 21 was 6% less than the previous month, and the lowest over the last 12 months. In the last 12 months the highest number of events held was September 20, when almost 2,100 events were held.

Lower decision and event volumes for July and August 21 can partly be attributed to increased amounts of leave taken by staff, including Inspectors, compared to July and August 2020.

The median<sup>4</sup> time to decide a case increased by 2.6 weeks between July and August 21, with the August median being 23.9 weeks. Performance had been improving between November 20 and March 21.

Figure 1: Number of events held<sup>5</sup>, decisions issued and median time between valid date & decision date; Sep 20 to Aug 21



Source: Horizon, Picasso, Inspector Scheduling System

Note – Red arrows indicate periods when national lockdowns were in effect

Table 1: Number of events held, decisions issued and median time between valid date & decision date; Sep 20 to Aug 21

Month	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21	Total
Events Held	2,095	1,916	1,680	1,383	1,362	1,374	1,402	1,351	1,561r	1,680	1,351r	1,267	18,422
Decisions	1,571	1,971	1,725	1,698	1,410	1,446	1,615	1,081	1,509	1,533	1,303	1,213	18,075
Median	24.0	25.6	26.9	23.9	22.0	20.9	19.0	21.9	22.1	21.9	21.3	23.9	22.9

<sup>4</sup> See the section on Decision timeliness for more, including definitions of the average measures used in this release.

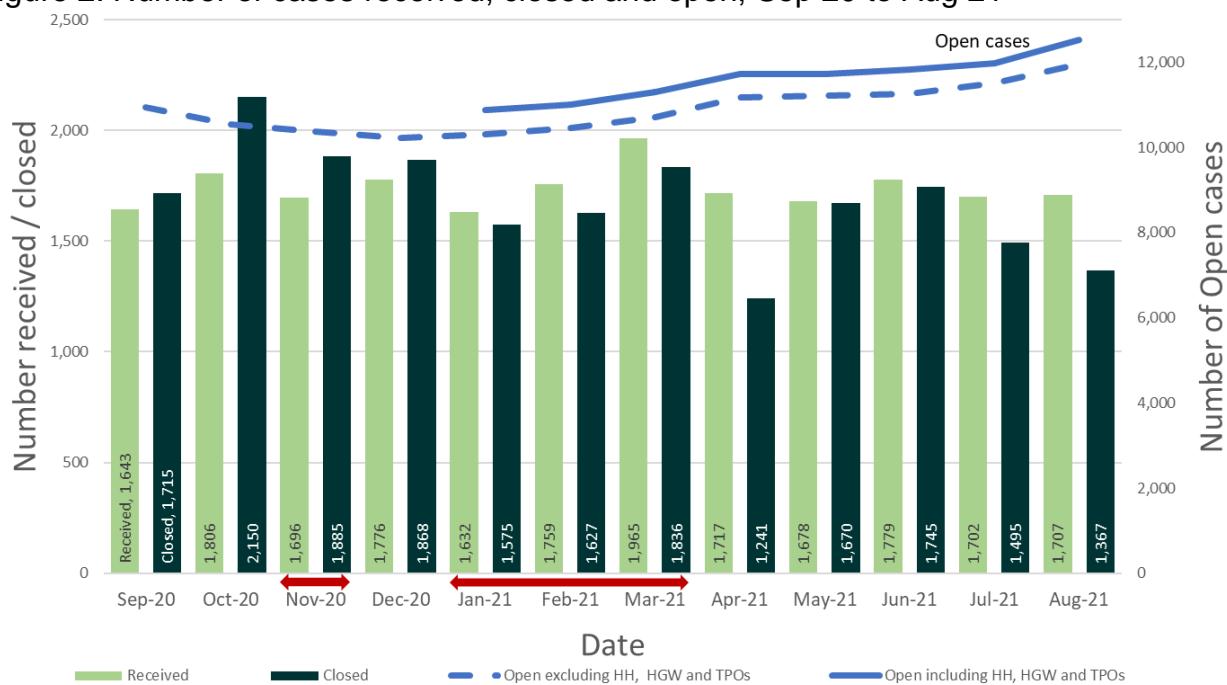
<sup>5</sup> A site visit, hearing, or inquiry. From April 2020 onwards all hearings and inquiries have been held virtually.

Source: Horizon, Picaso, Inspector Scheduling System. r denotes revision – a change of more than 5 cases since last month (see Background Quality Report for more information)

The number of open cases stands at its highest point in the last 12 months, at over 12,500 cases. The numbers of receipts averages at over 1,700 per month, over the last 12 months. The number closed averages just below 1,700 per month, over the last 12 months. However, in August 21 the number of cases closed was under 1,400, significantly below the 12-month average, whilst receipts were at their average level for August 21.

Note – The number of cases closed is higher than the number of decisions, as it includes cases where an appeal is withdrawn, notice is withdrawn, or the appeal is turned away.

Figure 2: Number of cases received, closed and open; Sep 20 to Aug 21



Source: Horizon and Picaso

Note – Red arrows indicate periods when national lockdowns were in effect

Data note 1 - the count of open cases from December 2020 onwards has been revised to include some specialist casework types that were previously excluded: High Hedge (HH), Hedgerow (HGW) and Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

Data note 2 – there is a known anomaly that means that the number of open cases does not exactly follow the volumes of cases closed or received (for example the number of open cases can increase between months even though the number closed exceeded the number received). The main reasons for this have been identified and are detailed in the Background Quality Report.

Data note 3 – received figures for April to Jun 21 have been revised upwards by approximately 40 per month (see Background Quality Report for specific changes). This is due to a backlog in registering Tree Preservation Order appeals on the appropriate casework system.

Table 2: Number of cases received, closed and open; Sep 20 to Aug 21

Month	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21	Total
Received	1,643	1,806	1,696	1,776	1,632	1,759	1,965	1,717r	1,678r	1,779r	1,702	1,707	20,478
Closed	1,715	2,150	1,885	1,868	1,575	1,627	1,836	1,241	1,670	1,745	1,495	1,367	20,300
Open (excl. HH, HGW, TPO)	10,949	10,539	10,367	10,233	10,314	10,447	10,719	11,183	11,223	11,267	11,509r	11,987	
Open(All)								10,880	11,001	11,293	11,725	11,733r	12,526

Source: Horizon and Picaso. r denotes revision – a change of more than 5 cases since last month (see Background Quality Report for more information)

