



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government



Statistical release

Planning application statistics

Planning applications in England: January to March 2021

In this release:

Between January and March 2021, district level planning authorities in England:

- received 124,400 applications for planning permission, up 20 per cent from the corresponding quarter of 2020;
- granted 87,100 decisions, up 13 per cent from the same quarter in 2020; this is equivalent to 88 per cent of decisions, up one percentage point from the same quarter of 2020;
- decided 88 per cent of major applications within 13 weeks or the agreed time, down one percentage point from the same quarter in 2020;
- granted 9,800 residential applications, down four per cent on a year earlier: 1,300 for major developments and 8,600 for minor developments;
- granted 1,900 applications for commercial developments, down five per cent on a year earlier.

In the year ending March 2021, district level planning authorities:

- granted 324,200 decisions, down five per cent on the year ending March 2020; and
- granted 39,000 decisions on residential developments, of which 5,000 were for major developments and 34,100 were for minor developments, down by 12 and 10 per cent respectively on the year ending March 2020. This is equivalent to a decrease of 11 per cent in the overall number of residential decisions granted.

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Introduction

This Statistical Release presents National Statistics on authorities that undertake district and county level planning activities in England. It covers information on planning applications received and decided, including decisions on applications for residential developments (dwellings) and enforcement activities. Data are provided at national and local planning authority level and are based on information reported for the relevant quarters as at 7 May 2021 for the PS1/2 return ('District matters') and the CPS1/2 return ('County matters').

The technical notes that were previously included in this release in the release have been published as a separate document from the July to September 2020 release. The *Definitions* section in the technical document provides a link to a glossary containing details of the main terms used within this release and associated live tables.

Authorities undertaking district level planning

A summary of the trends in applications, decisions and permissions granted is provided in **Figure 1**. The number of applications, decisions and permissions at district level in this publication is given to the nearest hundred; more detailed figures are available in the accompanying Live Tables.

Planning applications

During January to March 2021, authorities undertaking district level planning in England received 124,400 applications for planning permission, up 20 per cent from the corresponding quarter in 2020. In the year ending March 2021, authorities received 431,100 planning applications, up two per cent on the year ending March 2020 (**Live Table P134, Table 1 and PS1 summary dashboard**).

Planning decisions

Authorities reported 98,900 decisions on planning applications in January to March 2021, an increase of 12 per cent on the 88,500 decisions in the same quarter of the previous year. In the

year ending March 2021, authorities decided 369,800 planning applications, down five per cent on the number in the year ending March 2020 (**Live Tables P120/P133/P134 and Table 1**).

Applications granted

During January to March 2021, authorities granted 87,100 decisions, up 13 per cent on the same quarter in 2020. Authorities granted 88 per cent of all decisions, up one percentage point from the March quarter of 2020 (**Live Tables P120/P133**). Overall, 82 per cent of major and minor decisions were granted, unchanged from the quarter ending March 2020 (**PS2 development types dashboard**).

Over the 12 months to March 2021, 324,200 decisions were granted, down five per cent on the figure for the year to March 2020 (**Table 1 and PS2 development types dashboard**).

The above information is summarised in Table 1, below¹.

Table 1: District level planning applications received, decided and granted
England, quarter and year ending March 2020 and March 2021^P

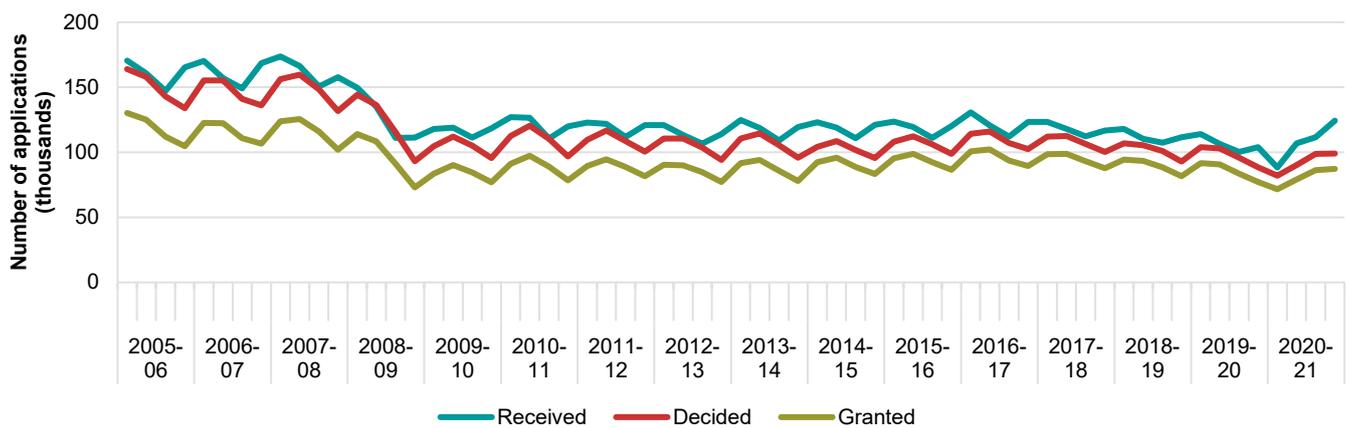
	Quarter ending		Year Ending	
	2021 Q1	2020 Q1	2021 Q1	2020 Q1
Number of applications received (000s)	124.4	103.8	431.1	424.5
<i>% change in the number of applications received from previous period</i>	20	-7	2	-5
Number of applications decided ¹ (000s)	98.9	88.5	369.8	391.3
<i>% change in the number of applications decided from previous period</i>	12	-8	-5	-4
Number of applications granted (000s)	87.1	77.2	324.2	343.0
<i>% change in the number of applications granted from previous period</i>	13	-5	-5	-4

Historical context

Figure 1 shows that, since about 2009-10, the numbers of applications received, decisions made and applications granted have each followed a similar pattern. As well as the usual within-year pattern of peaks in the Summer (July to September quarter for applications and July to September for decisions) and troughs in the Autumn (October to December quarter for applications and January to March quarter for decisions), there was a clear downward trend during the 2008 economic downturn, followed by a period of stability with reductions in more recent quarters.

¹ The historic time series that were included in Table 1 in previous releases are available in Live Table P120.

Figure 1: Number of planning applications received, decided and granted
 England, quarter ending June 2005 to quarter ending March 2021



Historical figures for all district level decisions dating back to 2008-09 are set out in **Live Table P120**, with separate breakdowns for residential and commercial decisions being shown in **Live Tables P120A** and **P120B** respectively. These latter two tables are discussed below in the sections on residential and commercial decisions².

