



The Planning Inspectorate Yr Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

Official Statistics
17 March 2022

Introduction

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

In the process of compiling this statistical release, quality issues have arisen regarding the number of cases received and open cases. This is a result of the Inspectorate transitioning to a new system for scheduling casework resulting in duplication of cases.

For this reason the publication of these statistics has been delayed whilst we identify duplicate records and rectify the statistics (Table 2, Figure 2, Table 10). We will seek to re-issue this release as soon as possible with the withheld information included.

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

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

This statistical bulletin provides¹:

- The time taken to reach decisions
- The number of events
- Number of Inspectors

The Planning Inspectorate

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

The Planning Inspectorate deals with planning appeals, national infrastructure planning applications, examinations of local plans and other planning-related and specialist casework in England. The Planning Inspectorate is an executive agency, sponsored by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, previously known as the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.

¹ See Annex A for breakdown of what has been included in recent releases.

Summary

Time to decide cases

The median time to decide a case in February 2022 was 25 weeks. The median time to decide was around 19 weeks during March 2021, and has increased to 24 weeks and over for the last 7 months.

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

Procedure type	Last 12 months	February 2022
Written Representations	22 weeks	24 weeks
Hearings	51 weeks	45 weeks
Inquiries	64 weeks	57 weeks
All Cases	23 weeks	25 weeks

The median time for planning cases was above 20 weeks for the last 11 months; and around 25 weeks for the last 4 months. Across the whole year, the median time to decision is 22 weeks.

Enforcement decisions made in the last 12 months had a median decision time of 36 weeks.

Since February 2021 Specialist cases have been decided quicker than Enforcement.

The median time for planning appeals decided by inquiry under the Rosewell Process over the 12 months to February 2022 is 32 weeks. This is quicker than other types of casework decided by inquiry.

Decisions

The Planning Inspectorate has made 17,102 appeal decisions² in the last 12 months, an average of over 1,425 per month. The number of decisions in February 2022 was higher than average, 1,670 decisions were issued.

There were 1,599 written representations decisions in February 2022; and 15,979 in the last 12 months. Pre-pandemic levels were approximately between 1,600 and 2,000 decisions per month.

There were 629 decisions made on hearings during the last 12 months, and during February 2022 36 decisions were issued. Pre-pandemic levels for hearing decisions were between 50 and 100 decisions per month.

There were 494 decisions made on inquiries during the last 12 months, with 35 in February 2022. Decisions for inquiries since March 2021 have ranged between approximately 20 and 60. Pre-pandemic levels for inquiry decisions were between 15 and 90 decisions per month.

Planning Inspectors

There were 357 Planning Inspectors employed by the Inspectorate in February 2022 with a full-time equivalent of 319.

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

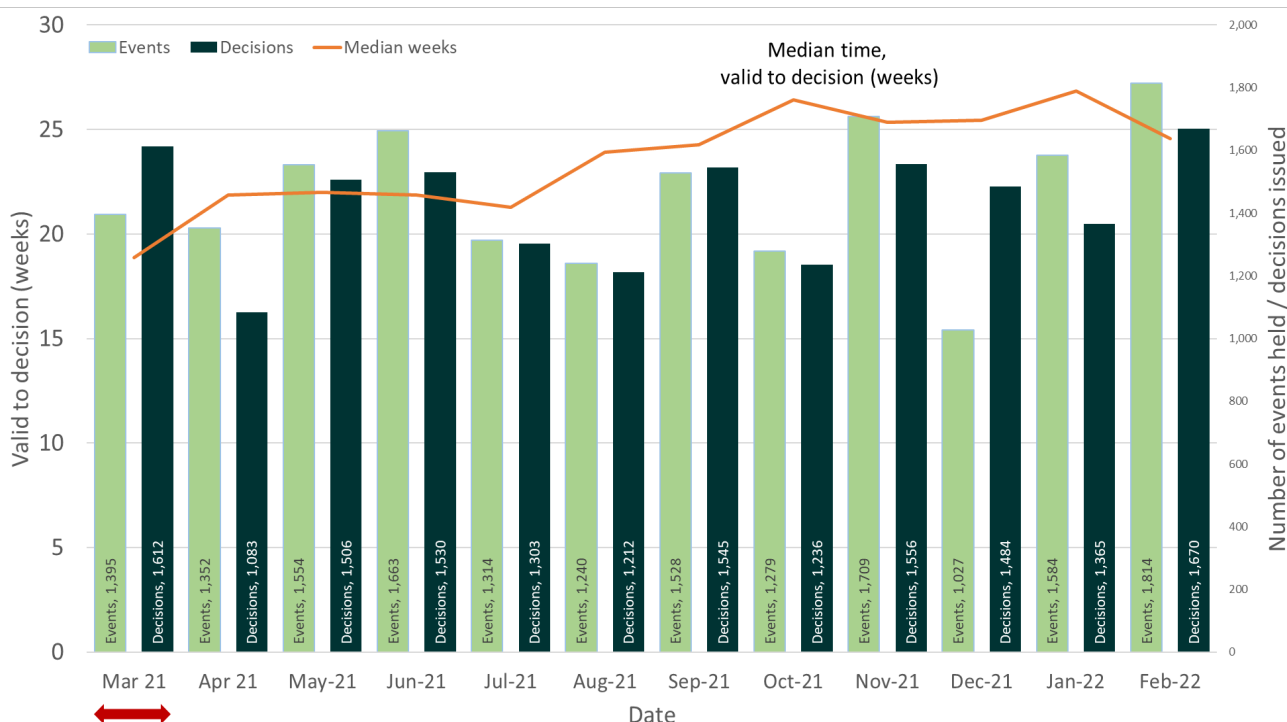
Decisions and Events

The number of decisions issued in February 2022 was 1,670; an increase of just over 300 decisions compared to January 2022.

The number of events held in February 2022 was 1,814, an increase of over 200 events compared to January 2022.

The median³ time to decide a case during January 2022 was 24.6 weeks, this is a decrease of 2.3 weeks compared to January 2022. The median time to decide was around 20 weeks at the start of the reporting period, and has increased to over 25 weeks for the last 4 months.

