



Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government



*Statistical release*

Planning application statistics

# Planning applications in England: October to December 2020

## In this release:

Between October and December 2020, district level planning authorities in England:

- received 111,700 applications for planning permission, up 11 per cent from the corresponding quarter of 2019;
- granted 86,000 decisions, up three per cent from the same quarter in 2019; this is equivalent to 87 per cent of decisions, unchanged from the same quarter of 2019;
- decided 88 per cent of major applications within 13 weeks or the agreed time, down one percentage point from the same quarter in 2019;
- granted 10,100 residential applications, down nine per cent on a year earlier: 1,300 for major developments and 8,800 for minors;
- granted 1,800 applications for commercial developments, down 14 per cent on a year earlier.

In the year ending December 2020, district level planning authorities:

- granted 313,900 decisions, down 10 per cent on the year ending December 2019; and
- granted 39,300 decisions on residential developments, of which 5,000 were for major developments and 34,400 were for minors, down by 16 and 11 per cent respectively on the year ending December 2019. This is equivalent to a decrease of 12 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 12 February 2020 for the PS1/2 return ('District matters') and the CPS1/2 return ('County matters').

Since the July to September 2020 release, the technical notes that were previously included in the release are being published as a separate document. 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 October to December 2020, authorities undertaking district level planning in England received 111,700 applications for planning permission, up 11 per cent from the corresponding quarter in 2019. In the year ending December 2020, authorities received 410,700 planning applications, down five per cent on the year ending December 2019 (**Live Table P134, Table 1 and PS1 summary dashboard**).

### Planning decisions

Authorities reported 98,300 decisions on planning applications in October to December 2020, an increase of three per cent on the 95,800 decisions in the same quarter of the previous year. In the

year ending December 2020, authorities decided 359,000 planning applications, down nine per cent on the number in the year ending December 2019 (**Live Tables P120/P133/P134 and Table 1**).

## Applications granted

During October to December 2020, authorities granted 86,000 decisions, up three per cent on the same quarter in 2019. Authorities granted 87 per cent of all decisions, unchanged from the December quarter of 2019 (**Live Tables P120/P133**). Overall, 81 per cent of major and minor decisions were granted, down one percentage point from the quarter ending December 2019 (**PS2 development types dashboard**).

Over the 12 months to December 2020, 313,900 decisions were granted, down 10 per cent on the figure for the year to December 2019 (**Table 1 and PS2 development types dashboard**).

The above information is summarised in Table 1, below<sup>1</sup>.

**Table 1: District level planning applications received, decided and granted**

England, quarter and year ending December 2019 and December 2020 <sup>P</sup>

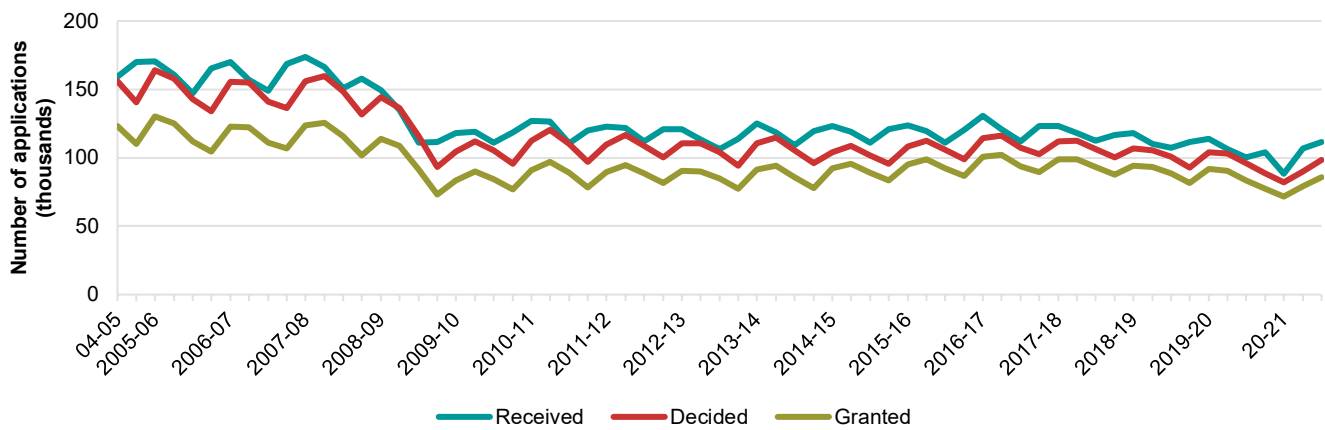
	Quarter ending		Year Ending	
	2020 Q4	2019 Q4	2020 Q4	2019 Q4
Number of applications received (000s)	111.7	100.3	410.7	432.2
<i>% change in the number of applications received from previous period</i>	11	-7	-5	-4
Number of applications decided <sup>1</sup> (000s)	98.3	95.8	359.0	395.8
<i>% change in the number of applications decided from previous period</i>	3	-5	-9	-4
Number of applications granted (000s)	86.0	83.5	313.9	347.3
<i>% change in the number of applications granted from previous period</i>	3	-6	-10	-5