Figure 2: Percentage of planning decisions granted, by type of development
 Local planning authorities, quarter ending March 2021

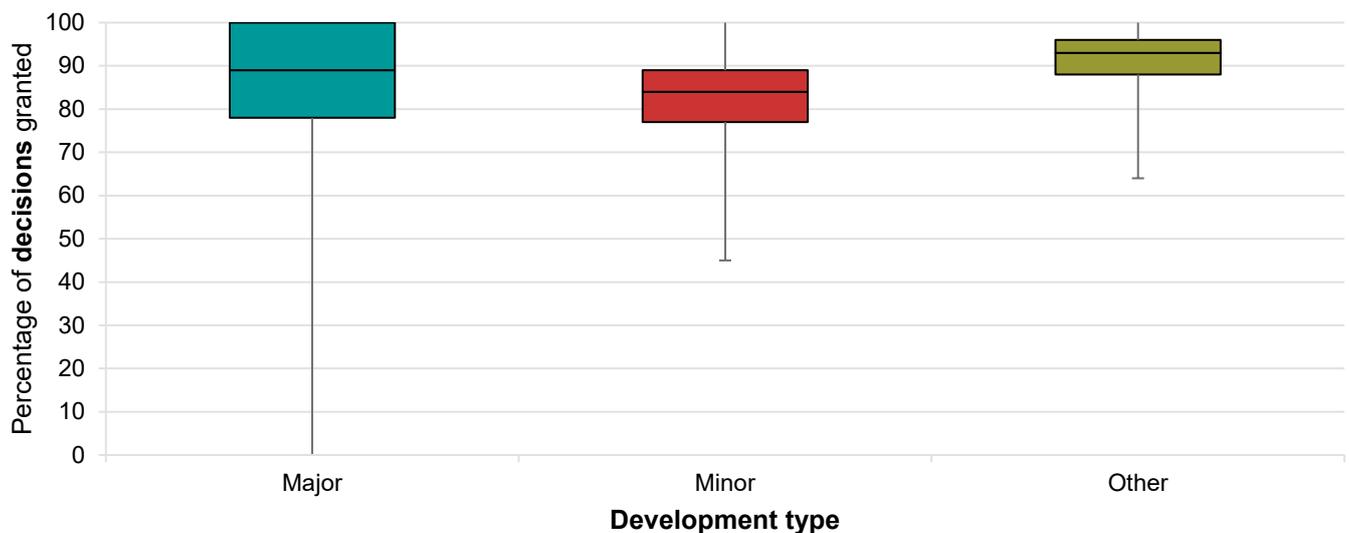


Figure 2 summarises the distribution of the percentage of decisions granted across authorities for major, minor and other developments using box and whisker plots. The ends of the box are the upper and lower quartiles, meaning that 50 per cent of local authorities fall within this range. The whiskers are the two lines above and below the box that extend to the highest and lowest observations (the range). **Figure 2** shows that the variation in percentage of decisions granted this quarter is widest between authorities for major developments (0 to 100 per cent), followed by

² Tables P120A and P120B do not between them cover the totality of decisions included in P120, which also includes decisions on Traveller caravan pitches and various 'Other developments'.

minor developments (45 to 100 per cent) and other developments (64 to 100 per cent) (**Live Table P120 and PS2 local planning authorities dashboard**).

Regional breakdowns

Table 2 shows how numbers of applications received, decisions made and decisions granted varied by region. It also shows how the percentage of decisions granted varies widely by region, from 80 per cent in London to 94 per cent in the North East. (**Live Table P133**).

Table 2: Regional breakdown of applications and decisions

Quarter ending March 2021

	Total applications received	Total decisions	Total decisions granted	Percentage of decisions granted
England	124,359	98,914	87,141	88
North East	3,774	3,006	2,817	94
North West	12,799	9,439	8,603	91
Yorkshire and the Humber	10,282	8,016	7,279	91
East Midlands	9,940	7,874	7,127	91
West Midlands	9,823	8,105	7,293	90
East of England	16,938	13,464	11,535	86
London	19,150	15,462	12,364	80
South East	24,238	19,427	17,156	88
South West	15,172	12,492	11,498	92
National Parks	2,243	1,629	1,469	90

1. National Parks are counted separately from each region: a few national parks straddle more than one region.

Table 3 shows how the changes in numbers of planning applications received, and in planning decisions made, varied by region. Although numbers of applications were largely unchanged, regional changes varied from increases of 11 per cent (West Midlands) to an increase of 33 per cent in the North East. (**Live Table P133**)

Table 3: Regional breakdown of changes in applications and decisions

Quarter ending March 2020 to quarter ending March 2021

	Total applications received, January to March 2020	Total applications received, January to March 2021	Percentage change	Total decisions, January to March 2020	Total decisions, January to March 2021	Percentage change
England	103,833	124,359	20	88,466	98,914	12
North East	2,838	3,774	33	2,468	3,006	22
North West	10,032	12,799	28	8,242	9,439	15
Yorkshire and the Humber	8,230	10,282	25	6,956	8,016	15
East Midlands	8,136	9,940	22	6,871	7,874	15
West Midlands	8,870	9,823	11	7,390	8,105	10
East of England	13,497	16,938	25	11,824	13,464	14
London	17,117	19,150	12	14,680	15,462	5
South East	20,529	24,238	18	17,627	19,427	10
South West	12,769	15,172	19	10,957	12,492	14
National Parks	1,815	2,243	24	1,451	1,629	12

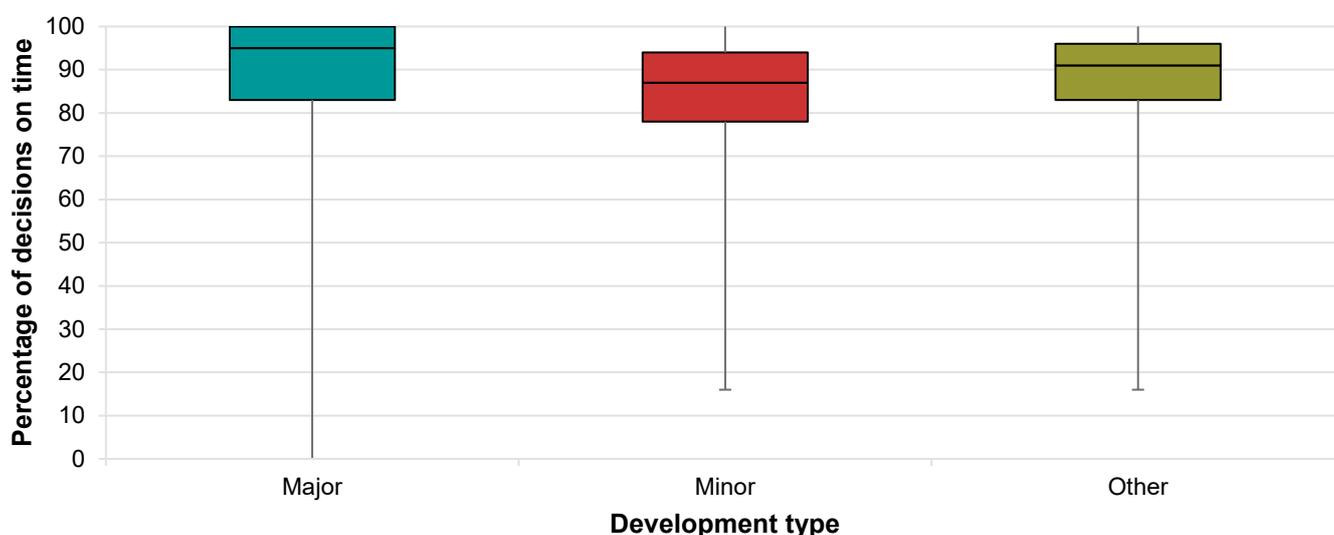
Speed of decisions

- In January to March 2021, 88 per cent of major applications were decided within 13 weeks or within the agreed time³, down one percentage point from the same quarter a year earlier.
- In the same quarter, 84 per cent of minor applications were decided within eight weeks or the agreed time, down one percentage point from a year earlier.
- Also in the same quarter, 88 per cent of other applications were decided within eight weeks or the agreed time, down two percentage points from a year earlier.