Figure 1: Number of events held⁴, decisions issued and median time between valid date & decision date; March 2021 to February 2022



Note – Red arrow indicates period when national lockdown was in effect

Source: Horizon, Picaso, Inspector Scheduling System

Table 1: Number of events held, decisions issued and median time between valid date & decision date; March 2021 to February 2022

Note: This table includes revisions to previously published data. Please see Annex E for further information

Month	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Total
Events Held	1,395	1,352	1,554	1,663	1,314	1,240	1,528	1,279	1,709	1,027	1,584	1,814	17,459
Decisions	1,612	1,083	1,506	1,530	1,303	1,212	1,545	1,236	1,556	1,484	1,365	1,670	17,102
Median	18.9	21.9	22.0	21.9	21.3	23.9	24.3	26.4	25.4	25.4	26.9	24.6	23.1

Source: Horizon, Picaso, Inspector Scheduling System.

Number of Decisions

³ See the section on Decision timeliness for more, including definitions of the average measures used in this release.

⁴ A site visit, hearing, or inquiry. From January 2022 onwards hearings and inquiries have been held in person.

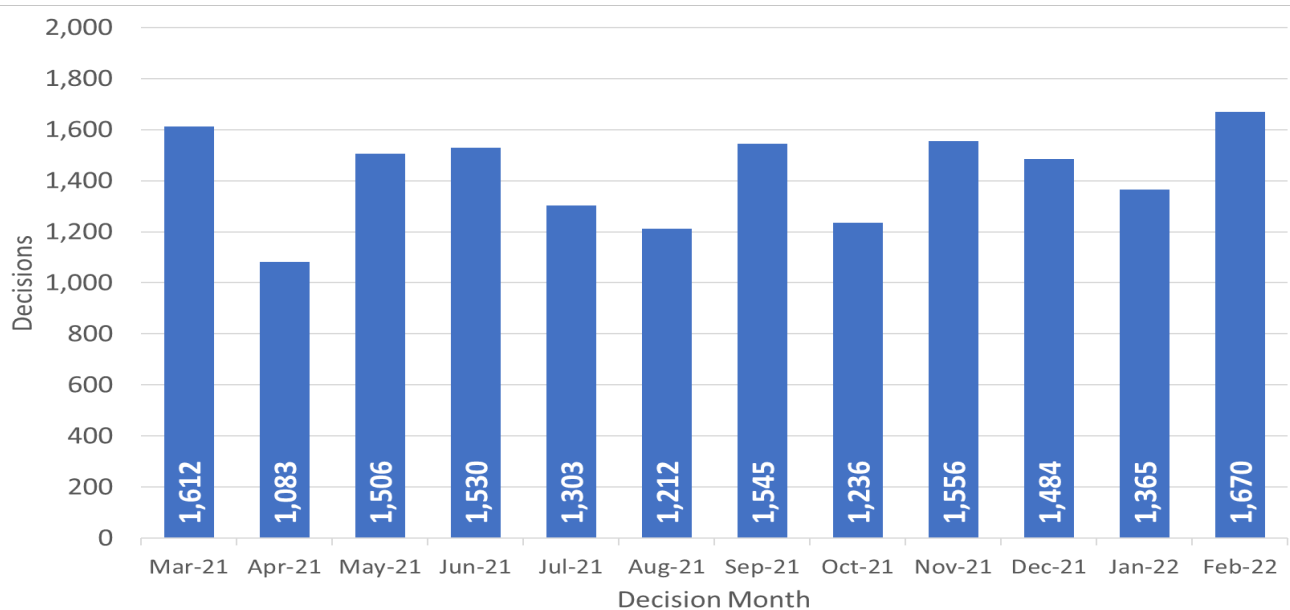
The Planning Inspectorate has made 17,102 appeal decisions⁵ in the last 12 months, an average of just over 1,425 per month. 1,670 cases were decided in February 2022. Table 3 below shows the monthly breakdown with fewer decisions for the months of April, July, August, and October 2021. This is thought to be due, in part, to the impact of staff taking more leave in 2021 than in 2020; and to an annual training event that took place in October 2021.

Table 3: Appeal Decisions; March 2021 to February 2022

Month	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Total
Decisions	1,612	1,083	1,506	1,530	1,303	1,212	1,545	1,236	1,556	1,484	1,365	1,670	17,102

Source: Horizon and Picaso

Figure 3 – Appeal Decisions; March 2021 to February 2022



Source: Horizon and Picaso

Decisions by procedure and case type

Planning Inspectors work on a broader range of work than the appeals featured in this Release. For example, they also work on examining Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project applications, Local Plans⁶, Compulsory Purchase Order applications and many other specialist licencing/application types.

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

The large majority of decisions (15,979) were made on written representations. This is ninety three percent of all appeal decisions made. Table 4 shows that written representation decisions varied from around 1,000 to over 1,500 per month through 2021. (Pre-pandemic

⁵ The appeal types include planning & related appeals, Enforcement and Specialist casework (covering a range of casework types). Please note that some previous releases covered only Rights of Way orders within Specialist casework. Annex A details the scope of previous releases, Annex D the scope of this release and Background Notes has further information.

⁶ Data on volumes for Nationally Significant Infrastructure projects and Local Plans can be seen here; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-inspectorate-statistics> (Tables 1.1 and 1.2)

levels being between approximately 1,600 and 2,000 decisions per month). There were 1,599 such decisions in February 2022.

There were 629 decisions made on hearings during the last 12 months and during February 2022 36 decisions were issued, which is lower than the average of 52 decisions per month over the past year. Pre-pandemic levels for hearing decisions were between 50 and 100 decisions per month. Decisions for inquiries since March 2021 have ranged between 18 and 60. Pre-pandemic levels for inquiry decisions were between 15 and 90 decisions per month.

Table 4: Appeal Decisions by Procedure and Casework Category; March 2021 to February 2022

Month	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Total
Written Representations	1,526	996	1,390	1,394	1,201	1,105	1,475	1,186	1,459	1,398	1,250	1,599	15,979
Hearings	53	52	64	80	65	51	40	32	47	54	55	36	629
Inquiries	33	35	52	56	37	56	30	18	50	32	60	35	494
Total	1,612	1,083	1,506	1,530	1,303	1,212	1,545	1,236	1,556	1,484	1,365	1,670	17,102
Month	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Total
Planning	1,413	938	1,285	1,269	1,077	970	1,365	1,033	1,332	1,263	1,109	1,417	14,471
Enforcement	149	100	161	200	179	187	148	153	193	160	208	222	2,060
Specialist	50	45	60	61	47	55	32	50	31	61	48	31	571
Total	1,612	1,083	1,506	1,530	1,303	1,212	1,545	1,236	1,556	1,484	1,365	1,670	17,102

Source: Horizon and Picaso.