## 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.

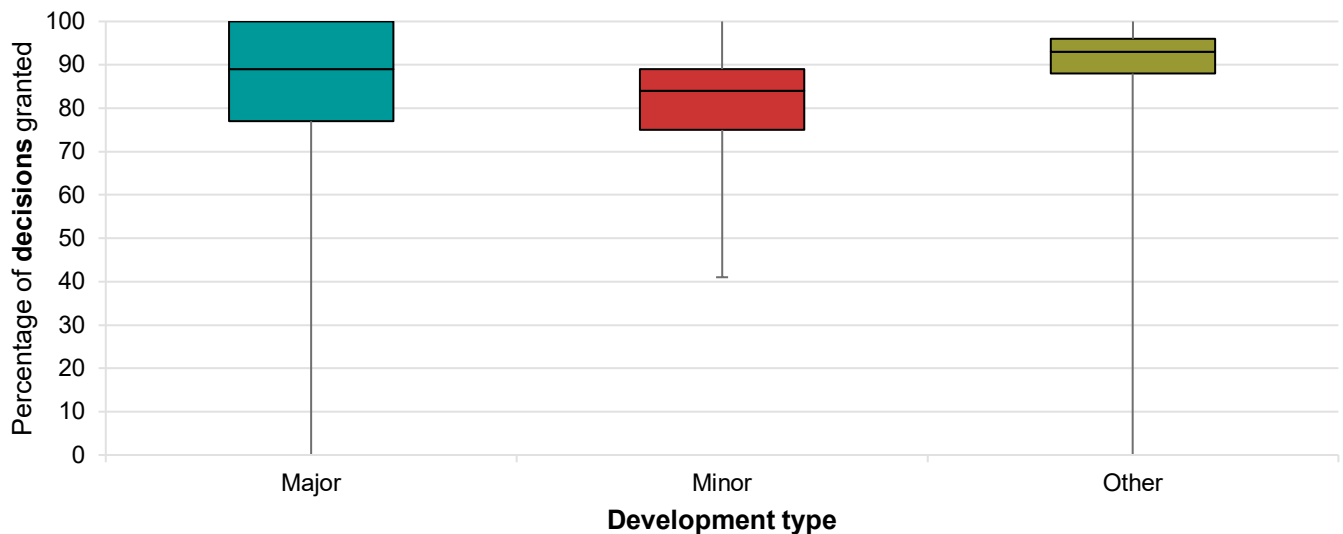
<sup>1</sup> The historic time series that were included in Table 1 in previous releases are available in Live Table P120.

**Figure 1: Number of planning applications received, decided and granted**  
 England, quarter ending December 2004 to quarter ending December 2020



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 decisions<sup>2</sup>.

**Figure 2: Percentage of planning decisions granted, by type of development**  
 Local planning authorities, quarter ending December 2020



**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

<sup>2</sup> 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 (41 to 100 per cent) and other developments (0 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 77 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 December 2020

	Total applications received	Total decisions	Total decisions granted	<i>Percentage of decisions granted</i>
<b>England</b>	<b>111,700</b>	<b>98,300</b>	<b>86,000</b>	<b>87</b>
North East	3,200	3,000	2,800	94
North West	11,300	9,600	8,700	91
Yorkshire and the Humber	8,800	8,400	7,600	90
East Midlands	8,800	7,700	7,000	90
West Midlands	9,100	8,000	7,300	91
East of England	15,000	13,300	11,400	85
London	18,200	15,300	11,800	77
South East	21,800	19,100	16,700	88
South West	13,600	12,200	11,100	92
National Parks	1,900	1,700	1,500	88

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 seven per cent (London and the South West) to an increase of 18 per cent in the North West. (**Live Table P133**)

**Table 3: Regional breakdown of changes in applications and decisions**

Quarter ending December 2019 to quarter ending December 2020

	Total applications received, October to December 2019	Total applications received, October to December 2020	Percentage change	Total decisions, October to December 2019	Total decisions, October to December 2020	Percentage change
<b>England</b>	<b>100,300</b>	<b>111,700</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>95,800</b>	<b>98,300</b>	<b>3</b>
North East	2,800	3,200	14	2,900	3,000	5
North West	9,500	11,300	18	9,300	9,600	4
Yorkshire and the Humber	7,800	8,800	14	7,700	8,400	10
East Midlands	7,600	8,800	16	7,500	7,700	3
West Midlands	8,400	9,100	9	7,900	8,000	2
East of England	13,400	15,000	12	12,800	13,300	4
London	17,000	18,200	7	15,900	15,300	-4
South East	19,400	21,800	12	18,500	19,100	3
South West	12,700	13,600	7	11,700	12,200	3
National Parks	1,700	1,900	16	1,700	1,700	1