## Number of Decisions

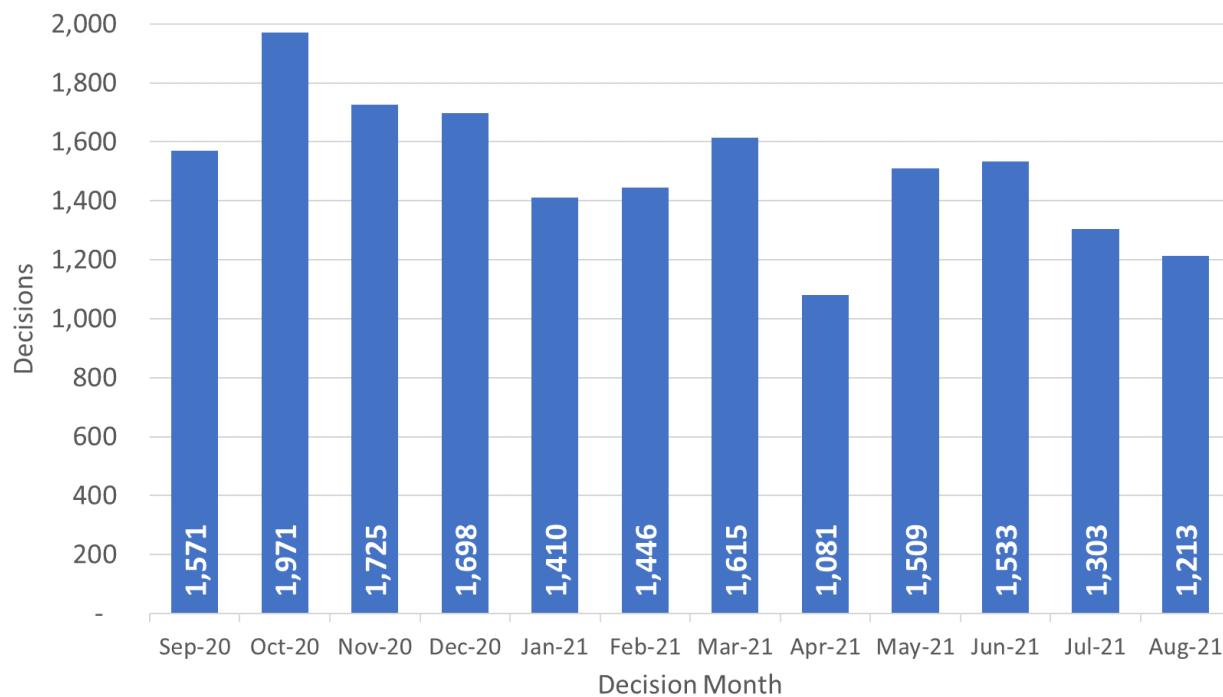
The Planning Inspectorate has made 18,075 appeal decisions<sup>6</sup> in the last 12 months, an average of over 1,500 per month. Table 3 below shows the monthly breakdown with fewer decisions for the months of August 20, April 21, July 21 and August 21. This is thought to be due to the impact of national lockdowns, in respect of August 20, and the impact of staff taking more annual leave in 2021 than in 2020.

Table 3: Appeal Decisions; Sep 20 to Aug 21

Month	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21	Total
Decisions	1,571	1,971	1,725	1,698	1,410	1,446	1,615	1,081	1,509	1,533	1,303	1,213	18,075

Source: Horizon and Picaso.

Figure 3 – Appeal Decisions; Sep 20 to Aug 21



Source: Horizon and Picaso

### Decisions by procedure and case type

Planning Inspectors work on a broader range of work than the appeals featured in this Release. For example, they also work on examining Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project applications, Local Plans<sup>7</sup>, Compulsory Purchase Order applications and many other specialist licencing/application types.

Table 4 below gives the numbers of appeal decisions made broken down by whether the case was dealt with by written representations, hearings, or inquiries.

The large majority of decisions (17,067) were made on written representations. This is about ninety five percent of all appeal decisions made. Table 4 shows that written representations

<sup>6</sup> The appeal types include planning & related appeals, Enforcement and Specialist casework (covering a range of casework types). Please note that some previous releases covered only Rights of Way orders within Specialist casework. Annex A details the scope of previous releases, Annex D the scope of this release and Background Notes has further information.

<sup>7</sup> Data on volumes for Nationally Significant Infrastructure projects and Local Plans can be seen here; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-inspectorate-statistics> (Tables 1.1 and 1.2)

decisions had recovered to pre-pandemic levels between October and December 20 (pre-pandemic being between approximately 1,600 and 2,000 decisions per month). Decisions in July 21 (1,199) and August 21 (1,102) were low, with only April 21 (994) having less written representation decisions issued.

There were 623 decisions made on hearings during the last 12 months. Decisions for hearings since December 20 have ranged between approximately 40 and 80 per month. Pre-pandemic levels for hearing decisions were between 50 and 100 decisions per month.

There were 385 decisions made on inquiries during the last 12 months. Decisions for inquiries since December 20 have ranged between approximately 20 and 60. Pre-pandemic levels for inquiry decisions were between 15 and 90 decisions per month.

Table 4: Appeal Decisions by procedure and casework category; Sep 20 to Aug 21

Month	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21	Total
Written Representations	1,543	1,918	1,672	1,612	1,326	1,383	1,529	994	1,392	1,397	1,199	1,102	17,067
Hearings	21	40	33	60	58	44	53	52	65	80	66	51	623
Inquiries	7	13	20	26	26	19	33	35	52	56	38	60	385
Total	1,571	1,971	1,725	1,698	1,410	1,446	1,615	1,081	1,509	1,533	1,303	1,213	18,075
Month	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21	Total
Planning	1,323	1,638	1,484	1,463	1,185	1,242	1,416	938	1,289	1,272	1,079r	978	15,307
Enforcement	215	281	195	186	164	112	150	100	161	200	179	182	2,125
Specialist	33	52	46	49	61	92	49	43	59	61	45	53	643
Total	1,571	1,971	1,725	1,698	1,410	1,446	1,615	1,081	1,509	1,533	1,303	1,213	18,075

Source: Horizon and Picaso. r denotes revision – a change of more than 5 cases since last month

**What are Planning cases?** The Planning category includes s78 planning appeals, householder appeals, commercial appeals, listed building consent appeals, advertisement appeals and s106 planning obligation appeals.

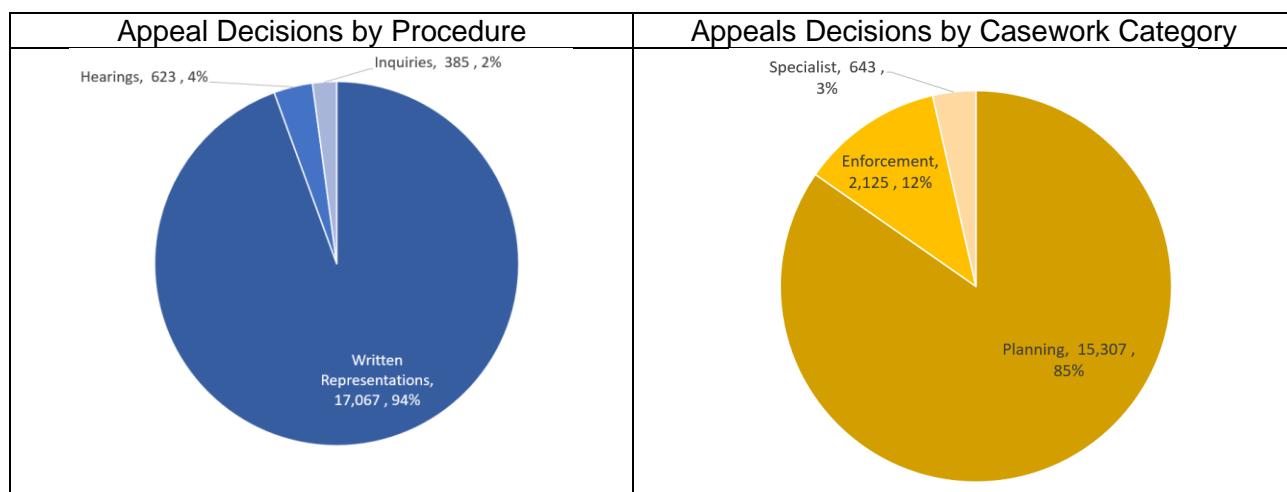
**What are Enforcement cases?** Enforcement covers enforcement appeals (i.e., appeals against the issue of an enforcement notice by a local planning authority), enforcement listed building notice appeals and lawful development certificate appeals.

**What are Specialist cases?** This category covers a wide range of different types of casework including Common Land, Environment, Purchase Notice, Rights of Way orders (including Schedule 14 cases), Tree Preservation Orders, Hedgerows and High Hedges cases.

The large majority of cases were planning (15,307). This is about eighty-five per cent of all appeal decisions made. There were 2,125 enforcement decisions and 643 specialist decisions. These totals are also shown in Table 4 and Figure 4 below.