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

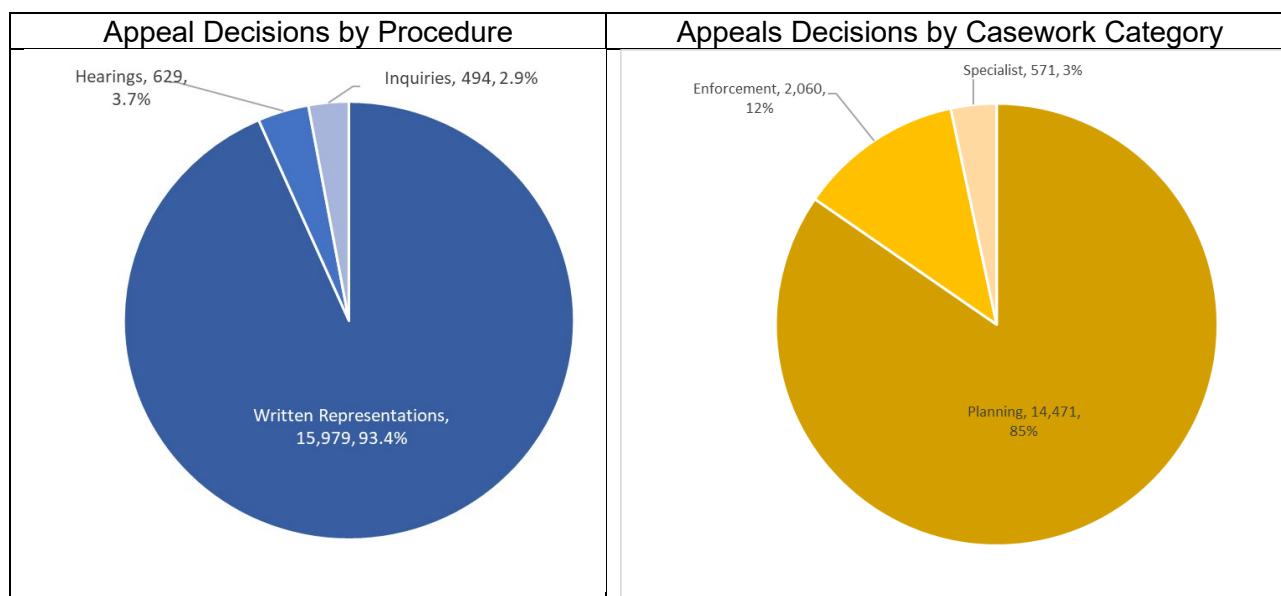
What are Enforcement cases? Enforcement covers enforcement appeals (i.e., appeals against the issue of an enforcement notice by a local planning authority), enforcement listed building notice appeals and lawful development certificate appeals.

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

The large majority of cases were planning (14,471). This is about eighty-five per cent of all appeal decisions made. There were 2,060 enforcement decisions and 571 specialist decisions. These totals are also shown in Table 4 above and Figure 4 below.

Trends for planning decisions show similar patterns to written representations. The number of enforcement decisions varies around an average of 160 decisions per month. February 22 had the most enforcement decisions of the last 12 months. June's total (200) was double that of April (100). Specialist casework figures continue to vary each month, from a low of 30 (September 2021) to a high of 61 (June 2021 and December 2021).

Figure 4 – Appeal Decisions by Procedure and Casework Category; March 2021 to February 2022



Source: Horizon and Picaso

Decision timeliness

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

Table 5 below shows that the median time to make a decision, across all cases in the last 12 months, was 23 weeks. Figure 5 shows the median has been above 21 weeks for the last 11 months; and has generally been higher since August 21.

How is timeliness measured?

The time to make a decision is measured from the time the Inspectorate have enough information for the case to proceed (it is deemed 'valid') to the time a decision letter is issued. A large majority of cases are 'validated' (the difference between the date the appeal is received, and the validation process being completed) in a week or less.

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

Table 5 also shows the mean time for the last 12 months is 28 weeks. Each month the median is less than the mean, due to the relatively small number of very long cases. Also included in the table is the *standard deviation* of decision timeliness. The standard deviation – a measure of variation – is comparable to performance seen over the last 12 months.

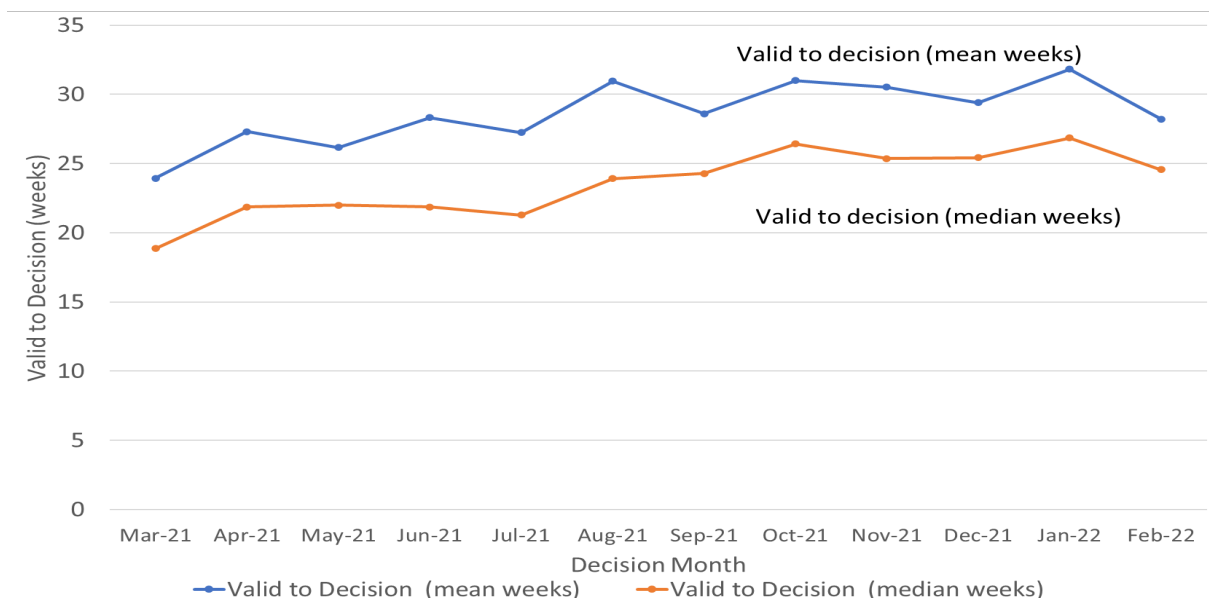
What are mean, median, and standard deviation?	
Measure	Definition
Mean	The total time taken divided by the number of cases. Also referred to as the 'average'. A measure of how long each case would take, if the total time taken was spread evenly across all cases.
Median	This is the time taken by the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