Figure 3 summarises the distribution of the percentage of decisions made in time across authorities for major, minor and other developments using box and whisker plots. The ends of the box are the upper and lower quartiles, meaning that 50 per cent of local authorities fall within this range. The whiskers are the two lines above and below the box that extend to the highest and lowest observations (the range). **Figure 3** shows that the variation in percentage of decisions made in time this quarter is widest between authorities for major developments (0 to 100 per cent), followed by minor developments (16 to 100 per cent) and other developments (16 to 100 per cent). (**Live Table P120 and the PS2 local planning authorities dashboard**).

Figure 3: Speed of decision-making, by type of development

Local planning authorities, quarter ending March 2021



³ This is the agreed time for applications for major developments associated with a Planning Performance Agreement (PPAs), Extension of Time (EoT) or Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

Use of performance agreements

Table 4 summarises the recent use of performance agreements⁴. It shows that they are more commonly used for major developments than minor or other developments, with 73 per cent of major decisions made during January to March 2021 involving a planning agreement, compared with 49 per cent of minor decisions and 34 per cent of other decisions. **Figure 4** shows, from 2010, numbers of decisions on major developments made involving a performance agreement, both in absolute terms and as a percentage of all decisions on major developments. The underlying historical figures are available in the PS2 development type dashboard. Notwithstanding definitional changes, there has been a marked increase in the use of agreements since early 2013. In reality, this longer upward trend has been driven by both the additional scope for recording them and their additional use.

The three final columns in Live Table P120 give corresponding figures for planning applications involving a planning agreement for all types of development (major, minor and 'other' combined), showing numbers of decisions and percentages decided within time.

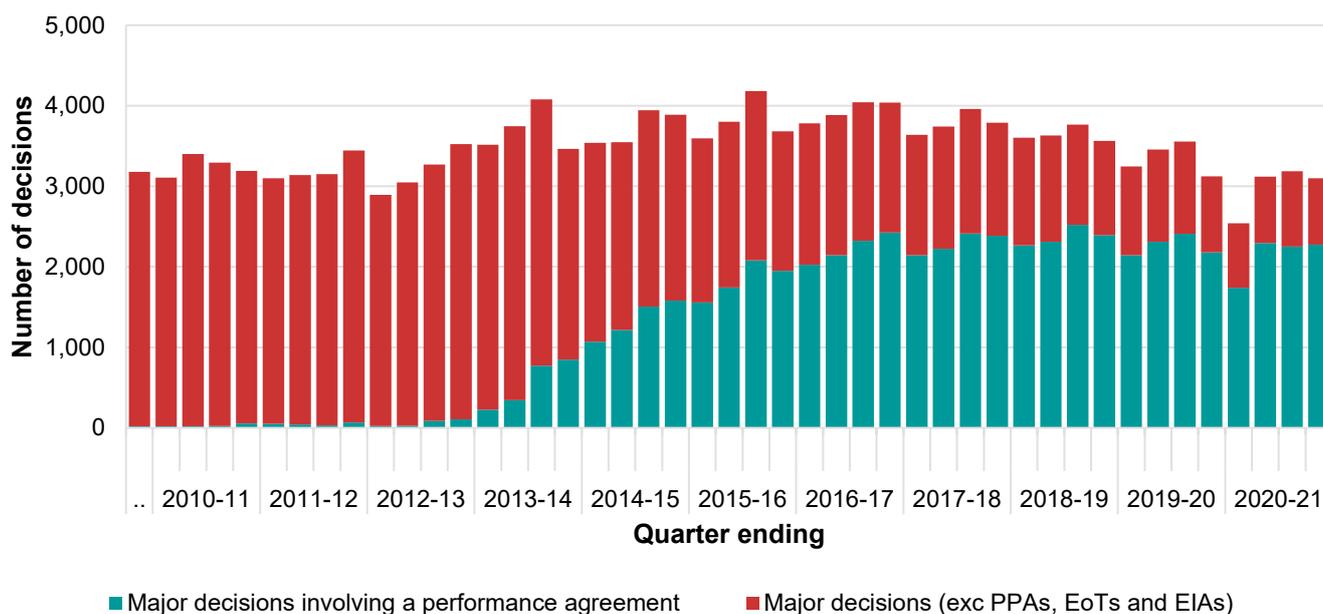
Table 4: Use of performance agreements with planning applications
England, quarters and years ending March 2020 and March 2021 ^P

	Quarter ending		Year ending	
	2021 Q1	2020 Q1	2021 Q1	2020 Q1
Major decisions				
Total	3,099	3,125	11,947	13,385
Number involving a performance agreement	2,274	2,181	8,556	9,044
% involving a performance agreement	73	70	72	68
Minor decisions				
Total	25,621	26,323	100,202	113,557
Number involving a performance agreement	12,601	11,850	47,792	47,206
% involving a performance agreement	49	45	48	42
Other decisions				
Total	70,194	59,018	257,662	264,321
Number involving a performance agreement	24,183	16,473	82,752	67,170
% involving a performance agreement	34	28	32	25

P = Provisional; R = Revised

⁴ 'Performance agreement' is an umbrella term used to refer to Planning Performance Agreements, Extensions of Time and Environmental Impact Assessments.

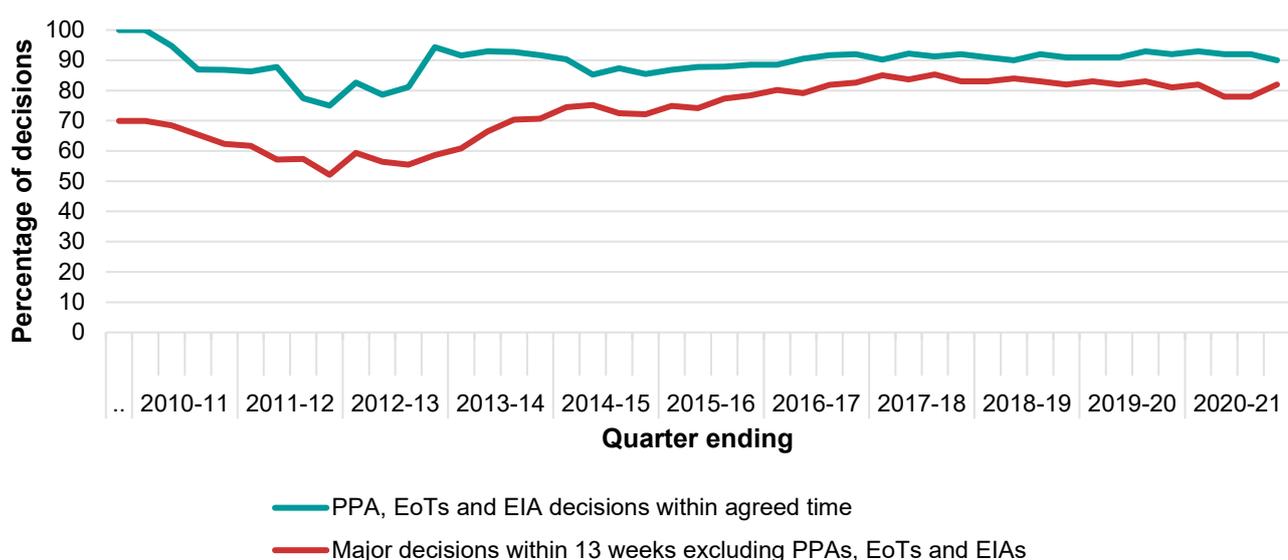
Figure 4: Use of performance agreements with applications for major developments¹
 England, quarter ending March 2010 to quarter ending March 2021



1. Figures cover agreed extensions of time and environmental impact assessments from 1 April 2013

Figure 5 and Reference Table 2 show that in the quarter to March 2021, 90 per cent of major development decisions involving performance agreements were made on time. In comparison, 82 per cent of major decisions not involving performance agreements were made within the statutory time limit of 13 weeks. The underlying figures are available in the **PS2 development type dashboard**.