Trends for planning decisions show similar patterns to written representations. The number of enforcement decisions had been decreasing month on month between October 20 and February 21 but have since increased, with the exception of April 21. Specialist casework figures continue to vary each month, from a low of 33 (September 20) to a high of 92 (February 21).

Figure 4 – Appeal Decisions by Procedure and Casework Category; Sep 20 to Aug 21



Source: Horizon and Picaso

## Decision timeliness

It is important for people to know how long an appeal is going to take, so that they can make plans and decisions based on this information. This section covers the timeliness of decisions (i.e., how long it takes to make a decision) across our appeal casework. In addition to an overall measure, timeliness is analysed by procedure type and casework category, as timeliness varies a great deal depending on these characteristics.

Table 5 below shows that the mean average time to make a decision<sup>8</sup>, across all cases in the last 12 months (August 20 to July 21), was 27 weeks.<sup>9</sup> Figure 5 shows the mean has been above 25 weeks for the last 12 months, except for March 21.

Table 5 also shows the median time is 23 weeks. Each month the median is less than the mean; this is due to the larger impact on the mean of very long cases.

The median timeliness increased between June 20 to Nov 20, peaking at almost 27 weeks. Between December 20 to March 21 there was a reduction in the median time to decision, down to a low in March 21 of 19 weeks. The median for the last four months ws around 21 and 22 weeks.

Also included in the table is the *standard deviation* of decision timeliness. A lower standard deviation would demonstrate greater consistency in the Planning Inspectorate's decision timeliness. The data shows that the variability was getting less towards the end of 2020 – the standard deviation values are 15.6 weeks or lower for August to December. Data for the months in 2021 show greater variability.

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<sup>8</sup> The time to make a decision is measured from the time it is judged that enough information has been provided for the case to proceed (i.e. it is deemed 'valid') to the time a decision letter is issued. Most cases are estimated to be 'validated' (the difference between receipt date and the validation process being completed) in a week or less. Where cases have missing documentation, the time taken to validate will be longer.

<sup>9</sup> The decisions made in a given month will include those that started many months before, and thus do not give an accurate indication of how decisions submitted, or deemed 'valid' in that month, will take.

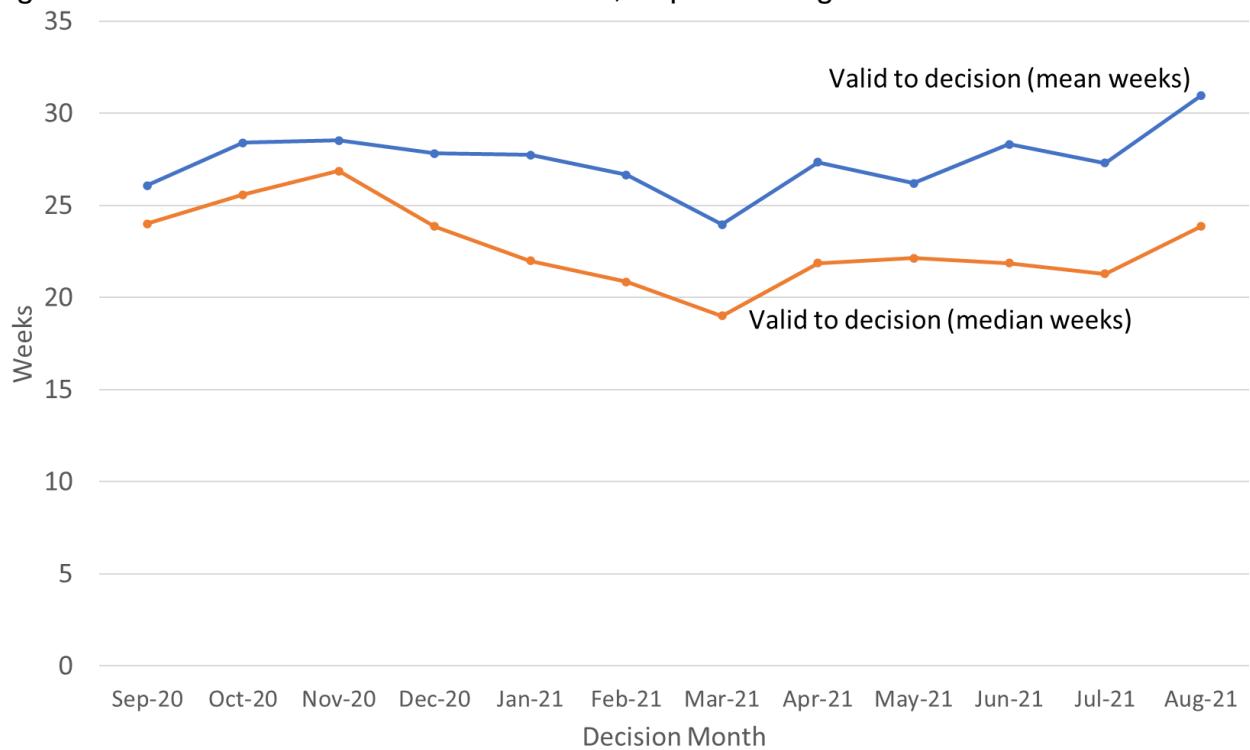
What are mean, median, and standard deviation?	
Measure	Definition
Mean	The total time taken divided by the number of cases. Also referred to as the 'average'. A measure of how long each case would take, if the total time taken was spread evenly across all cases.
Median	This is the time taken by the 'middle' case if all cases were sorted from quickest to longest
Standard deviation	This is a measure of variability or spread. It is calculated by examining how much each value differs from the mean. A higher standard deviation means the individual decision times vary more widely around the mean.

Table 5: Mean, Median and Standard Deviation of Time to Decision; Sep 20 to Aug 21

Month	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21	Total
Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	26.1	28.4	28.5	27.8	27.7	26.7	24.0	27.3	26.2	28.3	27.3	31.0	27.3
Valid to Decision (median weeks)	24.0	25.6	26.9	23.9	22.0	20.9	19.0	21.9	22.1	21.9	21.3	23.9	22.9
Standard Deviation (weeks)	12.5	14.9	12.9	15.6	18.1	16.9	16.0	18.7	16.7	19.7	18.5	23.3	16.8

Source: Horizon and Picaso

Figure 5: Mean and Median time to decision; Sep 20 to Aug 21



Source: Horizon and Picaso

## Procedure Type

Table 6 below shows decision timeliness broken down by the procedure type. Hearings and inquiries take longer than written representations – with inquiries taking more than twice as long as written representations. Because 19 of every 20 cases are by written representation, the timeliness measures for written representations is similar to the measure across all cases.

Where a small number of cases has been decided, the average timeliness (whether mean or median) is less meaningful as a measure than where there are many cases. Those areas shaded in the table below should be treated with caution as there are fewer than 20 cases decided.

The median time for written representations over the 12 months to August 21 is 22 weeks. The median time for inquiries over the 12 months to August 21 is over a year - 61 weeks. The median time for hearings is less at 47 weeks. For each of these procedure types, the mean is higher as it is more affected by the longest cases.