Table 5: Mean, Median and Standard Deviation of Time to Decision; March 2021 to February 2022

Month	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Total
Valid to Decision (median weeks)	18.9	21.9	22.0	21.9	21.3	23.9	24.3	26.4	25.4	25.4	26.9	24.6	23.1
Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	23.9	27.3	26.2	28.3	27.2	31.0	28.6	31.0	30.5	29.4	31.8	28.2	28.4
Standard Deviation (weeks)	16.0	18.7	16.7	19.7	18.5	23.3	16.7	19.0	21.0	17.8	22.0	17.3	18.9

Source: Horizon and Picaso

Figure 5: Mean and Median Time to Decision; March 2021 to February 2022



Source: Horizon and Picaso

Procedure Type

Table 6 below shows decision timeliness broken down by the procedure type. Hearings and inquires take longer than written representations – both types take more than twice as long on average across the last 12 months. Because 19 of every 20 cases are by written representation, the timeliness measures for written representations are similar to the measure across all cases.

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

Median times are less affected by large values than mean times, so are the focus of this commentary. The median time for written representations over the 12 months to February 2022 is 22 weeks; the last seven months have longer median time to decision than the previous five months. The median time for inquiries over the 12 months to February 2022 is over a year - 64 weeks. The median time for hearings is less at 51 weeks.

Table 6: Mean and Median Time to Decision, with Standard Deviation, by Procedure; March 2021 to February 2022

Note 1: where the number of decisions issued is fewer than 20, the measures mean, median and standard deviation are less meaningful. This applies to the number of inquiries in Feb-21 and Oct-21.

Key: WR= Written Representations; HRG= Hearings; INQ= Inquiries; All= All Cases

Measure	Procedure	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Total
Valid to Decision (median weeks)	WR	18.4	20.9	21.1	20.7	20.4	23.0	23.6	25.9	24.4	24.9	25.4	24.0	22.3
	HRG	52.4	62.0	39.6	61.3	43.6	43.9	50.4	53.6	47.9	54.4	64.1	45.3	50.9
	INQ	41.3	62.4	66.0	64.6	79.0	95.0	35.6	50.4	80.9	40.6	90.9	57.3	63.6
	All	18.9	21.9	22.0	21.9	21.3	23.9	24.3	26.4	25.4	25.4	26.9	24.6	23.1
Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	WR	22.1	24.1	24.1	25.0	24.5	27.2	27.3	29.6	27.9	27.8	28.1	26.9	26.1
	HRG	56.7	63.8	42.9	57.0	50.0	49.8	57.1	57.2	60.8	61.2	75.7	55.0	56.4
	INQ	57.6	64.4	61.7	70.9	77.5	87.7	56.5	77.6	80.3	47.3	69.4	60.7	69.1
	All	23.9	27.3	26.2	28.3	27.2	31.0	28.6	31.0	30.5	29.4	31.8	28.2	28.4
Standard Deviation (weeks)	WR	12.6	13.6	14.0	13.9	13.3	16.0	14.0	16.4	15.5	15.0	15.3	15.0	14.7
	HRG	26.3	26.9	18.4	21.7	19.8	27.5	27.5	22.9	38.6	31.7	43.8	29.8	29.1
	INQ	31.3	27.8	26.1	42.8	43.8	47.1	40.8	50.9	41.8	30.0	30.5	35.4	39.3
	All	16.0	18.7	16.7	19.7	18.5	23.3	16.7	19.0	21.0	17.8	22.0	17.3	18.9
Decisions	WR	1,526	996	1,390	1,394	1,201	1,105	1,475	1,186	1,459	1,398	1,250	1,599	15,979
	HRG	53	52	64	80	65	51	40	32	47	54	55	36	629
	INQ	33	35	52	56	37	56	30	18	50	32	60	35	494
	All	1,612	1,083	1,506	1,530	1,303	1,212	1,545	1,236	1,556	1,484	1,365	1,670	17,102

Source: Horizon and Picaso.

The standard deviation information indicates that for all three procedures, there is considerable variation, meaning times are widely spread about the mean. For written representations, the amount of variation has been quite stable over recent months, whereas hearings and enquiries have experienced considerable month to month changes in the spread of decision times.

Casework Category

The nature of the cases the Planning Inspectorate deal with varies widely and several factors play a part in determining how long it takes to make a decision. One such factor is the type of casework. Table 7 below shows the time taken to decide, in planning cases, in enforcement cases, and in specialist⁷ cases, as does Figure 6.

⁷ See the box in the section on Number of Decisions for what these categories of casework include.

The median time to decision for planning cases (there are many more of these decisions than in the other categories) is lower than for enforcement cases; and less variable than the times for specialist cases. Table 7 and Figure 6 show the median time for planning cases was above 20 weeks for the last 11 months; and above 24 weeks for the last 5 months. Across the 12 month period, the median time to decision is 22 weeks for these cases.

Table 7: Decisions, Mean, Median and Standard Deviation of Time to Decision – Planning, Enforcement, Specialist Cases; March 2021 to February 2022

Note: This table includes revisions to previously published data. Please see Annex E for further information

Casework Category	Measure	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Total
Planning Cases	Valid to Decision (median weeks)	18.3	20.9	21.6	20.7	20.4	23.0	23.6	25.3	24.6	24.6	25.3	24.1	22.3
	Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	21.9	24.7	24.4	25.2	24.4	26.2	26.9	28.3	27.2	26.9	28.1	26.2	25.6
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	12.4	14.6	13.0	15.2	13.7	14.7	13.5	13.6	14.1	13.7	16.2	13.9	14.0
Enforcement Cases	Valid to Decision (median weeks)	31.0	35.2	28.3	38.9	32.3	41.6	33.2	34.0	39.9	39.1	37.5	31.3	35.1
	Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	41.7	47.6	40.6	45.7	42.7	54.5	40.7	43.6	53.5	45.0	49.5	40.2	45.4
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	26.3	29.4	28.9	29.7	29.4	38.3	26.3	30.2	37.6	26.4	32.4	26.7	30.8
Specialist Cases	Valid to Decision (median weeks)	14.9	21.9	15.9	28.0	22.4	17.7	27.7	32.1	19.6	27.1	29.3	23.0	26.1
	Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	28.7	35.6	24.7	36.6	33.6	34.4	46.8	48.9	31.6	40.8	41.8	34.8	38.7
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	28.2	30.1	21.6	27.7	27.1	29.6	35.7	36.6	31.5	32.5	37.3	31.7	31.2