## Speed of decisions

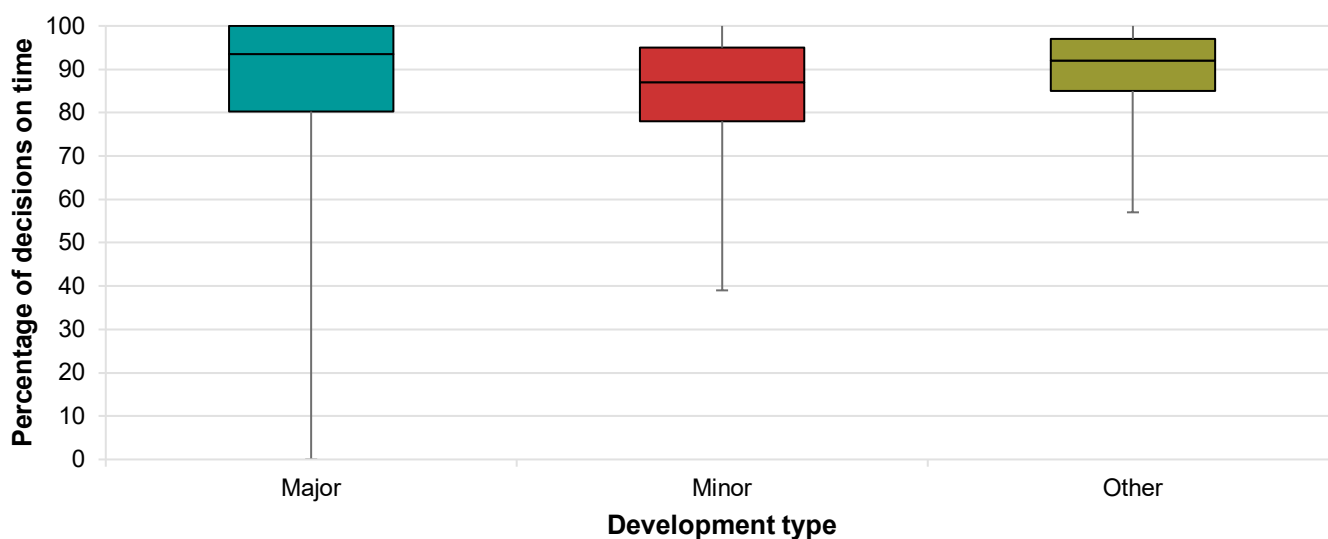
- In October to December 2020, 88 per cent of major applications were decided within 13 weeks or within the agreed time<sup>3</sup>, down one percentage point from the same quarter a year earlier.
- In the same quarter, 84 per cent of minor applications were decided within eight weeks or the agreed time, down one percentage point from a year earlier.
- Also in the same quarter, 89 per cent of other applications were decided within eight weeks or the agreed time, down one percentage point 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 (39 to 100 per cent) and other developments (57 to 100 per cent). **(Live Table P120 and the PS2 local planning authorities dashboard).**

<sup>3</sup> 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).

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

Local planning authorities, quarter ending December 2020



## Use of performance agreements

**Table 4** summarises the recent use of performance agreements<sup>4</sup>. It shows that they are more commonly used for major developments than minor or other developments, with 70 per cent of major decisions made during October to December 2020 involving a planning agreement, compared with 46 per cent of minor 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 types 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.

