



The Planning
Inspectorate

Experimental Statistics

18th August 2022

Introduction

This report provides some information on how the Planning Inspectorate has performed, for the three months April to June 2022, against new measures by which Ministers agreed to assess the organisation's casework performance for appeals.

These measures are:

- Appeals valid on first submission
- How long appeals take
 - There is also an ambition on more consistent, timely decisions
- Customer Satisfaction
- Number of cases quality assured

Full details of these are available at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1049462/Housing_Minister_letter_to_PINS.pdf

This is the first time such information has been produced, and the work is still in development. This release covers two of these: appeals valid on first submission and number of cases quality assured.

We know that some of the information presented is not straightforward; and that as we report to Ministers on casework performance, a bit more information, or different information, may help others get a clearer view.

As a result, these are designated as Experimental Statistics. We would welcome any feedback on these statistics to help us develop them to be as useful and understandable as possible. Please send these comments to statistics@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Feedback will be reviewed continuously in order to improve these statistics for users. There will be a formal review in March 2023 to decide whether to continue with production, and whether the experimental status is still needed.

Appeals Valid on First Submission

For appeals received during April to June 2022, 61.2% were valid first time¹. Table 1 below shows how the proportion valid on first submission varies over the last five quarters.

¹ Please note that this is calculated using a proxy: what are included are those cases where the date that the appeal had been validly received, is the same as the date that the case was first received. Additionally, be aware that the date for 'validly received' is the date on which the information was received, even if is assessed as being valid on a later date.

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Table 1 – Proportion of Appeals Valid First Time, By Quarter, Apr 21 – Jun 2022

Appeals Received	Apr – Jun 2021	Jul – Sep 2021	Oct – Dec 2021	Jan – Mar 2022	Apr – Jun 2022
% Valid First Time	58.8%	63.6%	63.5%	59.8%	61.2%

Source: Horizon

Robust data on the reasons for appeals not being valid are not currently available. The Inspectorate are developing new digital public services and as more cases are submitted using those services the data we hold will improve.

The table below (Table 2) shows how the proportion valid first time during April to June 2022, varied for a selection of high-volume appeal types:

Table 2 – Proportion of Appeals Valid First Time For Selected Appeal Types, Apr – Jun 2022

Appeal Type	Proportion valid on first submission	Number of Appeals
Planning Appeal (S78):	59.9%	1,523
Householder Appeal Service (HAS)	81.6%	941
Enforcement Notice	41.1%	276
Lawful Development Certificate	74.7%	130
Commercial Appeal Service (CAS)	83.6%	97
Listed Building Consent & Conservation	55.4%	56
Appeal against enforcement listed building	55.6%	5

Source: Horizon

The Inspectorate are developing new digital public services. As more appeals are submitted through those services the proportion of cases submitted validly is expected to rise.

Ambition: Proportion rising annually and ambition to reach 100%. Rising to at least 85% in 2023/24.

How Long Appeals Take

The Ministerial measure requires information on how long appeal decisions take from valid receipt to decision², with information on various percentiles.

What is a percentile?

A percentile is a measure that shows the value below which a given percentage of the values in a group of numbers fall.

For example, if we tell you the 20th percentile for decision times, then you know that 20% of decisions are issued in less time (or the same time) as that.

The Planning Inspectorate are also working towards more consistent, timely decisions, with measures showing the proportion of cases decided in 20 or 26 weeks (depending on the procedure used).

² As noted in Footnote 1 above, the date for ‘validly received’ is the date on which the information was received, even if is assessed as being valid on a later date

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There is much potential here for the release of this information to create a confusing picture for users rather than adding clarity, when set alongside what is already published in the monthly statistics. In particular, care will be needed if some results cover decisions in a given quarter, while others give individual months or a whole year. Further development work is needed to ensure that user needs are understood and met as well as they can be.

Consultation

If you would like to make a suggestion on which information you would like to see; or would like to have the chance to comment on any proposals on what is published, please contact us via statistics@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

There is also further work required to ensure robust, consistent quality assurance around these measures.

If sufficient progress has been made in tackling these issues by the next quarterly update, in November 2022, statistics will be presented and feedback on these would be welcome. If not, then a timetable will be given by which they will be available.

Ambition: Decision time for 50th percentile falling. Decision time for 90th percentile falling faster than 50th percentile.

The ambition means that, to succeed, it is not enough for all cases to be decided more quickly; there needs to be more reduction in the cases taking the longest. This means that the Inspectorate makes the biggest difference to cases taking longest. If the ambition is met, the gap between the 50th percentile and 90th percentile needs to reduce.

Ambition: As an initial milestone in making more consistent, timely decisions The Planning Inspectorate should be working towards consistently achieving decisions in these ranges:

- Appeals decided entirely using writing evidence in 16 – 20 weeks
- Appeals decided including at least some evidence through hearing or inquiry 24 - 26 weeks (30 weeks to recommendation for called in or recovered cases)

Customer Satisfaction

We will be working with the Institute for Customer Service to conduct a satisfaction survey for 2022 and will report the results of this when available.

Ambition: Proportion of customers reporting satisfaction with the planning Inspectorate's services rising annually.

Number of Cases Quality Assured

During the three months April to June 2022, 831 appeal cases were quality assured. These comprised:

Table 3 - Number of appeal decisions quality assured, April to June 2022

Number	Category	Explanation
98	Inspector Manager team reading	Inspector Managers are expected to review a proportion of their Inspectors' decisions post-decision. This is to ensure quality standards and to

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		identify learning opportunities and to check for consistency with the relevant quality framework.
135	APOs	Recommendations made by Appeals Planning Officers (APOs) are all reviewed as part of routine quality assurance before a decision is issued by an Inspector
598	Inspector in Training – pre-decision	The majority of decisions made by Inspectors in Training (IITs) are all reviewed for teaching purposes. Each review is by an experienced Inspector
831	Total Appeal decisions	

To put these totals in context, the 831 appeal decisions quality assured constitutes around 22% of all decisions issued over that period.

Table 4: Number of Other Decisions Quality Assured, April to June 2022

Number	Category	Explanation
6	Local Plans	All Local Plans are quality assured as part of the examination process. Eight Local Plan Reports were issued in this quarter but two of these were quality assured in the previous quarter.
4	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP)	All NSIP decisions are quality assured as part of the examination process.

Ambition: There is no minimum number or percentage ambition on this measure.