Figure 5: Percentage of major development decisions made within time¹
 England, quarter ending March 2010 to quarter ending March 2021



1. Figures cover agreed extensions of time and environmental impact assessments from 1 April 2013

Performance of individual district level local planning authorities

Live Tables P151a and P153 present data on the performance of district level local planning authorities against the latest published criterion in [Improving planning performance: criteria for designation](#) on the speed of decision-making for informing decisions on the designation of poorly performing local planning authorities under section 62B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. In particular, **Live Table P151a** gives detailed figures for the time taken for **major** decisions to be made over the eight most recent quarters and **Live Table P153** presents data for the time taken by district level local planning authorities for decisions on ‘**non-major developments**’ (defined as minor developments, changes of use and householder developments) to be made over the eight most recent quarters.

Similarly, **Live Table P152a**, presents data on the performance of district level local planning authorities against the latest published criterion in [Improving planning performance: criteria for designation](#) on the quality of decision-making for assessing performance under section 62B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. In particular, it gives detailed figures for the percentage of **major** decisions subject to a successful planning appeal, by matching eight quarters of the department’s data on decisions and all available quarters of Planning Inspectorate data on appeals. This table is usually published a few weeks after the statistical release and most of the other live tables, to take account of the latest appeals data.

Live Table P154 presents data for the percentage of decisions on non-major developments (as defined for Table P153) subject to a successful planning appeal, by matching eight quarters of the department’s data on decisions and all available quarters of Planning Inspectorate data on appeals. Like Table P152a, this table is usually published a few weeks after the statistical release and most of the other live tables, to take account of the latest appeals data.

Residential decisions

In January to March 2021, 13,300 decisions were made on applications for residential ⁵ developments, of which 9,800 (74 per cent) were granted. The number of residential decisions made decreased by four per cent from the March quarter of 2020, with the number granted also dropping four per cent.

The number of major residential decisions granted decreased by two per cent to 1,300, and the number of minor residential decisions granted decreased by four per cent, to 8,600 (**Live Table P120A, and the PS2 development type dashboard**). In the year ending March 2021, authorities granted 5,000 major and 34,100 minor residential applications, down by 12 and 10 per cent respectively on the year ending March 2020 (**Live Table P120A and the PS2 local planning authorities dashboard**). This is equivalent to a decrease of 11 per cent in the overall number of residential decisions granted.

⁵ ‘Residential’ is used in this release to refer only to developments involving the construction or conversion of dwellings, rather than also including other developments involving people’s homes, such as householder developments and some changes of use.

Residential units

The figures collected by the department are the numbers of decisions on planning applications submitted to local planning authorities, rather than the number of units included in each application, such as the number of homes in the case of housing developments. The department supplements this information by obtaining statistics on housing permissions from a contractor, Glenigan.⁶ The latest provisional figures show that permission for 295,000 homes was given in the year to 31 March 2021, down 6 per cent from the 315,000 homes granted permission in the year to 31 March 2020. This reflects very low figures in the April to June 2020 quarter, offset by a sharp increase in the final quarter (January to March 2021).

On an ongoing basis, figures are revised to ensure that any duplicates are removed, and also to include any projects that local planning authorities may not have processed: they are therefore subject to change, and the latest quarter's provisional figures tend to be revised upwards. These figures are provided here to give contextual information to users and have not been designated as National Statistics.

Table 5 shows rolling annual totals to Q1 from 2017 to 2021.

Table 5: Number of housing units granted planning permission

	2017 Q1	2018 Q1	2019 Q1	2020 Q1	2021 Q1
Rolling annual total	329,000	314,000	327,000	315,000	295,000
Percentage change from previous year	22%	-4%	4%	-4%	-6%

Source: Glenigan planning permission data: snapshot as at 14 June 2021

Figures include housing units on all sites, including those with ten or fewer units.

P Provisional

R Revised

Table 6 gives a breakdown of the annual total to Q3 2021 by size of project, whereas **Table 7** gives a breakdown by region.

⁶ Glenigan routinely collects data on planning applications submitted to all English local planning authorities and records the information by maintaining a 'planning application' for every project. The data have been updated over time as subsequent applications are submitted and decisions made, with all new applications being matched against the existing database at entry stage. This has involved an automated process supplemented by manual checking to identify any further matching projects. More details are given in the Definitions section of this release.

Table 6: Numbers of housing units granted permission in the year to 31 March 2021: by size and number of projects ^{1,2}

Number of units	Frequency (rounded to nearest 100)	% of total number of units	Number of projects (rounded to nearest 10)	% of total number of projects
1	5,400	2	5,370	39
2	2,200	1	1,090	8
3-5	10,600	4	2,780	20
6-9	12,000	4	1,610	12
10	1,900	1	190	1
10 or fewer	32,100	11	11,040	0
11-49	36,200	12	1,460	11
50-99	36,600	12	520	4
100-149	30,500	10	250	2
150-199	31,500	11	190	1
200-499	80,100	27	260	2
500+	47,900	16	60	0
Total	294,900	100	13,780	100

1. 'Projects' (from Glenigan data) and 'applications/decisions' (from local planning authorities' PS1/2 data returns to MHCLG) are not equivalent units. A single project may involve several applications/decisions - e.g. for outline planning permission, full planning permission, approval of reserved matters (i.e. information excluded from the initial outline planning application) and the variation or removal of planning conditions.

2. For comparison purposes, regional breakdowns of quarterly numbers of planning applications received, and of planning decisions made and granted, are available from the [PS1 planning dashboard](#).

Source: Glenigan Ltd

Table 7: Housing units granted permission in the year ending 31 March 2021: by region

Region	Number, rounded to the nearest 100	% of England total
North East	12,100	4
North West	40,400	14
Yorkshire and the Humber	22,700	8
East Midlands	31,000	11
West Midlands	29,900	10
East of England	35,500	12
London	52,300	18
South East	43,200	15
South West	27,100	9
National Parks	700	0
England	294,900	100

Source: Glenigan Ltd

For comparison purposes, regional breakdowns of quarterly numbers of planning applications received, and of planning decisions made and granted, are available from the [district matters planning dashboard](#). In addition, regional totals have been included in Live Table P133 since July to September 2020.

Commercial ⁷ decisions

In January to March 2021, 2,100 decisions were made on applications for commercial developments, of which 1,900 (90 per cent) were granted. The total number of commercial decisions granted decreased by five per cent on the same quarter of 2020. In the year ending March 2021, 7,100 applications for commercial developments were granted, down 17 per cent on the year ending March 2020 (**Live Table P120B**).