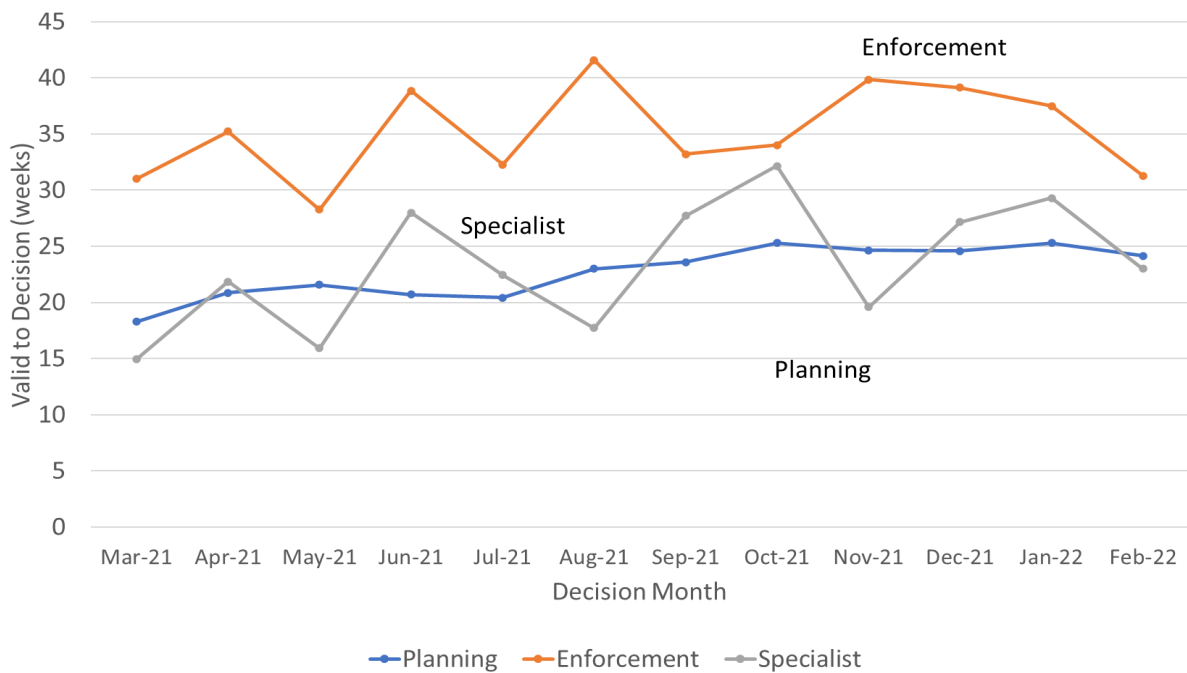
Source: Horizon and Picaso.

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

Enforcement decisions made in the last 12 months had a median decision time of 38 weeks.

There are considerably fewer specialist cases which means results are more liable to be distorted by extreme values. Looking at the annual measures, the median time to decision for specialist decisions have been shorter than enforcement decisions, and longer than the median for planning decisions. Since February 2021 Specialist cases have been decided quicker than Enforcement. The mix of casework being decided under the Specialist group has changed, and there was a concentrated effort to decide a high number of older Tree Preservation Order (TPO) cases that has influenced performance figures.

Figure 6 – Median Time to Decision by Casework Category: March 2021 to February 2022



Source: Horizon and Picaso

Note that the Inspectorate publishes each month, information on the mean and median times from valid to decision, for selected appeal types. The information published also breaks down the time for each stage of the process. See Annex C⁸ for further details.

Planning Inquiry Decisions

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

The median time for inquiries over the 12 months to February 2022 is 32 weeks, with the monthly median having ranged from 25 to 52 over that time. The median time to decision for February 2022 was 42 weeks.

⁸ Data also published on gov.uk at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/appeals-average-timescales-for-arranging-inquiries-and-hearings>

Table 8: Decisions, Mean and Median Time to Decision, Planning Inquiry Cases under Rosewell Process; March 2021 to February 2022

Note 1: where there are fewer than 20 decisions, the measures mean, median and standard deviation are less meaningful. This applies to all months except June 2021.

Measure	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Total
Decisions	15	17	16	30	11	13	19	8	19	14	21	23	206
Median (weeks)	33.7	51.9	30.1	33.9	29.1	25.1	26.9	43.2	28.6	27.4	31.9	42.1	32.1
Mean (weeks)	36.7	53.5	34.3	40.7	32.0	39.6	30.5	40.0	36.8	29.2	37.8	47.0	38.8
St. Dev. (weeks)	12.0	31.1	9.9	22.1	12.0	44.5	10.7	13.5	18.7	8.5	19.6	19.7	21.6

Most inquiry decisions now being issued are under the revised ‘Rosewell’⁹ process but some inquiries, for example those that are linked together with associated enforcement cases, do not follow the Rosewell process.