Table 6: Mean and Median Time to Decision, with standard deviation, by procedure; Sep 20 to Aug 21

Measure	Procedure	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21	Total
Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	Written Representations	25.6	27.9	28.0	26.6	25.8	25.3	22.1	24.1	24.1	25.0	24.5	27.2	25.6
	Hearings	50.5	49.8	37.3	49.6	59.8	47.5	56.7	63.8	42.8	57.0	50.1	49.8	51.7
	Inquiries	63.2	43.8	58.5	52.8	53.9	76.3	57.6	64.4	61.7	70.9	76.7	84.6	66.5
	All Cases	26.1	28.4	28.5	27.8	27.7	26.7	24.0	27.3	26.2	28.3	27.3	31.0	27.3
Valid to Decision (median weeks)	Written Representations	23.9	25.1	26.6	23.1	21.3	20.4	18.6	20.9	21.1	20.7	20.4	23.0	22.1
	Hearings	40.3	40.1	37.3	43.9	51.5	49.0	52.4	62.0	39.6	61.3	44.1	43.9	46.9
	Inquiries	65.0	37.3	55.0	40.1	47.3	68.1	41.3	62.4	66.0	64.6	78.7	89.4	61.1
	All Cases	24.0	25.6	26.9	23.9	22.0	20.9	19.0	21.9	22.1	21.9	21.3	23.9	22.9
Standard Deviation (weeks)	Written Representations	11.7	14.2	12.3	14.0	15.2	14.8	12.6	13.6	14.0	13.9	13.3	15.9	13.8
	Hearings	20.4	25.5	14.7	20.0	29.1	20.9	26.3	26.9	18.3	21.7	19.6	27.5	23.9
	Inquiries	18.5	17.4	14.0	31.0	30.5	36.9	31.3	27.8	26.1	42.8	43.5	47.1	37.3
	All Cases	12.5	14.9	12.9	15.6	18.1	16.9	16.0	18.7	16.7	19.7	18.5	23.3	16.8

Source: Horizon and Picasso. Cells shaded grey had fewer than 20 decisions.

The standard deviation information indicates that for all three procedures, there is considerable variation, meaning times are widely spread about the mean. For written representations, the amount of variation does not appear to be either increasing or decreasing through the year. Hearings have experienced higher month to month changes, and for inquiries the last two months have been higher (therefore more variable) than previous months.

## Casework Category

The nature of the cases the Planning Inspectorate deal with varies widely and several factors play a part in determining how long it takes to make a decision. One such factor is the casework type. Table 7 below shows the time taken to decide, in planning cases, in enforcement cases, and in specialist<sup>10</sup> cases, as does Figure 6.

<sup>10</sup> Specialist cases comprise Common Land, Rights of Way, Tree Preservation Orders, High Hedges appeals and Hedgerow appeals

The median time to decision for planning cases (there are many more of these decisions than in the other categories) is lower than for other casework categories, apart from in March 21 and May 21. Table 7 and Figure 6 shows the median time for planning cases was, apart from February and March 21, above 20 weeks for the last 12 months. Across the whole year, the median time to decision is 22 weeks.

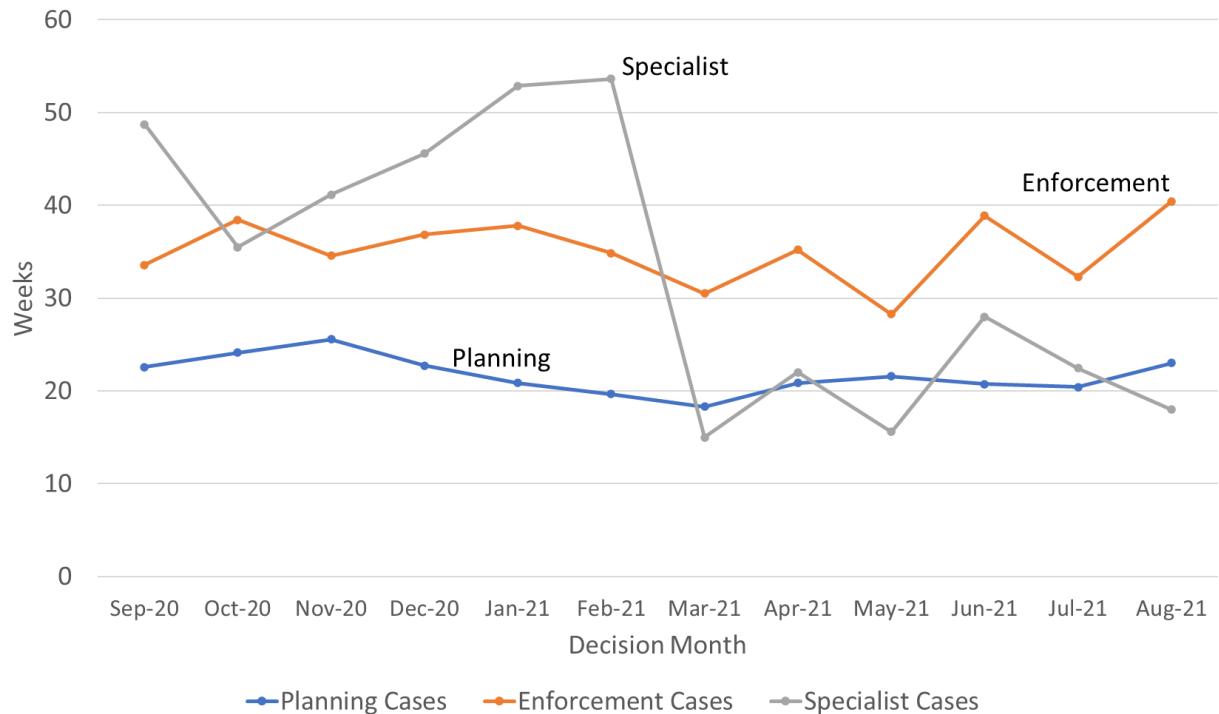
Annex B gives information on mean and median time to decision, with standard deviation, for these procedure types, split by planning, enforcement, and specialist casework categories.

**Table 7: Decisions, Mean, Median and Standard Deviation of Time to Decision – Planning, Enforcement, Specialist Cases; Sep 20 to Aug 21**

Casework Category	Measure	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21	Total
Planning Cases	Valid to Decision (mean wks)	23.7	25.6	27.0	25.4	24.6	23.2	21.9	24.7	24.5	25.2	24.5	26.3	24.6
	Valid to Decision (median wks)	22.6	24.1	25.6	22.7	20.9	19.6	18.3	20.9	21.6	20.7	20.4	23.0	21.7
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	9.8	11.3	11.3	12.3	12.3	11.6	12.3	14.6	13.1	15.2	13.8	14.7	12.6
Enforcement Cases	Valid to Decision (mean wks)	37.5	42.8	37.7	42.1	43.8	42.7	41.6	47.6	40.6	45.7	42.7	54.6	42.4
	Valid to Decision (median wks)	33.6	38.4	34.6	36.9	37.8	34.9	30.5	35.2	28.3	38.9	32.3	40.4	34.9
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	15.5	20.5	16.8	23.1	29.0	26.7	26.2	29.4	28.9	29.7	29.4	38.7	26.0
Specialist Cases	Valid to Decision (mean wks)	47.0	38.8	39.4	45.3	46.1	53.7	29.1	36.7	24.8	36.6	34.3r	35.2	39.5
	Valid to Decision (median wks)	48.7	35.5	41.1	45.6	52.9	53.6	15.0	22.0	15.6	28.0	22.4	18.0	33.9
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	24.3	26.4	18.3	24.6	33.7	24.7	28.3	30.4	21.8	27.7	27.4	29.9	27.6

Source: Horizon and Picaso. r denotes revision – a change of more than 0.5 weeks since last month.

**Figure 6 – Median time to decision by casework area; Sep 20 to Aug 21**



Source: Horizon and Picaso

Enforcement decisions made in the last 12 months had a median decision time of 35 weeks. For the last 12 months the mean is 42 weeks. The median time for enforcement decisions is longer than the median decision time for planning cases.

There are considerably fewer specialist cases which means results are more liable to be distorted by extreme values. Looking at the annual totals, the median and mean time to decision for specialist decisions had been broadly the same as for enforcement decisions, and longer than the median for planning decisions. Since February 21 there has been a change in this trend, with Specialist cases being quicker than Enforcement. The mix of casework being decided under the Specialist group has changed, and there was a concentrated effort to decide a high number of older Tree Preservation Order (TPO) cases that has influenced performance figures.