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

**Table 4: Use of performance agreements with planning applications**

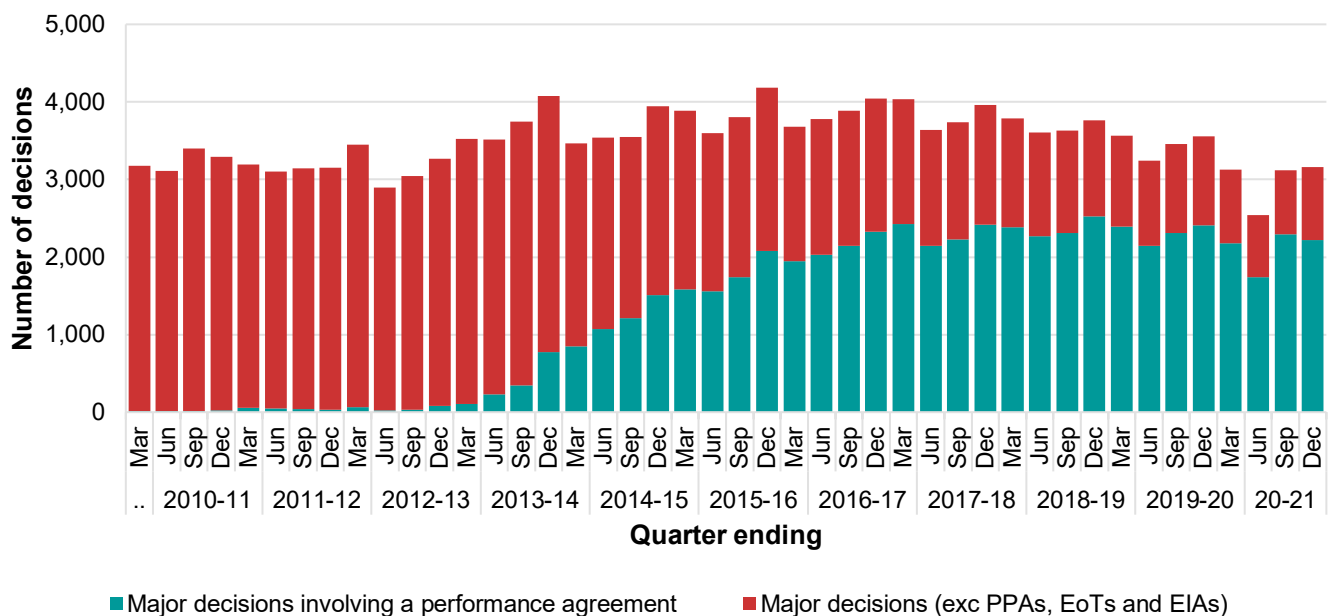
England, quarters and years ending October 2019 and December 2020 <sup>P</sup>

	Quarter ending		Year ending	
	2020 Q4	2019 Q4	2020 Q4	2019 Q4
<b>Major decisions</b>				
Total	3,157	3,558	11,943	13,824
Number involving a performance agreement	2,221	2,410	8,435	9,256
% involving a performance agreement	70	68	71	67
<b>Minor decisions</b>				
Total	25,834	28,680	100,712	114,697
Number involving a performance agreement	11,874	11,943	46,971	47,044
% involving a performance agreement	46	42	47	41
<b>Other decisions</b>				
Total	69,343	63,596	246,358	267,266
Number involving a performance agreement	20,841	15,993	75,011	66,459
% involving a performance agreement	30	25	30	25

P = Provisional; R = Revised

**Figure 4: Use of performance agreements with applications for major developments<sup>1</sup>**

England, quarter ending March 2010 to quarter ending December 2020



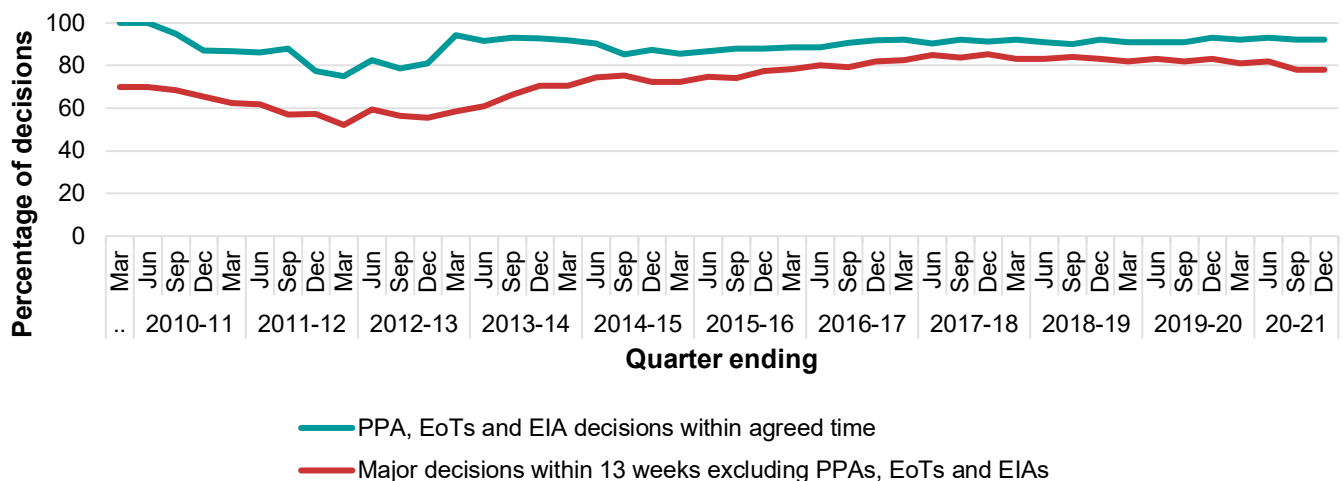
1. Figures cover agreed extensions of time and environmental impact assessments from 1 April 2013

**Figure 5 and Reference Table 2** show that in the quarter to December 2020, 92 per cent of major development decisions involving performance agreements were made on time. In comparison, 78 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 types dashboard**.