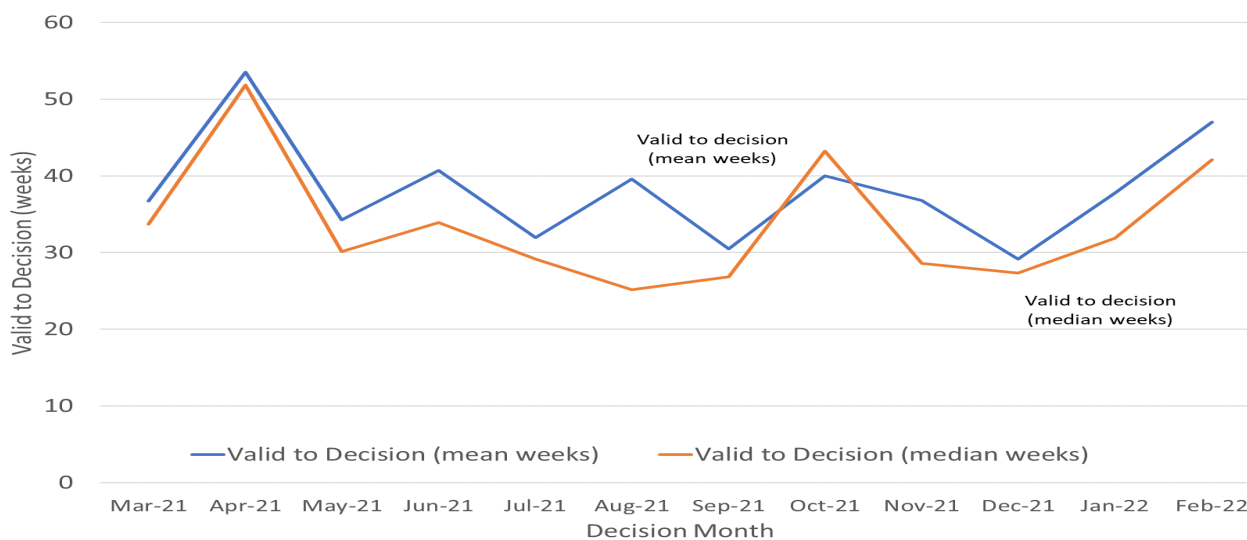
Table 9: Decisions, Planning Inquiry Cases under non-Rosewell Process; March 2021 to February 2022

Month	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Total
Decisions	1	1	4	7	2	3	1	0	0	3	2	0	24

Source: Horizon

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

Figure 7: Mean, Median Time to Decision, Rosewell Inquiry Process; March 2021 to February 2022



Source: Horizon

⁹ The ‘Rosewell’ process introduced changes to how the inquiry event date was agreed and a firm timetable for submission of documentation. Further information on what the Rosewell Review concluded is at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-review-of-planning-appeal-inquiries-report>

Inspectors

Table 11 below shows the number of inspectors in the Planning Inspectorate in each month from March 2021 to February 2022¹⁰. This includes headcount (i.e. the number of different individuals) and full-time equivalents (FTE) where those working part time are counted in proportion with their contracted hours. There were 357 Planning Inspectors employed by the Inspectorate in February 2022 – with a full-time equivalent of 319.

Table 11: Planning Inspectors – Headcount and FTE; March 2021 to February 2022
(at end of month)

Month	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22
Headcount	352	355	353	349	347	346	345	351	360	361	360	357
FTE	314.4	317.0	314.4	310.8	308.4	307.8	306.6	314.0	323.2	322.8	320.9	318.9

Source: SAP HR

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

Revisions to previous release

Data in the previous statistical release may have changed between being published last month and what is shown this month. Where changes have occurred (the volume numbers have changed by more than five, or the timeliness measures have changed by greater than 0.5 weeks) the tables in this release give the most recent figures. Information about which tables this applies to, can be found in Annex E and the separate Background Quality Report.

¹⁰ Data as at the last day of the month.

Annex A – Content of ad-hoc Statistical Releases, 2020-21

Note: The Table below covers ad-hoc statistical releases. From November 2020 onwards, the content is fixed, so is the same as this publication, apart from the following: from November 2021 data on virtual events is no longer included in the release.

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

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

Planning

Note: where there are fewer than 20 decisions, the measures mean, median and standard deviation are less meaningful. This applies to inquiry decisions in all months of 2021 except for May, June and September.

Procedure	Measure	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Total
Written Representations	Decisions	1,359	886	1,214	1,193	1,021	917	1,323	1,000	1,276	1,204	1,053	1,364	13,810
	Median Average Weeks	18.0	20.1	21.0	20.0	19.7	22.4	23.1	25.0	24.1	24.3	24.7	23.9	21.7
	Mean Average Weeks	21.0	22.9	23.4	23.5	23.3	25.2	26.2	27.5	26.3	25.8	26.5	25.3	24.5
	Standard Deviation	10.9	11.2	11.7	11.9	11.3	12.0	12.3	12.7	12.0	11.5	12.4	12.5	11.9
Hearings	Decisions	38	34	51	39	43	37	22	25	37	42	33	30	431
	Median Average Weeks	44.8	56.9	37.4	45.4	42.0	37.4	50.4	54.3	45.9	50.0	55.9	43.6	44.9
	Mean Average Weeks	48.0	56.1	40.7	49.2	42.7	41.3	54.7	54.7	54.3	56.8	70.7	51.5	50.3
	Standard Deviation	24.6	23.6	18.9	20.7	16.5	18.6	24.0	20.6	34.1	29.3	39.0	27.0	26.1
Inquires	Decisions	16	18	20	37	13	16	20	8	19	17	23	23	230
	Median Average Weeks	33.6	52.4	32.9	36.9	30.9	30.0	27.9	43.2	28.6	23.9	31.9	42.1	33.6
	Mean Average Weeks	35.8	54.9	44.8	53.5	53.5	50.3	36.6	40.0	36.8	29.1	41.0	47.0	44.6
	Standard Deviation	12.1	30.7	23.5	37.3	51.6	53.9	28.8	13.5	18.7	10.5	25.4	19.7	31.4
All Planning Cases	Decisions	1,413	938	1,285	1,269	1,077	970	1,365	1,033	1,332	1,263	1,109	1,417	14,471
	Median Average Weeks	18.3	20.9	21.6	20.7	20.4	23.0	23.6	25.3	24.6	24.6	25.3	24.1	22.3
	Mean Average Weeks	21.9	24.7	24.4	25.2	24.4	26.2	26.9	28.3	27.2	26.9	28.1	26.2	25.6
	Standard Deviation	12.4	14.6	13.0	15.2	13.7	14.7	13.5	13.6	14.1	13.7	16.2	13.9	14.0

- The median time to decision for planning written representations has generally been increasing since March 2021, as has the mean.
- The standard deviation of time to decision for planning written representations has generally been slightly increasing since February 2021, indicating more variability in the time to decision.
- The median for planning hearings during February 2022 decreased by 12.3 weeks compared to January 2022
- The median for planning inquiries during February 2022 was 10.2 weeks higher than in January 2022

Enforcement

Note: where there are fewer than 20 decisions, the measures mean, median and standard deviation are less meaningful. This applies to hearing decisions in all months other than June and July 2021; and to inquiry decisions in all months other than May, July, August and November 2021