Note that the Inspectorate publishes each month, information on the mean and median times from valid to decision, for selected appeal types. The information published also breaks down the time for each stage of the process. See Annex C<sup>11</sup> for further details.

### **Planning Inquiry Decisions**

For planning appeals decided by the inquiry process, The Planning Inspectorate has been implementing recommendations from the Rosewell review.

The median time for inquiries over the 12 months to July 21 is 35 weeks, with the mean being marginally higher at 40 weeks. Except for February 21, decision volumes have been above ten per month since Dec 20, reaching their highest level in June 21 (30 decisions).

**Table 8: Decisions, Mean and Median Time to Decision, Planning Inquiry cases under Rosewell process; Sep 20 to Aug 21**

Measure	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21	Total
Decisions	2	7	7	18	13	8	15	17	16	30	12	17	162
Mean (weeks)	41.1	45.7	45.7	35.3	36.5	40.7	36.7	53.5	34.3	40.7	33.1	40.0	40.0
Median (weeks)	41.1	32.6	50.9	39.4	40.3	40.7	33.7	51.9	30.1	33.9	30.0	27.9	34.4
St. Dev. (weeks)	1.1	22.1	9.1	10.2	12.2	7.9	12.0	31.1	9.9	22.1	12.1	39.6	21.6

Source: Horizon. r denotes revision – a change of more than 0.5 weeks since last month.

Most inquiry decisions now being issued are under the revised ‘Rosewell’<sup>12</sup> process but some inquiries, for example those that are linked together with associated enforcement cases, do not follow the Rosewell process.

**Table 9: Decisions, Planning Inquiry cases under non-Rosewell process; Sep 20 to Aug 21**

Month	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21	Total
Decisions	0	1	5	0	1	1	1	1	4	7	2	3	26

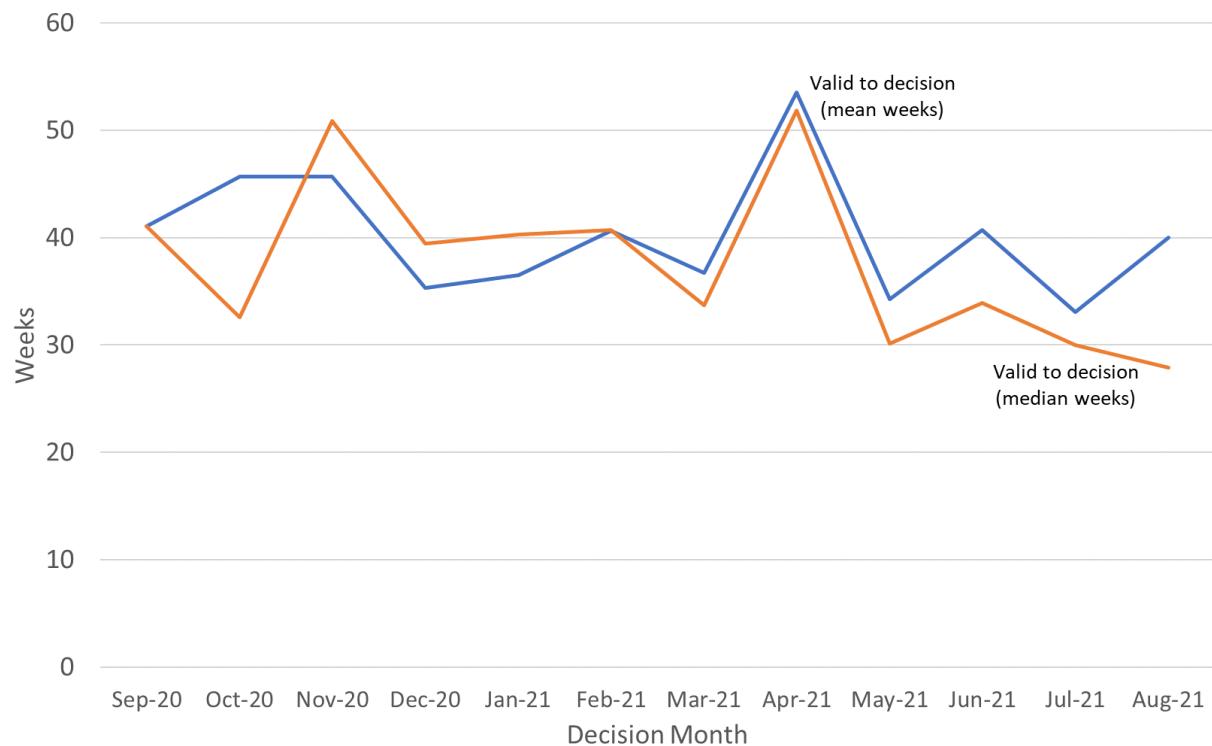
Source: Horizon

Figure 7 below shows the mean and median time to decision for planning inquiry cases under the Rosewell process.

<sup>11</sup> Data also published on gov.uk at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/appeals-average-timescales-for-arranging-inquiries-and-hearings>

<sup>12</sup> The ‘Rosewell’ process introduced changes to how the inquiry event date was agreed and a firm timetable for submission of documentation. Further information on what the Rosewell Review concluded is at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-review-of-planning-appeal-inquiries-report>

Figure 7: Mean, Median Time to Decision, Rosewell Inquiry Process; Sep 20 to Aug 21



Source: Horizon

## Open Cases

At the end of August 21, the Planning Inspectorate had over twelve thousand five hundred cases open<sup>13</sup> (12,526). This is higher than the previous month. The open cases comprised over 10,600 cases being handled through written representations; just over 1,000 through hearings; and over 700 through inquiries. This is not the number of ‘live’ hearings and inquiries since it includes cases where the event (hearing or inquiry) has yet to start, as well as those where the event has finished but the decision has yet to be issued.

For each procedure type, there are more cases with an event scheduled but not yet started, than at any other stage in the process. Event refers to either a site visit, hearing, or inquiry.

<sup>13</sup> Open cases are any that have been received but on which a decision has not yet been made/ issued. Cases included comprise Planning, Enforcement, and the following Specialist cases: Common Land, Environment, Purchase Notice and Rights of Way, Tree Preservation Orders, Hedgerows and High Hedges cases.

Note that previous publications excluded Tree Preservation Order, Hedgerow and High Hedge cases from open cases totals. See Background Quality report for more information.

Table 10: Open cases by procedure and stage, as of end of August 2021

Procedure	Case received but yet to be deemed valid	Case deemed valid, event date yet to be set / in the future	Event complete but decision not yet issued	Total
Written Representations	963	7,957	1,715	10,635
Hearings	42	919	92	1,053
Inquiries	2	619	92	713
Total	1,007	9,612	1,907	12,526

Source: Horizon

Note there are 125 cases that have no procedure type recorded (see Background Quality Report for more detail) These are included in the total row but excluded from the breakdown by procedure.

Data note 1 - the count of open cases from December 2020 onwards has been revised to include some specialist casework types that were previously excluded: High Hedge (HH), Hedgerow (HGW) and Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

Data note 2 – there is a known anomaly that means that the number of open cases does not exactly follow the volumes of cases closed or received (for example the number of open cases can increase between months even though the number closed exceeded the number received). The main reasons for this have been identified and are detailed in the Background Quality Report.

## Inspectors

Table 11 below shows the number of inspectors in the Planning Inspectorate in each month from September 20 to August 21<sup>14</sup>. This includes headcount (i.e., the number of different individuals) and full-time equivalents (FTE) where those working part time are counted in proportion with their contracted hours. There were 346 Planning Inspectors employed by the Inspectorate in August 21 – with a full-time equivalent of 307.8.