**Figure 5: Percentage of major development decisions made within time<sup>1</sup>**

England, quarter ending June 2010 to quarter ending December 2020



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’** (previously ‘minor and other developments’, and 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 minor and other 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 October to December 2020, 13,800 decisions were made on applications for residential <sup>5</sup> developments, of which 10,100 (73 per cent) were granted. The number of residential decisions made decreased by nine per cent from the December quarter of 2019, with the number granted also dropping nine per cent.

The number of major residential decisions granted decreased by 14 per cent to 1,300, and the number of minor residential decisions granted decreased by 8 per cent, to 8,800 (**Live Table P120A, and the PS2 development types dashboard**). In the year ending December 2020, authorities granted 5,000 major and 34,400 minor residential applications, down by 16 and 11 per cent respectively on the year ending December 2019 (**Live Table P120A and the PS2 local planning authorities dashboard**). This is equivalent to a decrease of 12 per cent in the overall number of residential decisions granted.

## 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.<sup>6</sup> The latest provisional figures show that permission for 283,000 homes was given in the year to 31 December 2020, down 16 per cent from the 335,500 homes granted permission in the year to 31 December 2019.

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 Q4 from 2016.

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<sup>5</sup> '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.

<sup>6</sup> 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 5: Number of housing units granted planning permission**

	2016 Q4	2017 Q4	2018 Q4	2019 Q4	2020 Q4
Rolling annual total	323,100	330,100	328,400	335,500	283,000
Percentage change from previous year	19%	2%	-1%	2%	-16%

Source: Glenigan planning permission data: snapshot as at 17 March 2021

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

P Provisional

R Revised

Rolling annual totals for each quarter from 2007 are held as linked open data on **Open Data Communities** at <http://opendatacommunities.org/data/planning/units-granted-permission/all-sites>

## Commercial <sup>7</sup> decisions

In October to December 2020, 2,100 decisions were made on applications for commercial developments, of which 1,800 (89 per cent) were granted. The total number of commercial decisions granted decreased by 14 per cent on the same quarter of 2019. In the year ending December 2020, 7,100 applications for commercial developments were granted, down 17 per cent on the year ending December 2019 (**Live Table P120B**).

### Trends in numbers of residential and commercial decisions

Historically, numbers of **residential** decisions dropped sharply during 2008 (particularly for minor decisions) but have been increasing since 2012, albeit with some decreases recently.

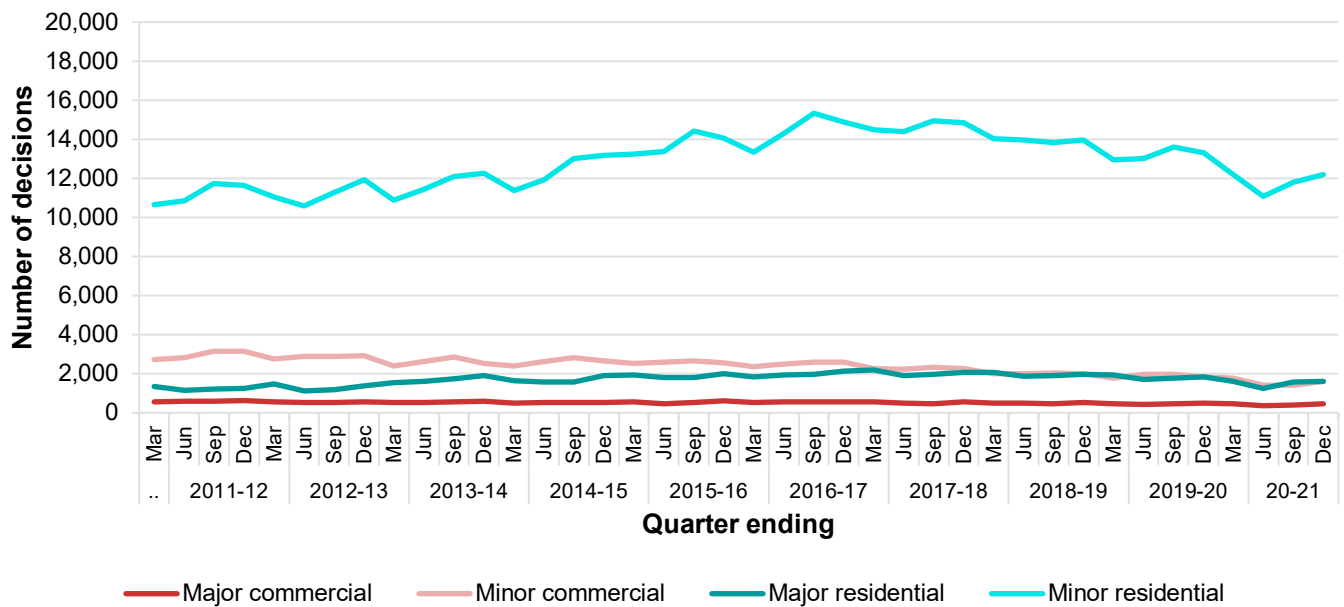
Numbers of **commercial** decisions made also decreased sharply during 2008 and then stabilised at around 2,100 per year for major and 10,000 per year for minor commercial decisions, but have undergone some further decreases recently, particularly for minor decisions. In 2019/20, numbers of major commercial decisions were at about 52 per cent of the pre-recession peak, with the numbers of minor commercial decisions being at about 34 per cent (**Live Tables P120A and P120B, Figure 6**).<sup>8</sup>