Procedure	Measure	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Total
Written Representations	Decisions	120	68	118	142	137	139	122	139	156	137	155	205	1,638
	Median Average Weeks	27.4	29.6	24.9	29.1	26.0	35.4	28.1	32.7	31.6	37.4	31.7	28.7	29.6
	Mean Average Weeks	32.3	34.4	31.5	33.1	32.2	40.0	33.8	38.7	42.1	41.5	37.2	36.9	36.4
	Standard Deviation	17.0	20.9	25.6	17.8	19.6	25.8	16.8	22.4	28.2	23.9	22.1	22.1	22.3
Hearings	Decisions	13	16	12	39	22	11	18	7	9	10	19	6	182
	Median Average Weeks	84.4	71.3	45.2	61.6	67.3	56.0	50.8	53.0	55.3	60.5	66.7	55.7	62.8
	Mean Average Weeks	78.5	77.9	50.9	62.6	64.1	70.7	60.0	66.1	82.7	71.6	81.8	72.3	68.5
	Standard Deviation	15.6	28.0	13.6	18.5	17.9	34.2	31.1	27.9	46.6	33.7	47.4	36.3	30.2
Inquires	Decisions	16	16	31	19	20	37	8	7	28	13	34	11	240
	Median Average Weeks	86.7	62.4	66.0	108.0	92.9	122.3	94.5	147.4	118.3	48.0	90.9	71.9	90.9
	Mean Average Weeks	81.8	73.8	71.3	104.9	90.6	104.1	101.6	117.6	107.6	60.9	87.3	84.0	90.9
	Standard Deviation	26.8	20.3	21.4	30.7	35.0	34.9	32.0	52.2	26.8	27.1	15.4	44.0	32.9
All Enforcement Cases	Decisions	149	100	161	200	179	187	148	153	193	160	208	222	2,060
	Median Average Weeks	31.0	35.2	28.3	38.9	32.3	41.6	33.2	34.0	39.9	39.1	37.5	31.3	35.1
	Mean Average Weeks	41.7	47.6	40.6	45.7	42.7	54.5	40.7	43.6	53.5	45.0	49.5	40.2	45.4
	Standard Deviation	26.3	29.4	28.9	29.7	29.4	38.3	26.3	30.2	37.6	26.4	32.4	26.7	30.8

- The mean and median measures for enforcement written representation decisions show considerable variation month to month but no clear trend. The mean for February 2022 was 0.3 of a week lower than January 2022.
- The time to decision for enforcement hearings and inquiries is generally more than twice the time for written representation decisions.
- Enforcement hearings show variable trends for all three measures; mean, median and standard deviation. There are smaller numbers of decisions for this casework / procedure group that can influence these measures.
- Enforcement inquiries are generally taking longer than they were a year ago. As with planning hearings, the effect of the pandemic is evident in these measures. Also, this grouping can be disproportionately affected by cases that involve multiple linked appeals (for example multiple people served an enforcement notice by a local authority appeal to The Planning Inspectorate, each person appealing is treated as a separate appeal, but all appeals are decided in one decision letter by one Inspector).

Specialist

Note: where there are fewer than 20 decisions, the measures mean, median and standard deviation are less meaningful. This applies to all months' hearings decisions; and all months inquiries decisions.

Note 2: This table includes revisions to previously published data. Please see Annex E for further information

Procedure	Measure	Mar-21	Apr-21	May-21	Jun-21	Jul-21	Aug-21	Sep-21	Oct-21	Nov-21	Dec-21	Jan-22	Feb-22	Total
Written Representations	Decisions	47	42	58	59	43	49	30	47	27	57	42	30	531
	Median Average Weeks	14.9	21.7	15.4	26.9	21.0	17.3	24.3	30.4	17.3	24.9	28.5	21.6	24.7
	Mean Average Weeks	26.7	32.2	22.8	34.5	28.3	28.6	44.9	46.6	21.3	36.1	35.1	31.9	35.2
	Standard Deviation	26.7	28.2	18.9	25.4	21.7	24.7	36.1	35.5	14.7	27.5	30.5	28.0	28.3
Hearings	Decisions	2	2	1	2	0	3	0	0	1	2	3	0	16
	Median Average Weeks	80.0	82.1	60.0	100.8	-	95.0	-	-	101.9	101.9	130.1	-	95.0
	Mean Average Weeks	80.0	82.1	60.0	100.8	-	78.3	-	-	101.9	101.9	93.2	-	86.5
	Standard Deviation	16.3	12.9	0.0	7.1	-	31.5	-	-	0.0	26.2	58.0	-	32.7
Inquires	Decisions	1	1	1	0	4	3	2	3	3	2	3	1	24
	Median Average Weeks	18.0	85.1	100.0	-	94.3	88.4	75.2	105.3	84.9	113.9	95.1	119.7	90.6
	Mean Average Weeks	18.0	85.1	100.0	-	90.2	84.6	75.2	84.7	101.2	113.9	84.0	119.7	87.4
	Standard Deviation	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	9.6	11.5	8.2	33.7	28.9	15.6	29.6	0.0	27.1
All Specialist Cases	Decisions	50	45	60	61	47	55	32	50	31	61	48	31	571
	Median Average Weeks	14.9	21.9	15.9	28.0	22.4	17.7	27.7	32.1	19.6	27.1	29.3	23.0	26.1
	Mean Average Weeks	28.7	35.6	24.7	36.6	33.6	34.4	46.8	48.9	31.6	40.8	41.8	34.8	38.7
	Standard Deviation	28.2	30.1	21.6	27.7	27.1	29.6	35.7	36.6	31.5	32.5	37.3	31.7	31.2

- The number of decisions for Specialist cases is low (see Table 4), and this makes it less easy to identify trends for Specialist cases decided by hearings and inquiries.
- The highest volume of decisions is against Written Representations, and over the last 12 months the volume and time measures see variable trends.
- The time to decision for specialist hearings and inquiries is generally more than twice the time for written representation decisions.
- The median for time to specialist written representation decision varies between 15 weeks (March 21) and 20 weeks (October 21). The mean average has a low of 21 weeks (November 21) and a high of 47 weeks (October 21).

Annex C – Detailed Information on timeliness (February)

The information below is published today on the number and length of decisions made in February 2022¹¹:

Note: when there are fewer than 20 decisions the measures mean, median and standard deviation are less meaningful. This applies to the 6 enforcement appeals managed through hearings and 11 managed through inquiries.