By both measures (headcount and FTE) the highest Inspector resource in the last 12 months was in April 21; and by both, the number at the end of January 21 was the lowest.

Table 11: Planning Inspectors – Headcount and FTE; Sep 20 to Aug 21 (at end of month)

Month	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21
Headcount	352	347	345	345	343	345	352	355	353	349	347	346
FTE	316.4	310.0	308.1	308.1	305.4	308.1	314.4	317.0	314.4	310.8	308.4	307.8

Source: SAP HR

As above, Planning Inspectors work on a broader range of work than the appeals featured in this Release. They also work on applications and examinations. Please note that data on Planning Inspectors is only applicable to salaried employees (it does not include fixed term contract Inspectors or non-salaried Inspectors).

<sup>14</sup> Data as at the last day of the month.

## Virtual Events<sup>15</sup>

The Planning Inspectorate has continued moving casework forward during the pandemic by adapting the ways of working so that examinations, hearings, and inquiries (which would previously have been held face-to-face) could take place virtually.

The Inspectorate are continuing to increase the number of events carried out ‘virtually’. There appears to be under-recording despite the introduction of system changes aimed at improving the quality of data.

The table and graph below give the number of virtual events that have occurred each month. There were 26 cases involving Virtual Events during August 21.

### Consultation with our users – Proposed removal of virtual events data

In this statistical release we have been publishing data on the number of virtual events being held each month. The Planning Inspectorate recommenced face-to-face events for hearings and inquiries from Monday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021. There also continues to be significant concerns with the quality of the data collected on virtual events.

It is proposed that virtual events data will no longer be published in future statistical releases.

If you have any concerns or comments on this proposed change please can you email [statistics@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:statistics@planninginspectorate.gov.uk) by Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October. The results of the consultation will be published in the October 2021 release.

### Data quality and corrections

There are concerns about the quality and accuracy of the data collection methods for virtual events data. Changes to recording systems aimed at reducing under-recording have been implemented but do not appear to be providing fully reliable information. See the Background Quality Report for further information.

Table 12: Virtual Events, Sep 20 to Aug 21<sup>P</sup>

Case Type	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21
s78 Hearings	36	41	43	35	35	23	33	29	26	33	17	4
s78 Inquiries	11	11	17	17	14	15	21	15	24	18	12	10
Enforcement	9	15	18	26	35	36	30	31	19	18	20	9
Local Plans	7	14	12	12	5	7	9	5	6	11	6	0
National Infrastructure	2 (2)	10 (3)	3 (30)	6 (9)	3 (18)	4 (7)	2 (8)	3 (2)	1 (1)	2 (1)	0 (0)	1 (1)
Other	0	4	16	7	14	8	11	9	9	4	3	2
Total	65 (65)	95 (88)	109 (136)	103 (106)	106 (121)	93 (96)	106 (112)	92 (91)	85 (85)	86 (85)	58 (58)	26 (26)

<sup>15</sup> Virtual Events data includes casework types not covered elsewhere in this release, including Local Plans and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.

Source: Virtual Events 'Triage' data and SharePoint list, data as at 15/09/21

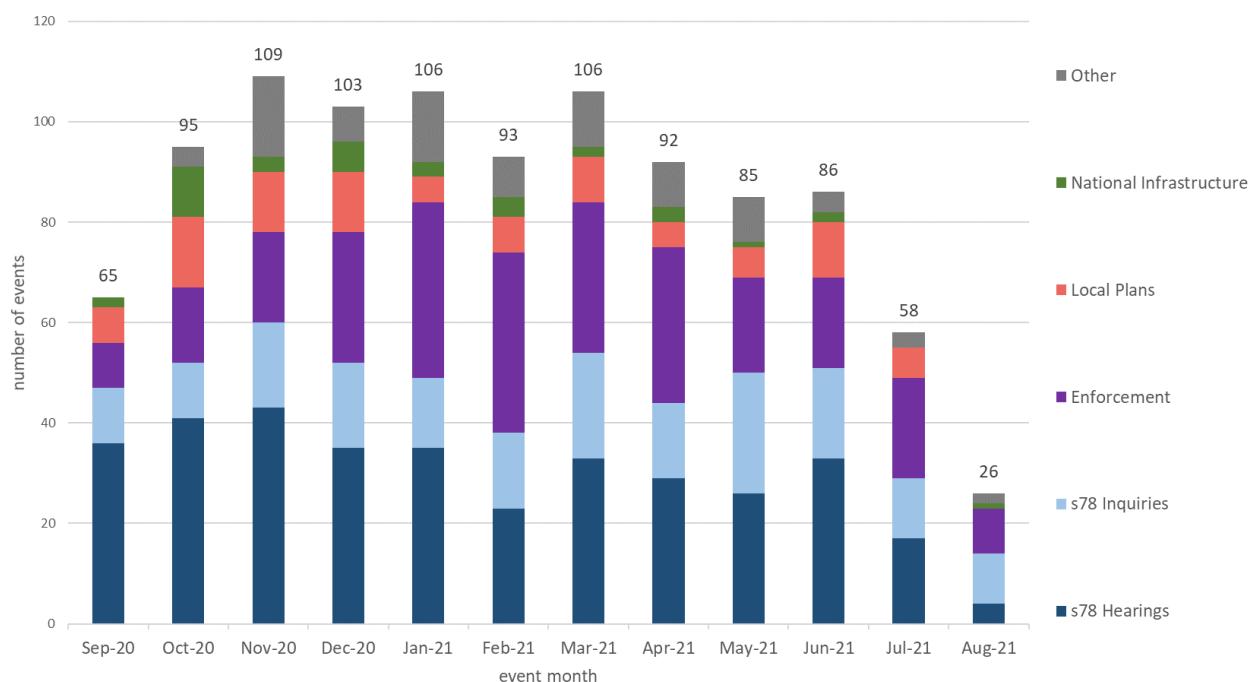
Numbers in brackets show count of events but note concerns below over counting sessions on same day.  
Local Plans are counted as cases where at least one sitting day occurred in a month.  
'Other' case type includes specialist casework like Environmental appeals, Transport examinations and Rights of Way cases

**Some virtual events have occurred, but the source data does not record the casework type. These have not been included in the above table.**

P – These numbers should be treated as provisional due to concerns about quality and accuracy.

Note – some cases can have multiple 'events' – for example an inquiry may sit over four to eight days but would only be counted as one 'event'. On the other hand, casework like National Infrastructure may have multiple events for the same project. For Local Plans, cases are counted as having held a virtual event, if at least one sitting day occurred that month.

Figure 8: Virtual Events; Sep 20 to Aug 21<sup>P</sup>



Source: Virtual Events 'Triage' data and SharePoint list, data as at 15/09/21

P – These numbers should be treated as provisional.

For National Infrastructure, the number given in the table is the number of projects that have held virtual events. The number in brackets is the number of individual events but this is potentially misleading as multiple sessions on the same day (e.g., morning and afternoon sessions) have been counted as separate events.

## Annex A – Content of ad-hoc Statistical Releases, 2020

Note: The Table below covers ad-hoc statistical releases. From November 2020 onwards, the content is fixed, so is the same as this publication.