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

<sup>8</sup> 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.

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

England, quarter ending March 2010 to quarter ending December 2020

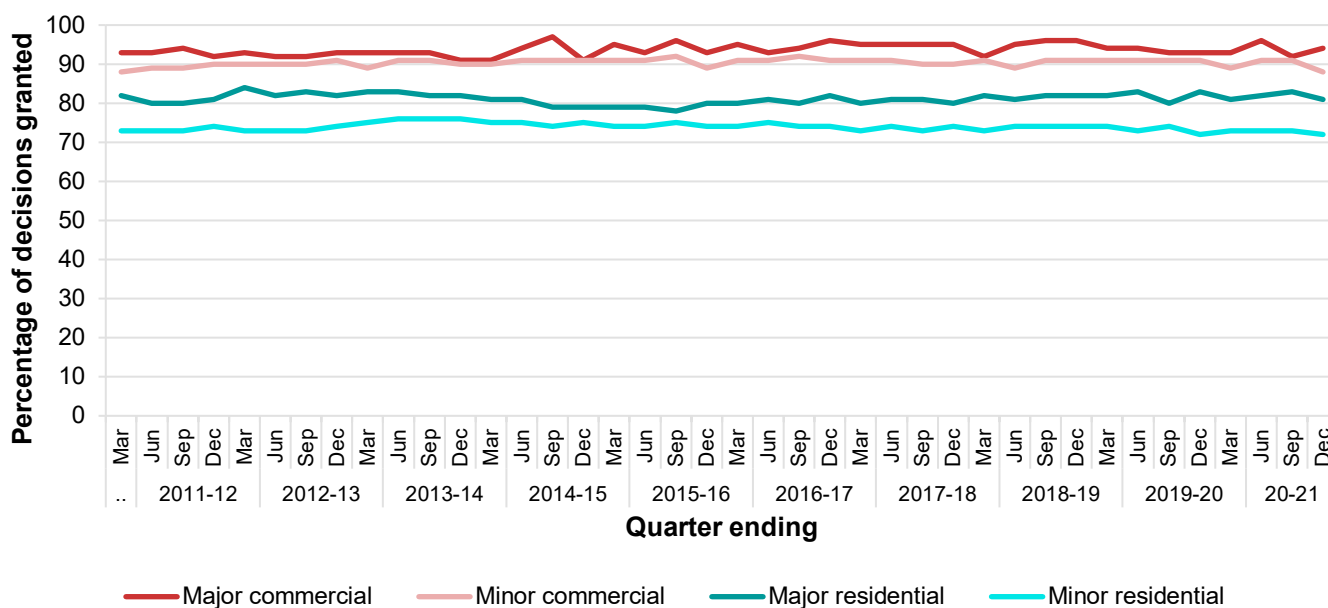


## Trends in the percentage of residential and commercial decisions granted

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 majors and about 75 per cent for minors) and have stabilised since then. 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, but have increased recently ([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 December 2020



## 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 55,700 in the quarter ending December 2020, accounting for 57 per cent of all decisions, up from 49 per cent of all decisions made in the quarter ending December 2019. The 55,700 decisions were up 19 per cent from the 46,800 decisions made in the quarter ending December 2019. Authorities granted 90 per cent of these applications and decided 91 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; and 80, five and no decisions respectively during October to December

## 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 process<sup>9</sup>.

The results for the latest quarter for which they have been collected (October to December 2020) are included in **Live Tables PDR1** (local authority level figures) and **PDR2** (England totals). Of the 8,300 applications reported in the October to December quarter of 2020, prior approval was not required for 4,800 and permission was granted for 1,800 and refused for 1,800. This resulted in an overall acceptance rate<sup>10</sup> of 78 per cent. Larger householder extensions accounted for 67 per cent of applications (5,600), with six per cent relating to agricultural to residential changes and five per cent to office to residential changes. '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, 6,500 applications were approved without having to go through the full planning process, up 23 per cent from a year earlier. Within the 25 per cent increase in the reported total number of PDR applications between October to December 2019 and October to December 2020:

- larger householder extensions increased by 23 per cent;
- office to residential changes decreased by 9 per cent;
- agricultural to residential changes decreased by 16 per cent: and
- 'all other' permitted development rights increased by 68 per cent.