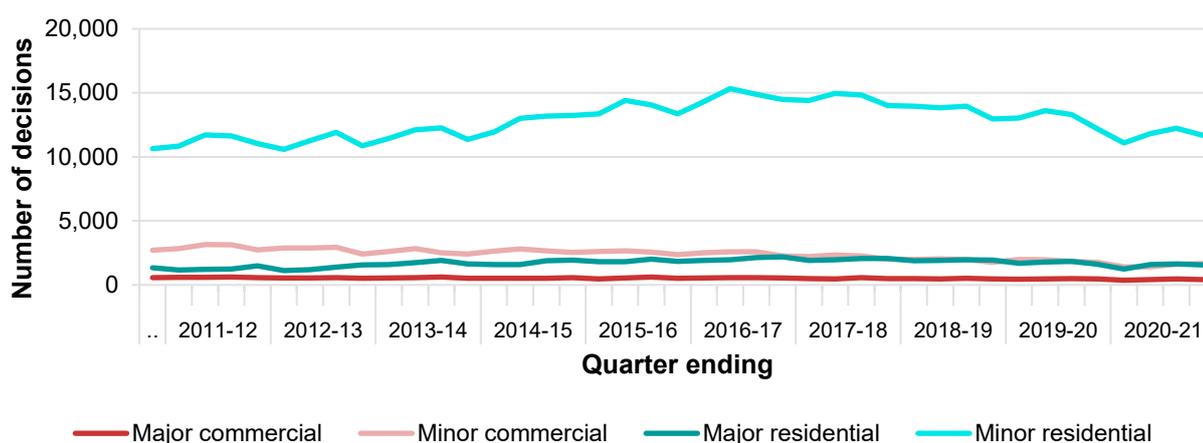
Trends in numbers of residential and commercial decisions

Historically, numbers of **residential** decisions dropped sharply during 2008 (particularly for minor decisions) then increased from 2012, before decreasing since about 2018 (major decisions) and 2019 (minor decisions).

Numbers of **commercial** decisions also decreased sharply during 2008 and then stabilised at around 2,100 per year for major and 10,000 per year for minor commercial decisions, but have undergone some further decreases recently, particularly for minor decisions. In 2020/21, numbers of major commercial decisions were at about 47 per cent of the pre-recession peak, with the numbers of minor commercial decisions being at about 27 per cent (**Live Tables P120A and P120B, Figure 6**).⁸

Figure 6: Number of planning applications decided by district authorities, by type of development

England, quarter ending March 2010 to quarter ending March 2021



⁷ Commercial developments are defined in this release as: 'Offices, research and development, light industry', 'General industry, storage, warehousing' and 'Retail and service'.

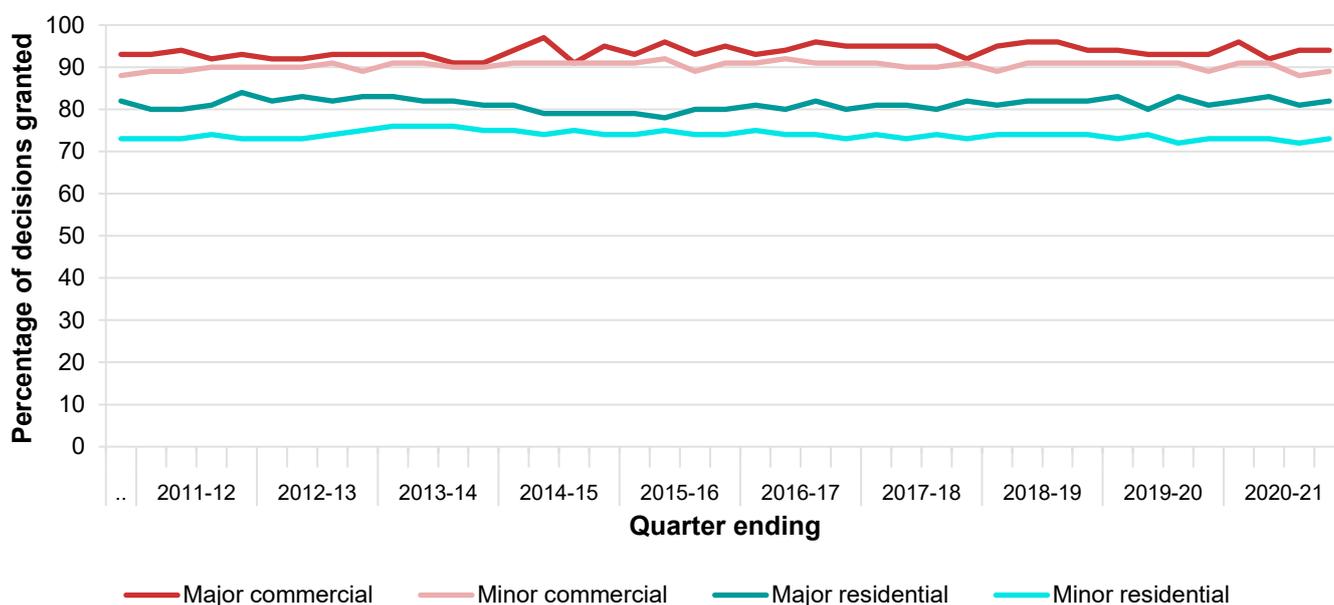
⁸ The pre-recession peak referred to differs for major and minor commercial decisions; the pre-recession peak occurred in 2006/07 for major decisions and 2007/08 for minor decisions.

Trends in the percentage of residential and commercial decisions granted

The percentages of major and minor **residential** decisions granted increased between 2008/09 (from about 65 per cent for each type) and 2010/11 (to about 80 per cent for major developments and about 75 per cent for minor developments) and have stabilised since then, at just over 80 per cent for major developments and just under 75 per cent for minor developments. The percentages of major and minor **commercial** decisions granted increased steadily, from 89 and 85 per cent respectively in 2007/08, to 94 and 91 per cent respectively in 2014/15, and have both been largely stable since then (**Live Tables P120A and P120B, Figure 7**).

Figure 7: Percentage of planning applications granted by district authorities, by type of development

England, quarter ending March 2011 to quarter ending March 2021



Householder developments

Householder developments are those developments to a residence which require planning permission such as extensions, loft conversions and conservatories (more details are in the glossary accessible from the *Definitions* section). The number of decisions made on householder developments was 57,300 in the quarter ending March 2021, accounting for 58 per cent of all decisions, up from 50 per cent of all decisions made in the quarter ending March 2020. The 57,300 decisions were up 31 per cent from the 43,900 decisions made in the quarter ending March 2020. Authorities granted 91 per cent of these applications and decided 89 per cent within eight weeks or the agreed time (**Reference Table 2 and PS2 development type dashboard**).

Permission in Principle/Technical Details consent decisions

Since 16 April 2017, local planning authorities have had the ability to grant permission in principle (PiP) to sites which have been entered on their brownfield land registers. Where sites have a grant of permission in principle, applicants have been able to submit an application for Technical Details Consent (TDC) for development on these sites. In addition, since 1 June 2018, it has also been possible to make an application for PiP for minor housing-led development as a separate application, independently of the brownfield register. Where a site has been granted PiP following an application, it is possible to apply for a TDC and a determination period of five weeks applies as it is minor development. Extensions of time may be agreed.

TDC applications have a 10-week determination period for major development and a five-week determination period for minor development. Extensions of time may be agreed and where it is an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development, the 16-week determination period applies.

Figures on PiP/TDC decisions have been collected on the quarterly PS2 return with effect from 1 January 2020. They are provided at local planning authority level in **Live Table PiP/TDC1**. In summary, during January to March 2020, local planning authorities reported 64 PiP decisions (minor housing-led developments), five TDC (minor housing-led developments) and no TDC (major developments). The totals for the next three quarters have been similar, with 60, four and no decisions respectively in April to June 2020; 51, eight and no decisions respectively during July to September; 80, five and no decisions respectively during October to December; and 79, four and no decisions respectively during January to March 2021.