Casework Type	Procedure Type	Median (weeks)	Mean (weeks)	Decisions
s78 planning appeals	Written Representations	28.9	30.6	741
	Hearings	43.6	51.5	30
	Inquiries	42.1	47.0	23
Householder appeals	Written Representations	16.1	17.9	548
Enforcement appeals	Written Representations	29.6	38.2	156
	Hearings	55.7	72.3	6
	Inquiries	76.4	89.7	8

Cells shaded grey had fewer than 20 decisions

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

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

Note: when there are fewer than 20 decisions the measures mean, median and standard deviation are less meaningful. This applies to the 13 inquiries with event dates in February 2022.

	s78 planning appeals			Householder appeals
	Written Representations	Hearings	Inquiries	
Weeks between valid date & start date				
Median (average)	13.7	13.8	2.0	2.1
Mean (average)	13.1	17.3	7.8	4.7
Cases that started in February 2022	850	20	28	441
Weeks between start date & event date				
Median (average)	10.2	20.5	14.9	7.7
Mean (average)	12.6	31.7	16.7	8.7
Cases where an event occurred during February 2022	754	34	13	630
Weeks between event date & decision date				
Median (average)	3.1	4.0	16.4	2.1
Mean (average)	4.7	5.1	22.3	3.0
Cases that have been decided in February 2022	737	27	23	544

¹¹ Also published on gov.uk here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/appeals-average-timescales-for-arranging-inquiries-and-hearings>

Explanation of date terminology

Valid date	When a case is deemed to have been validly received. Note – this is not always the date the case was validated. If a case is validated after the date it was validly received, it is the date it was validly received that is the valid date.
Start date	When a timetable, on how the appeal will progress, is issued to both the appellant and local authority. This timetable tells the appellant when to submit the information the Inspectors need to determine the appeal. It also tells the local authority when to notify interested parties about the appeal.
Event date	When the site visit, hearing, or inquiry occurred.
Decision date	When the decision was issued by The Planning Inspectorate.

Find out more about the process here - <https://www.gov.uk/appeal-planning-decision/after-you-appeal>

Annex D – Casework types included in this release

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

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

Specialist casework includes Common Land, Rights of Way orders (including Schedule 14 cases), Purchase orders, Tree Preservation Orders, High Hedges appeals and Hedgerow appeals. (Note that the data on Open Cases in previous publications excluded Tree Preservation Orders and High Hedges and Hedgerow appeals.)

Annex E – Revisions to the data tables

This Annex lists all revisions made to the data since the last statistical release.

Note: Classed as a revision are any values which have changed by more than five (when measuring number of decisions/ cases) or more than 0.5 weeks (for mean, median or standard deviation of weeks).

Table	Revisions
Table 1	Event held, January 2022
Table 7	Specialist casework, valid to decision mean weeks September 2021 and January 2022; Specialist casework, valid to decision median weeks September 2021; Specialist casework, standard deviation January 2022.
Annex B	Enforcement written representations decisions October 2021; Specialist casework written representation decisions, July, September and January 2022; Specialist casework valid to decision mean September 2021 and January 2022; Specialist casework valid to decision median July and September 2021; Specialist casework standard deviation January 2022.

Background notes

Data sources

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

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

Compliance with the Code of Practice for Statistics

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

Technical Notes

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

Data quality	<p>Data on cases is taken from a live casework system, and details of cases can change for a number of reasons even after a decision has been made. We are seeking to get a better understanding of the nature and volume of these changes and will provide further information as it is available.</p> <p>We carry out regular checks on the quality of our data and may undertake ad hoc data cleansing exercises. Therefore, all the data for the last 12 rolling months is published in provisional form.</p> <p>We have indicated in this publication any data where a number of cases has changed by more than five cases in a month; or where a measure (mean, median or standard deviation) has changed by more than 0.5 weeks.</p>
Measuring weeks	<p>Data are measured in days and then converted to weeks. Note that not all decimal values are possible where converting days to weeks. 1 day is 1/7 of a week, or 0.14 weeks (to two decimal places). 2 days = 0.29; 3 days = 0.43; 4 days = 0.57; 5 days = 0.71; 6 days = 0.86.</p> <p>When these are used to calculate averages, or displayed to one decimal place, the result will not equate to a full day which can be misleading: it may appear that we are measuring part days (e.g. 19.8 weeks) but we only measure in whole days.</p>

Glossary

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

Term	Explanation
FTE	Full Time Equivalent – a count of employees where those working part time are counted in proportion with their contracted hours.
Headcount	Total number of staff employed regardless of how many hours they work (i.e. the number of different individuals).
Hearings	<p>A hearing involves the submission of written evidence by the main parties and a hearing once all the written submissions have been received.</p> <p>This takes the form of a round-the-table discussion (in person or virtually) that will be led by the planning inspector. It allows for all parties to respond to any questions that the inspector might have, and to let everyone make their case known.</p> <p>Source: Planning Portal</p>
Inquiries	<p>An inquiry is usually used for complex cases where legal issues may need to be considered. The main parties will usually have legal representatives to present their case and to cross-examine any witnesses. Prior to the inquiry date, the Planning Inspectorate will expect to have received various documents from all parties that will be taking part in the appeal. These may include statements of case and proofs of evidence from expert witnesses. Third parties may also take part. The inquiry will be led by the inspector and will follow a formal procedure.</p> <p>At some point during or on conclusion of the inquiry the inspector and the main parties will undertake a site visit.</p> <p>Source: Planning Portal</p>
Live appeals	Number of live appeals in that have an appeal valid date but no end date (either decision date or a closed date, e.g. for appeals that have been withdrawn).
Mean	The total time taken divided by the number of cases. Also referred to as the 'average'. A measure of how long each case would take, if the total time taken was spread evenly across all cases.
Median	This is the time taken by the 'middle' case if all cases were sorted from quickest to longest
Open Cases	Number of cases that have been received but on which a decision has not yet been made/ issued. Will differ from Live Appeals as it includes those received but not yet verified.
Procedure Type	The method by which The Planning Inspectorate processes and decides appeals.
Standard deviation	This is a measure of variability or spread. It is calculated by examining how much each value differs from the mean. A higher standard deviation means the individual decision times vary more widely around the mean.
Written Representations	Most planning appeals are decided by the written representations' procedure. With this procedure the Inspector considers written evidence from the appellant, the LPA and anyone else who has an interest in the appeal. The site is also likely to be visited.

Contact Us

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

Media enquiries 0303 444 5004
email press.office@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Public enquiries email statistics@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

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

email statistics@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

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