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

<sup>10</sup> 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.

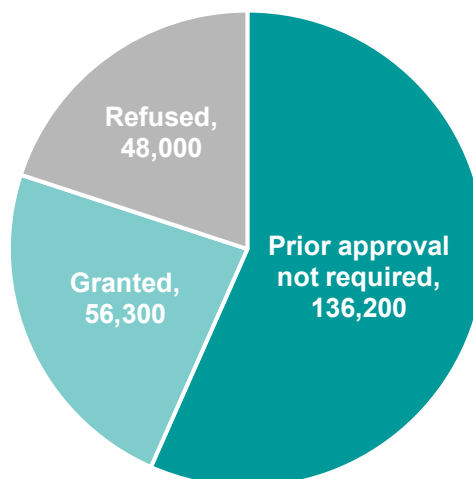
The large increase in ‘all other’ permitted development rights is due in part to the creation of several new permitted development rights in June and July 2020, largely relating to ‘building upwards’.<sup>11</sup>

Figures for the total number of permitted development right applications made for changes to residential use for quarters from July to September 2014 are given in the quarterly worksheets in **Live Table PDR1**. These show that a total of 1,100 applications for changes to residential use were reported in October to December 2020, of which 700 (65 per cent) were given the go-ahead without having to go through the full planning process.

Overall during the twenty-seven quarters ending December 2020, district planning authorities reported 240,500 applications for prior approvals for permitted developments. For 136,200 (57 per cent) of them prior approval was not required, 56,300 (23 per cent) were granted and 48,000 (20 per cent) were refused (**Figure 8**).

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

England, twenty-seven quarters from April 2014 to December 2020



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 and 28,900 in 2019-20. 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

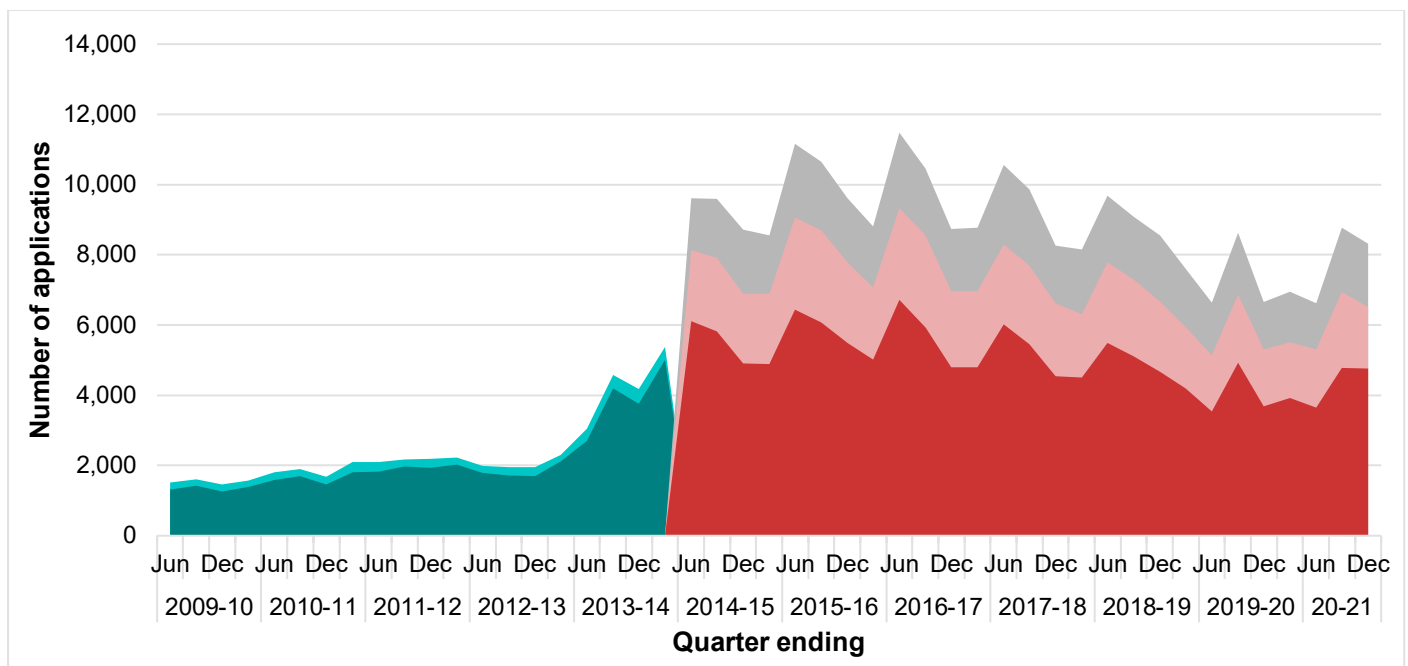
<sup>11</sup> Mostly as announced on 21 July 2020: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-laws-to-extend-homes-upwards-and-revitalise-town-centres>.