Permitted development rights

Planning permission for some types of development has been granted nationally through legislation, and the resulting rights are known as 'permitted development rights'. In some cases, if the legislation is complied with, developments can go ahead without the requirement to notify the local planning authority and hence no way of capturing data exists. In other cases, the legislation requires an application to the local planning authority to determine whether prior approval is required (more details are in the *Definitions* section). A local planning authority can withdraw specific permitted development rights across a defined geographical area, bringing these types of development within the control of the main planning process⁹.

The results for the latest quarter for which they have been collected (January to March 2021) are included in **Live Tables PDR1** (local authority level figures) and **PDR2** (England totals). Of the 8,600 applications reported in the January to March quarter of 2021, prior approval was not required for 5,000 and permission was granted for 1,900 and refused for 1,700. This resulted in an overall acceptance rate¹⁰ of 80 per cent. Larger householder extensions accounted for 64

⁹ Under Article 4 of the General Permitted Development Order (Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015

¹⁰ The acceptance rate is defined as the number of applications for which prior approval was not required, or for which permission was granted, as a percentage of the total number of applications.

per cent of applications (5,500), with seven per cent relating to change of use from agricultural to residential and six per cent to change of use from office to residential. 'All other' permitted development rights, accounted for 18 per cent of applications, up from 14 per cent a year earlier.

Taking i) granted applications and ii) those for which prior approval was not required together, 6,900 applications were approved without having to go through the full planning process, up 24 per cent from a year earlier. Within the 25 per cent increase in the reported total number of PDR applications between January to March 2020 and January to March 2021:

- larger householder extensions increased by 15 per cent;
- change of use from office to residential increased by 28 per cent;
- change of use from agricultural to residential increased by 17 per cent: and
- 'all other' permitted development rights increased by 57 per cent.

The large increase in 'all other' permitted development rights is due in part to the creation of several new permitted development rights in June and July 2020, largely relating to 'building upwards'.¹¹

Figures for the total number of permitted development right applications made for changes *to residential use* for quarters from July to September 2014¹² are given in the quarterly worksheets in **Live Table PDR1**. These show that a total of 1,500 applications for changes to residential use were reported in January to March 2021, of which 1,100 (72 per cent) were given the go-ahead without having to go through the full planning process.

Overall during the twenty-eight quarters¹³ ending March 2021, district planning authorities reported 249,100 applications for prior approvals for permitted developments. For 141,200 (57 per cent) of them prior approval was not required, 58,100 (23 per cent) were granted and 49,700 (20 per cent) were refused (**Figure 8**).

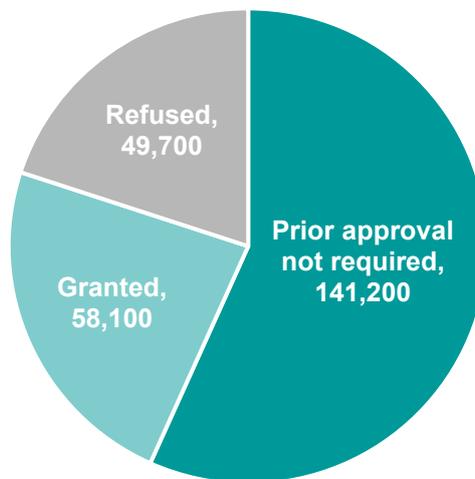
¹¹ Mostly as announced on 21 July 2020: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-laws-to-extend-homes-upwards-and-revitalise-town-centres>.

¹² The table was expanded with effect from July to September 2021 to provide on overall total of changes to residential use.

¹³ This is the period since detailed data collection started from 1 April 2014.

Figure 8: Applications for prior approvals for permitted development rights reported by district planning authorities

England, twenty-eight quarters from April 2014 to March 2021



To put these recent figures into context, **Live Table P128** and **Figure 9** show how the number of ‘determination applications’ received remained broadly stable at around 5,000 to 8,000 per year from 2004/05 to 2012/13, but approximately doubled to 15,700 in 2013/14, following the creation of new permitted development right categories in May 2013.

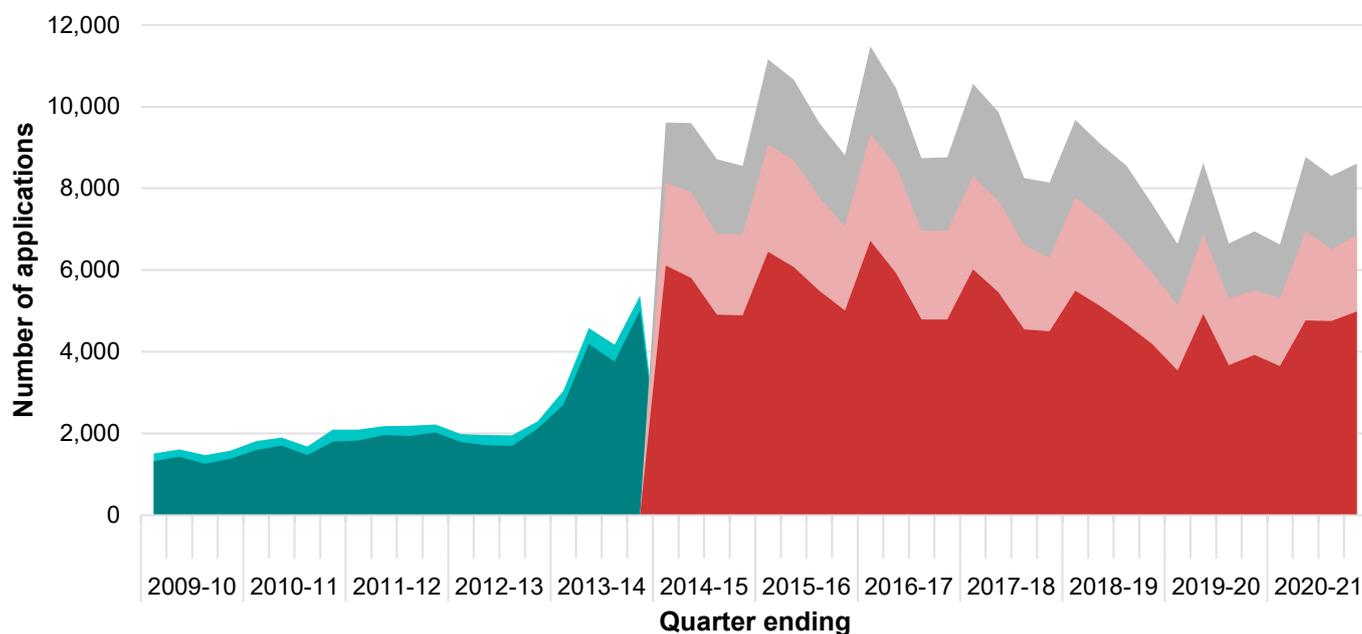
Since April 2014, there have been 36,500 PDR applications in 2014-15, 40,200 in 2015-16, 39,400 in 2016-17, 36,800 in 2017-18, 34,900 in 2018-19, 28,900 in 2019-20 and 32,300 in 2020-21. The quarterly pattern since April 2014 reflects a combination of both: i) the introduction of new permitted development right categories on several occasions; and ii) the seasonal peaks and troughs that have previously also been observed for planning applications, as shown earlier in this release, in **Figure 1 (Live Table PDR 2 and Figure 9)**.