Date	March 2020	April 2020	July 2020	September 2020	October 2020
Content	Appeals receipts and decisions in the last 12 and 24 months (1st March 2018 – 29th February 2020)  Number of section 78 Planning Appeals received / decided / within target that used the written representation method in the last 12 months (1st March 2019 – 29th February 2020)  Number of dwellings decided, and number of dwellings allowed by appeal decisions between 1st January 2017 and 31st December 2019.  Number of Planning Inspectors employed by the Planning Inspectorate at the end of each quarter between 31st March 2017 and 31st December 2019.	Appeals receipts and decisions between 17 <sup>th</sup> March 2020 and 22 <sup>nd</sup> April 2020  Live appeals in the system as at 23 <sup>rd</sup> April 2020  Number of appeals involving housing within the system as at 23 <sup>rd</sup> April 2020  Virtual site visits	Appeals decisions between 17th March 2020 and 22nd June 2020  Number of open cases  Number of virtual events	Appeals decisions between 17th March 2020 and 21st September 2020  Number of open cases  Number of virtual events	Appeals decisions from October 2019 to September 2020  Number of open cases  Number of virtual events
Scope	England only  Planning cases, Enforcement cases and Rights of Way orders	England only  Planning cases, Enforcement cases and Rights of Way orders	England only  Planning cases, Enforcement cases and Rights of Way orders	England only  Planning cases, Enforcement cases and Rights of Way orders	England only  Planning cases, Enforcement cases, Specialist cases: Common Land, Rights of Way orders, Tree Preservation Orders, High Hedges appeals and Hedgerow appeals

## Annex B – Mean and median time to decision, with standard deviation, for planning, enforcement, and specialist casework

### Planning

Measure	Procedure	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21	Total
Valid to decision (mean weeks)	Written Representations	23.3	25.2	26.6	24.6	23.7	22.5	21.0	22.9	23.5	23.5	23.3	25.2	23.8
	Hearings	51.3	39.7	35.0	45.9	46.2	41.2	48.0	56.1	40.6	49.2	43.1r	41.3	44.6
	Inquiries	41.1	44.6	54.9	35.3	40.4	50.6	35.8	54.9	44.8	53.5	52.9	48.5	47.7
	All Cases	23.7	25.6	27.0	25.4	24.6	23.2	21.9	24.7	24.5	25.2	24.5	26.3	24.6
Valid to decision (median weeks)	Written Representations	22.3	23.9	25.4	22.0	20.4	19.4	18.0	20.1	21.0	20.0	19.7	22.4	21.1
	Hearings	43.1	34.0	36.1	43.0	46.6	46.4	44.8	56.9	37.3	45.4	42.0	37.4	41.9
	Inquiries	41.1	34.8	53.9	39.4	40.7	42.9	33.6	52.4	32.9	36.9	31.7	32.0	38.9
	All Cases	22.6	24.1	25.6	22.7	20.9	19.6	18.3	20.9	21.6	20.7	20.4	23.0	21.7
Standard Deviation (weeks)	Written Representations	8.8	10.7	10.9	11.4	10.8	10.5	10.9	11.2	11.8	11.9	11.3	12.0	11.1
	Hearings	20.5	18.5	13.3	17.4	23.0	16.7	24.6	23.6	18.7	20.7	16.5	18.6	20.1
	Inquiries	1.1	20.8	13.1	10.2	18.4	29.0	12.1	30.7	23.5	37.3	49.8	48.8	32.5
	All Cases	9.8	11.3	11.3	12.3	12.3	11.6	12.3	14.6	13.1	15.2	13.8	14.7	12.6

### Enforcement

Measure	Procedure	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21	Total
Valid to decision (mean weeks)	Written Representations	37.1	41.4	36.7	38.3	36.9	35.4	32.3	34.4	31.5	33.1	32.2	39.7	36.4
	Hearings	34.3	84.4	54.4	64.3	82.7	66.3	78.5	77.9	50.9	62.6r	64.1	70.7	68.3
	Inquiries	84.6	43.9	62.5	102.9	75.4	108.7	81.8	73.8	71.3	104.9	90.6	104.1	87.7
	All Cases	37.5	42.8	37.7	42.1	43.8	42.7	41.6	47.6	40.6	45.7	42.7	54.6	42.4
Valid to decision (median weeks)	Written Representations	33.6	36.9	33.9	35.2	31.1	28.1	27.6	29.6	24.9	29.1	26.0	34.5	32.0
	Hearings	34.3	89.0	56.0	68.5	78.8	68.8	84.4	71.3	45.2	61.6	67.3	56.0	66.3
	Inquiries	84.6	42.6	56.1	99.0	86.1	125.3	86.7	62.4	66.0	108.0	92.9	122.3	86.7
	All Cases	33.6	38.4	34.6	36.9	37.8	34.9	30.5	35.2	28.3	38.9	32.3	40.4	34.9
Standard Deviation (weeks)	Written Representations	14.9	19.3	16.3	18.9	23.2	17.8	16.9	20.9	25.6	17.8	19.6	26.2	19.7
	Hearings	0.0	12.8	12.3	22.6	23.2	22.2	15.6	28.0	13.6	18.5	17.9	34.2	23.4
	Inquiries	0.0	10.1	10.1	19.2	38.1	23.2	26.8	20.3	21.4	30.7	35.0	34.9	32.7
	All Cases	15.5	20.5	16.8	23.1	29.0	26.7	26.2	29.4	28.9	29.7	29.4	38.7	26.0

## Specialist

Measure	Procedure	Sep 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	Apr 21	May 21	Jun 21	Jul 21	Aug 21	Total
Valid to decision (mean weeks)	Written Representations	45.2	38.9	37.5	44.7	42.7	52.8	27.1	33.3	22.8	34.5	28.8r	29.3	37.1
	Hearings	0.0	-	-	-	89.8	65.0	80.0	82.1	60.0	100.8	-	78.3	79.9
	Inquiries	63.7	37.3	66.7	59.9	58.4	77.6	18.0	85.1	100.0	-	90.2	84.6	67.5
	All Cases	47.0	38.8	39.4	45.3	46.1	53.7	29.1	36.7	24.8	36.6	34.3r	35.2	39.5
Valid to decision (median weeks)	Written Representations	48.1	33.7	39.1	44.0	43.6	53.1	14.9	21.9	15.3	26.9	21.0	17.3	31.4
	Hearings	-	-	-	-	102.1	65.0	80.0	82.1	60.0	100.8	-	95.0	81.4
	Inquiries	65.0	37.3	60.4	59.9	64.0	81.9	18.0	85.1	100.0	-	94.3	88.4	69.9
	All Cases	48.7	35.5	41.1	45.6	52.9	53.6	15.0	22.0	15.6	28.0	22.4	18.0	33.9
Standard Deviation (weeks)	Written Representations	24.5	26.6	16.7	24.8	33.3	24.5	26.9	28.4	19.1	25.4	21.9	25.0	26.4
	Hearings	-	-	-	-	18.1	0.0	16.3	12.9	0.0	7.1	-	31.5	21.4
	Inquiries	12.7	0.0	17.3	13.1	19.5	19.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	9.6	11.5	23.1
	All Cases	24.3	26.4	18.3	24.6	33.7	24.7	28.3	30.4	21.8	27.7	27.4	29.9	27.6

r denotes revision – a change of more than 0.5 weeks since last month.

## Annex C – Detailed Information on timeliness (August)

The information below is published today on the number and length of decisions made in August 2021<sup>16</sup>:

Casework Type	Procedure Type	Mean (weeks)	Median (weeks)	Decisions
s78 planning appeals	Written Representations	27.2	24.0	563
	Hearings	41.2	36.9	34
	Inquiries	48.5	32.0	20
Householder appeals	Written Representations	19.1	19.4	303
Enforcement appeals	Written Representations	31.5	34.5	134
	Hearings	50.9	56.0	11
	Inquiries	71.3	122.3	37

The smaller the number of decisions, the less helpful the mean and median are as measures for summarising performance. Particular care should be taken when there are fewer than twenty decisions. These are shaded grey in the table but have been provided for completeness and transparency.