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 and eight per cent in 2019-20.<sup>12</sup>

**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 December 2020



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 July to December 2020 are given in **Reference Tables 1 and 2** respectively. These include the following:

**Delegated decisions**

- Of the 98,300 decisions made during the quarter, 94,100 (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**.

<sup>12</sup> Sources: statistical releases on *Housing Supply: net additional dwellings* at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/net-supply-of-housing>



## Enforcement activity

- During the quarter, authorities issued 904 enforcement notices and served 1,021 planning contravention notices, 153 breach of condition notices, 28 stop notices and 42 temporary stop notices, while 11 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

- 258 'Regulation 3' and 61 '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 four major applications for traveller pitches, granting none of them, and deciding three of them within 13 weeks or the agreed time.
- They also decided 68 minor applications for traveller pitches, granting 34 of them and deciding 39 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 870 'county matters' applications in the year ending December 2020 (**CPS dashboard**). This compares with around 410,700 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 7**. More historical and detailed figures are given in the accompanying **CPS dashboard**.

**Table 6: County level planning applications received, decided and granted**England, quarters and years ending December 2019 and December 2020 <sup>P</sup>

	Quarter ending		Year ending	
	2020 Q4	2019 Q4	2020 Q4	2019 Q4
Number of applications received	252	255	870	990
<i>% change in the number of applications received from previous period</i>	-1	-14	-12	-9
Number of applications decided	223	221	710	898
<i>% change in the number of applications decided from previous period</i>	1	-9	-21	-7
Number of applications granted	210	213	669	855
<i>% change in the number of applications granted from previous period</i>	-2	-9	-22	-8

P Provisional

## Planning applications

In the quarter ending December 2020, authorities received 252 'county matter' applications, down one per cent from the same quarter last year. County councils accounted for 71 per cent of total applications received, unitary authorities for 19 per cent, metropolitan districts for eight per cent, London boroughs zero per cent and National Parks two per cent. The highest number of applications was received by Lincolnshire and Surrey (both with 17 applications). 106 out of the 160 responding authorities (66 per cent) did not receive any 'county matter' applications (**CPS dashboard**).

## Planning decisions

'County matters' authorities made decisions on 223 planning applications in the December quarter of 2020, up one per cent on the same quarter a year earlier. Of these, 94 per cent (210) were granted (**Table 4 and the CPS dashboard**), down two percentage points from the same quarter last year.

Waste developments accounted for 57 per cent of the total decisions, minerals developments for 38 per cent and other developments for four per cent (**CPS dashboard**).

## Speed of decisions

In the quarter ending December 2020, 'county matters' planning authorities determined 97 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 October to December 2020 are given as additional columns in **Live Table PDR3**. They show that 12 applications for prior approval for permitted development were reported during the October to December quarter of 2020, up from 11 in the same quarter of 2019.

## Other information

England totals for the items of information collected on the CPS1 returns for October to December 2020 are given in **Reference Table 3**. These include the following:

### Delegated decisions

- Of the 223 decisions made during the quarter, 147 (66 per cent) were delegated to officers. This percentage has remained stable in recent years.

## Enforcement activity

- Authorities issued 9 enforcement notices during the quarter, and served 20 planning contravention notices, no breach of condition notices, one stop notice and one temporary stop notice. No enforcement injunctions were 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

- 116 '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, 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

An associated data file (.csv file) and data dictionary are also available.

**PS2** - separate displays for breakdowns by:

- development type
- planning authority

Also an interactive mapping facility. Includes figures previously published in live tables P121, P122, P123, P124, P131, P132, P135 and P136. An associated data file (.csv file) and data dictionary are also available.

### **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. An associated data file (.csv file) and data dictionary are also available.

### **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 (new table: data available for the first two quarters of 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: October to December 2020
- 2 PS2 – England totals: October to December 2020
- 3 CPS1 – England totals: October to December 2020

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](mailto: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](mailto: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 Official Statistics 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](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics)



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