The initially large increase since 2014 in reported numbers of PDR applications for a change of use (e.g. office to residential), followed by a more recent decrease, is consistent with the annual numbers of dwellings added to the net housing supply as a result of a change of use. These have shown increases of 65 per cent in 2014-15, 48 per cent in 2015-16 and 22 per cent in 2016-17, and decreases of 20 per cent in 2017-18, two per cent in 2018-19, eight per cent in 2019-20 and a 12 per cent increase in 2020-21.¹⁴

¹⁴ Sources: statistical releases on *Housing Supply: net additional dwellings* at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/net-supply-of-housing>

Figure 9: Applications for determination and prior approvals for permitted development rights decided by district planning authorities

England, quarter ending September 2009 to quarter ending March 2021



1. April 2014 - beginning of collecting information on additional PDRs

Other information

England totals for all the items of information collected on the PS1 and PS2 returns for January to March 2021 are given in **Reference Tables 1 and 2** respectively. These include the following:

Delegated decisions

- Of the 98,900 decisions made during the quarter, 94,900 (96 per cent) were delegated to officers. This percentage has been stable since 2014, having previously increased from around 75 per cent in 2000. Also see **Live Table P133**.

Enforcement activity

- During the quarter, authorities issued 925 enforcement notices and served 914 planning contravention notices, 106 breach of condition notices, 32 stop notices and 56 temporary stop notices, while 12 enforcement injunctions were granted by the High/County Court and one injunctive application refused. In recent years, this level of activity has remained broadly proportionate to the number of planning decisions made. See **Live Table P127**.

Regulation 3 and 4 decisions

- 348 'Regulation 3' and 54 'Regulation 4' decisions were made. Relative to the number of planning decisions made in recent years, numbers of 'Regulation 3' decisions have dropped and those for 'Regulation 4' have remained stable. Also see **Live Table P128**.

Traveller pitches

- During the quarter, authorities decided five major applications for traveller pitches, granting two of them, and deciding three of them within 13 weeks or the agreed time.
- They also decided 45 minor applications for traveller pitches, granting 28 of them and deciding 34 of them within eight weeks or the agreed time. Also see **Live Table P137**.
- For both major and minor applications, the numbers of decisions, and percentages of applications granted and decided on time, have remained broadly stable since figures were first collected in 2008.

Authorities undertaking county level planning

Authorities that undertake county level planning activity – which includes counties, unitary authorities, London boroughs, metropolitan districts, national parks and development corporations - received 890 ‘county matters’ applications in the year ending March 2021 (**CPS dashboard**).

This compares with around 431,100 planning applications received by authorities that undertake district level planning activities. Statistics for ‘county matters’ decisions are therefore likely to be more volatile than those for districts because of the smaller numbers of such decisions. County level figures are unrounded in this publication. Recent summary statistics on numbers of applications, decisions and permissions granted are shown in **Table 8**. More historical and detailed figures are given in the accompanying **CPS dashboard**.

Table 8: County level planning applications received, decided and granted

England, quarters and years ending March 2020 and March 2021 ^P

	Quarter ending		Year ending	
	2021 Q1	2020 Q1	2021 Q1	2020 Q1
Number of applications received	200	180	890	896
<i>% change in the number of applications received from previous period</i>	11	-34	-1	-19
Number of applications decided	183	183	710	859
<i>% change in the number of applications decided from previous period</i>	0	-18	-17	-8
Number of applications granted	168	173	664	813
<i>% change in the number of applications granted from previous period</i>	-3	-20	-18	-10

P Provisional

Planning applications

In the quarter ending March 2021, authorities received 200 'county matter' applications, up 11 per cent from the same quarter last year. County councils accounted for 72 per cent of total applications received, unitary authorities for 17 per cent, metropolitan districts for 11 per cent, London boroughs one per cent and National Parks one per cent. The highest number of applications was received by Lancashire (with 15 applications). 110 out of the 161 responding authorities (68 per cent) did not receive any 'county matter' applications (**CPS dashboard**).

Planning decisions

'County matters' authorities made decisions on 183 planning applications in the March quarter of 2021, unchanged from the same quarter a year earlier. Of these, 92 per cent (168) were granted (**Table 4 and the CPS dashboard**), down three percentage points from the same quarter last year.

Waste developments accounted for 56 per cent of the total decisions, minerals developments for 39 per cent and other developments for four per cent (**CPS dashboard**).

Speed of decisions

In the quarter ending March 2021, 'county matters' planning authorities determined 90 per cent of applications within 13 weeks or the agreed time (**CPS dashboard**).

Performance of individual county level local planning authorities

Live Table 151b presents data on the performance of county level local planning authorities against the latest published criterion in [Improving planning performance: criteria for designation](#) on the speed of decision-making for informing decisions on the designation of poorly performing local planning authorities under section 62B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. In particular, it gives detailed figures for the time taken for decisions to be made over the eight most recent quarters.

Similarly, **Live Table P152b** presents data on the performance of county level local planning authorities against the latest published criterion in [Improving planning performance: criteria for designation](#) on the quality of decision-making for assessing performance under section 62B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. In particular, it gives detailed figures for the percentage of decisions subject to a successful planning appeal, by matching eight quarters of the department's data on decisions and all available quarters of Planning Inspectorate data on appeals. This table is usually published a few weeks after the statistical release and most of the other live tables, to take account of the latest appeals data.

Live Table P155 presents data on the time taken by county level local planning authorities to make decisions on oil and gas developments, using data from the eight most recent available quarters. The table has been produced to enable local planning authority performance to be

measured, as set out in the Written Ministerial Statement of 16 December 2015, available at <http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2015-09-16/HCWS201/>.

Permitted development rights

Although most activity relating to permitted development rights is concerned with 'district matters', it is also relevant for 'county matters', with the CPS1 return having been amended to collect information on prior approvals for permitted developments with effect from 1 April 2014. The results for January to March 2021 are given as additional columns in **Live Table PDR3**. They show that 10 applications for prior approval for permitted development were reported during the January to March quarter of 2021, up from six in the same quarter of 2020.

Other information

England totals for the items of information collected on the CPS1 returns for January to March 2021 are given in **Reference Table 3**. These include the following:

Delegated decisions

- Of the 183 decisions made during the quarter, 118 (64 per cent) were delegated to officers. This percentage has remained stable in recent years.

Enforcement activity

- Authorities issued 14 enforcement notices during the quarter, and served 22 planning contravention notices, four breach of condition notices, one stop notice and eight temporary stop notices. One enforcement injunction was granted by the High Court or county courts and no injunctive applications were refused. These activities have remained stable in recent years. Also see the **CPS dashboard**.

Regulation 3 and 4 decisions

- 142 'Regulation 3' and no 'Regulation 4' decisions were made. The former has shown a downtrend trend in recent years. Also see the **CPS dashboard**.

Changes to accompanying tables

Until recently, the department was publishing over 40 accompanying Live Tables as individual spreadsheets for this quarterly publication, as listed below. The GSS Code of Practice for Statistics states that statistics producers should be creative and motivated to improve statistics and data. As stated in previous releases and in accordance with these guidelines, we proposed a number of changes intended to improve the accessibility, clarity and flexibility of our statistics, as well as reducing the burden on the department with regard to producing these statistics in a timely and efficient manner. The first step was to introduce three Excel spreadsheets providing district matters figures in a new **drop-down menu table format** over several quarters, between them enabling: i) breakdowns by development type to be displayed for a particular authority or type of authority during a particular period; ii) time series data to be displayed for a particular local authority, type of authority or for England; and iii) figures for residential, commercial and all district matters decisions taken within any given time period to be compared across local planning authorities.