The information published below shows the time taken for different stages of the appeals process:

	s78 planning appeals			Householder appeals
	Written Representations	Hearings	Inquiries	
<b>Weeks between valid date &amp; start date</b>				
Mean (average)	12.9	23.7	2.2	7.8
Median (average)	13.4	18.4	1.7	9.0
Cases that started in August 21	752	23	17	283
<b>Weeks between start date &amp; event date</b>				
Mean (average)	14.1	20.1	26.5	8.5
Median (average)	9.1	18.1	18.7	6.7
Cases where an event occurred during August 21	685	27	12	418
<b>Weeks between event date &amp; decision date</b>				
Mean (average)	4.5	6.0	11.1	3.3
Median (average)	3.1	5.1	10.9	2.3
Cases that have been decided in August 21	620	39	13	358

- Valid date – the date a case is deemed to have been validly received
- Start date – date when a case has started its documentation phase (requesting statements and additional information) and an Inspector resource has usually been identified to carry out the case
- Event date – the date of either a site visit, hearing, or inquiry

<sup>16</sup> Also published on gov.uk here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/appeals-average-timescales-for-arranging-inquiries-and-hearings>

- Decision date – the date the decision was issued by The Planning Inspectorate

## Annex D – Casework types included in this release

Planning covers s78 planning appeals, Householder appeals, Commercial appeals, s20 Listed Building appeals, Advertisement appeals, s106 Planning Obligation appeals and Called In Planning Applications.

Enforcement covers s174 Enforcement appeals, s39 Enforcement Listed Building appeals and Lawful Development Certificate appeals.

Specialist casework includes Common Land, Rights of Way orders, Purchase orders, Tree Preservation Orders, High Hedges appeals and Hedgerow appeals.  
 (Note that the data on Open Cases in previous publications excluded Tree Preservation Orders and High Hedges and Hedgerow appeals.)

## Background notes

### Data sources

Horizon / Picasso – The main casework management systems used for processing appeals casework (note that Picasso is no longer a live system).

SAP HR – The Human Resources system database used to store all information regarding members of staff.

Measure	Definition
Mean	The total time taken divided by the number of cases. Also referred to as the ‘average’. A measure of how long each case would take, if the total time taken was spread evenly across all cases.
Median	This is the time taken by the ‘middle’ case if all cases were sorted from quickest to longest
Standard deviation	This is a measure of variability or spread. It is calculated by examining how much each value differs from the mean. A higher standard deviation means the individual decision times vary more widely around the mean.

### Compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics

These statistics have been published in accordance with the Code of Practice for Statistics, which cover trustworthiness, quality, and value. They have been pre-announced, and publication is overseen by the Head of Profession.

### Technical Notes

A Background Quality Report is published alongside this Statistical Release. It provides more detail on the quality of statistics in this publication.

Data quality	Data on cases is taken from a live casework system, and details of cases can change for a number of reasons even after a decision has been made. We are seeking to get a better understanding of the nature and volume of these changes and will provide further information as it is available.
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	<p>We carry out regular checks on the quality of our data and may undertake ad hoc data cleansing exercises. Therefore, all the data for the last 12 rolling months is published in provisional form.</p> <p>We have indicated in this publication any data where a number of cases has changed by more than five cases in a month; or where a measure (mean, median or standard deviation) has changed by more than 0.5 weeks.</p>
Virtual Events	<p>Data is currently being sourced from an operational MS Excel workbook. It is therefore being constantly updated and refined and may result in data may changing between monthly publications.</p> <p>There are concerns about the quality and accuracy of the data collection methods. Definitions of what constitutes an event are being refined, as this differs according to the type of casework.</p> <p>Whilst this work is in progress these numbers should be treated as provisional.</p> <p>Data for Local Plans is now being sourced from information recorded by Inspectors on their timesheets.</p>
Measuring weeks	<p>Data are measured in days and then converted to weeks.</p> <p>Note that not all decimal values are possible where converting days to weeks. 1 day is 1/7 of a week, or 0.14 weeks (to two decimal places). 2 days = 0.29; 3 days = 0.43; 4 days = 0.57; 5 days = 0.71; 6 days = 0.86.</p> <p>When these are used to calculate averages, or displayed to one decimal place, the result will not equate to a full day which can be misleading: it may appear that we are measuring part days (e.g. 19.8 weeks) but we only measure in whole days.</p>

## Glossary

Term	Explanation
Appeals	The right to appeal a planning decision made by a local authority is a key feature of the planning system, as is appealing when an authority is taking too long.
Appeals decided	Number of appeals by the date the appeal was decided by The Planning Inspectorate.
Appeals received	Number of appeals by the date the appeal was received by The Planning Inspectorate.
Applications	Planning Inspectorate manage the application process for proposed Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) within England and Wales in line with the 2008 Planning Act.
Closed	The total number of appeals decided, withdrawn, or turned away.
Decision	The outcome of the case e.g. appeal allowed or rejected. The date of the decision is taken as the date a decision letter is sent to the appellant.
Event	A site visit, hearing, or inquiry (may be virtual)
Event Type	The different options of how an Inspector visits a site for a written representations appeal.
Examinations	The process of examining local plans is dealt with by the Planning Inspectorate. Every Local Planning Authority is required to have a local plan. This includes a vision for the future and plan to address housing needs in the area.

	When a Local Planning Authority has finished preparing and consulting on a local plan it must be submitted to the Secretary of State who appoints an Inspector to carry out an independent examination.
FTE	Full Time Equivalent – a count of employees where those working part time are counted in proportion with their contracted hours.
Headcount	Total number of staff employed regardless of how many hours they work (i.e. the number of different individuals).
Hearings	<p>A hearing involves the submission of written evidence by the main parties and a hearing once all the written submissions have been received.</p> <p>This takes the form of a round-the-table discussion (in person or virtually) that will be led by the planning inspector. It allows for all parties to respond to any questions that the inspector might have, and to let everyone make their case known.</p> <p>Source: Planning Portal</p>
Inquiries	<p>An inquiry is usually used for complex cases where legal issues may need to be considered. The main parties will usually have legal representatives to present their case and to cross-examine any witnesses. Prior to the inquiry date, the Planning Inspectorate will expect to have received various documents from all parties that will be taking part in the appeal. These may include statements of case and proofs of evidence from expert witnesses. Third parties may also take part. The inquiry will be led by the inspector and will follow a formal procedure.</p> <p>At some point during or on conclusion of the inquiry the inspector and the main parties will undertake a site visit.</p> <p>Source: Planning Portal</p>
Live appeals	Number of live appeals in that have an appeal valid date but no end date (either decision date or a closed date, e.g. for appeals that have been withdrawn).
Open Cases	Number of cases that have been received but on which a decision has not yet been made/ issued. Will differ from Live Appeals as it includes those received but not yet verified.
Procedure Type	The method by which The Planning Inspectorate processes and decides appeals.
Written Representations	Most planning appeals are decided by the written representations' procedure. With this procedure the Inspector considers written evidence from the appellant, the LPA and anyone else who has an interest in the appeal. The site is also likely to be visited.

## Contact Us

The Planning Inspectorate welcome feedback on our statistical products. If you have any comments or questions about this publication or about our statistics in general, you can contact us as follows:

**Media enquiries** 0303 444 5004  
email [press.office@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:press.office@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

**Public enquiries** email [statistics@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:statistics@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

**Please note** we are currently reviewing our statistics with a view to making them as clear and helpful as possible for users. We would be delighted if you could contact us via the address below with any views on this approach; particularly on what content would be most useful and why.

email [statistics@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:statistics@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

If you require information which is not available within this or other available publications, you may wish to submit a Request for Information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to the Planning Inspectorate. For more information, see: <https://www.gov.uk/make-a-freedom-of-information-request/the-freedom-of-information-act>