As the most recent step in the process, the department introduced **some interactive Power BI dashboards** to complement the ongoing use of some live tables in Excel spreadsheets. In particular, dashboards were introduced covering the main data items from the PS1, PS2 and CPS1/2 returns.

Taking account of this, the current position is set out below:

- **Discontinued little-used tables:** Tables P121, P122, P123, P124, P131, P132, P135, P136, P139 to P149 are no longer routinely published, having been replaced by interactive dashboards. Further information on how the dashboards can be used to replicate information from existing live tables is available in a **short user note** on the live tables web page.
- **Combining tables with significant overlap:** it is possible that other sets of tables with significant overlap could be replaced by further dashboards in the future, such as Live Tables P127 to P130. There are, however, no immediate plans to do so.
- **Retaining some of the existing tables as separate spreadsheets** – e.g. local authority performance tables (P151 to P155), Permitted development rights tables (PDR1 to PDR3), and Reference Tables 1 to 3.

Accompanying tables

The accompanying tables updated and available to download alongside this release are:

District planning authorities

P120 District planning authorities - planning applications received, decided, granted, performance agreements and speed of decisions, England (time series – quarterly and financial years' data)

- P120A** District planning authorities – residential planning applications decided, granted, performance agreements and speed of decisions, England (time series - quarterly and financial years' data)
- P120B** District planning authorities – commercial planning applications decided, granted, performance agreements and speed of decisions, England (time series - quarterly and financial years' data)
- P124A** District planning authorities - planning decisions by development type and local planning authority (yearly data)
- P127** District planning authorities - enforcement action, England (quarterly and financial years' data)
- P128** District planning authorities - regulation 3 and 4 decisions made and applications for determination, England (quarterly and financial years' data)
- P129/P130** District planning authorities - enforcement action by local planning authority (P129 quarterly, P130 yearly data)
- P133** District planning authorities - applications received, decided, granted and delegated, environmental statements received and flow of applications by local planning authority (quarterly data)
- P134** District planning authorities - applications received, decided, granted and delegated and environmental statements received, by local planning authority (yearly data)
- P137/P138** District planning authorities - planning applications decided, granted and speed of decisions on major and minor traveller caravans, by local planning authority (P137 quarterly, P138 yearly data)

District matters interactive dashboard tables:

PS1 - separate displays for:

- PS1 summary
- Permitted development rights
- Enforcement action

A data dictionary and two associated data files (.csv files) are also available: one csv file holds data for the four most recent quarters only, whereas the other holds data back to Q2 1996.

PS2 - separate displays for breakdowns by:

- development type
- planning authority

There is also an interactive mapping facility. It includes figures previously published in live tables P121, P122, P123, P124, P131, P132, P135 and P136. A data dictionary and two associated data files (.csv files) are also available: one csv file holds data for the four most recent quarters only, whereas the other holds data back to Q2 1979.

County matters interactive dashboard table

CPS1/2 - separate displays for breakdowns by:

- Planning authority level summary
- Time series
- Development type

There is also an interactive mapping facility. Includes figures previously published in Live Tables P139 to P149. A data dictionary and four associated data files (.csv files) are also available: one csv file holds CPS1 data for the four most recent quarters only, and the others hold: CPS2 data for the four most recent quarters only; CPS1 data going back to Q2 1979; and CPS2 data going back to Q2 1989.

Local planning authority performance tables

- P151a/b** District and 'county matters' planning authorities' performance - speed of major development decisions (24 months' data)
- P152a/b** District and 'county matters' planning authorities' performance - quality of major development decisions (24 months' data)
- P153** District planning authorities' performance - speed of non-major development decisions (24 months' data)
- P154** District planning authorities' performance - quality of non-major development decisions (24 months' data)
- P155** 'County matters' planning authorities' performance - speed of decisions on oil/gas developments (24 months' data)

Permission in Principle/Technical Details Consent

- PIP/TDC1** District planning authorities' - Permission in Principle and Technical Details Consents: data available for each quarter from Q1 2020

Permitted development rights

- PDR1** District planning authorities - applications for prior approvals for permitted developments, by local planning authority (all available quarters)
- PDR2** District planning authorities - applications for prior approvals for permitted

developments, England (all available quarters)

PDR3 'County matters' planning authorities - applications for prior approvals for permitted developments, by local planning authority (all available quarters)

Reference Tables:

1 PS1 – England totals: January to March 2021

2 PS2 – England totals: January to March 2021

3 CPS1 – England totals: January to March 2021

These tables can be accessed at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-planning-application-statistics>

The following tables are no longer routinely updated following the review of tables described in the previous section of this release:

P121/P122 District planning authorities - planning applications decided, granted and speed of decisions, by type of authority, England (P121 quarterly, P122 yearly data)

P123/P124 District planning authorities - planning applications decided, granted, performance agreements and speed of decisions, by type of development, England (P123 quarterly, P124 yearly data)

P131/P132 District planning authorities - planning applications decided, granted, performance agreements and speed of decisions, by development type and local planning authority (P131 quarterly, P132 yearly data)

P135/P136 District planning authorities - planning applications decided, granted, performance agreements and speed of decisions on major and minor residential developments, by local planning authority (P135 quarterly, P136 yearly data)

P139 'County matters' planning authorities - planning applications received, decided and granted, by type of authority, England (quarterly and financial years' data)

P140/P141 'County matters' planning authorities - planning applications decided and granted, by type of authority and type of development, England (P140 quarterly, P141 yearly data)

P142 'County matters' planning authorities - planning decisions, by speed of decision, England (quarterly and financial years' data)

P143/P144 'County matters' planning authorities - planning applications received, decided and granted, speed of decisions and regulation 3 and 4 decisions, by local planning authority (P143 quarterly, P144 yearly data)

- P145** 'County matters' planning authorities - enforcement action, England (quarterly and financial years' data)
- P146** 'County matters' planning authorities - decisions on minerals applications, by type of development, England (financial years' data)
- P147** 'County matters' planning authorities - decisions on waste planning applications, by type of development, England (financial years' data)
- P148** 'County matters' planning authorities - planning applications decided and granted, by nature of site, and type of development, England (yearly data)
- P149** 'County matters' planning authorities - planning applications decided, granted and speed of decisions, by type of development, England (yearly data)

The following tables remain available from the link above but cannot be updated for the reasons given below:

- P125/P126** District planning authorities – major planning decisions by speed, performance agreements and type of development: separate data on large- and small-scale major developments have not been collected since April 2014
- P150** 'County matters' planning authorities – reasons given for decisions taking over 8 weeks: data have not been collected since April 2014

A planning statistics **email alert** is sent to anyone wishing to be informed each time some MHCLG planning application statistics are published. To sign up for this free service, please send an email to planning.statistics@communities.gov.uk.

Data held on Open Data Communities

The following linked open data is held on **Open Data Communities** at <http://opendatacommunities.org>:

- A selection of derived data on planning developments as included in planning live tables P124A and the 'Comparison between local authorities' table, at local planning authority level; and
- Rolling annual England total figures for numbers of planning permissions granted, as provided by Glenigan.

The **Open Data mobile app** provides a range of statistics published by the department for the locality and is available for download free of charge from [the Windows App Store](#), the [Google Playstore](#) and the [Apple iTunes Store](#). Any enquiries about the app should be sent to ODC@communities.gov.uk.

Technical Notes

Please see the accompanying technical notes document for further details of definitions, related statistics and other technical details.

Information on the UK Statistical System is available via the UK Statistics Authority website:

<https://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/>

Information about statistics at MHCLG is available via the Department's website:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics



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