



The Planning  
Inspectorate

## Official Statistics 22nd September 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.

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 provides:

- Appeals decisions and events held from September 2021 to August 2022
- The time taken to reach decisions
- Number of open cases
- Number of Inspectors

### The Planning Inspectorate

The Planning Inspectorate makes decisions 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.

## Summary

### Time to decide cases

The median time to decide a case in August 2022 was 27 weeks. The median time to decide has varied from 24 weeks to 28 weeks over for the last 12 months.

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

Procedure type	Last 12 months	August 2022
Written Representations	24 weeks	26 weeks
Hearings	59 weeks	63 weeks
Inquiries	54 weeks	69 weeks
All Cases	26 weeks	27 weeks

The median time for planning cases has been above 23 weeks for each of the last 12 months. Across the whole year, the median time to decision is 25 weeks.

Enforcement decisions made in the last 12 months had a median decision time of 42 weeks.

For each of the last 12 months Specialist cases have been decided more quickly than Enforcement cases.

The median time for planning appeals decided by inquiry under the Rosewell Process over the 12 months to August 2022 is 29 weeks.

### Decisions

The Planning Inspectorate has made 17,519 appeal decisions<sup>1</sup> in the last 12 months, an average of 1,460 per month. The number of decisions in August 2022 was slightly higher than average, 1,474 decisions were issued.

There were 1,357 written representations decisions in August 2022; and 16,420 in the last 12 months. Pre-pandemic levels were approximately between 1,600 and 2,000 decisions per month.

There were 623 decisions made on hearings during the last 12 months, and during August 2022, 39 decisions were issued. Pre-pandemic levels for hearing decisions were between 50 and 100 decisions per month.

There were 476 decisions made on inquiries during the last 12 months, with 78 in August 2022. Decisions for inquiries since September 2021 have ranged between 18 and 78. Pre-pandemic levels for inquiry decisions were between 15 and 90 decisions per month.

### Planning Inspectors

There were 376 Planning Inspectors employed by the Inspectorate in August 2022 with a full-time equivalent of 335.

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<sup>1</sup> The appeal types include planning & related appeals, Enforcement and Specialist casework (covering a range of casework types). Please note that some previous releases covered only Rights of Way orders within Specialist casework. Annex C explains the scope of this release and Background Notes has further information.

## Decisions, Events & Open Cases

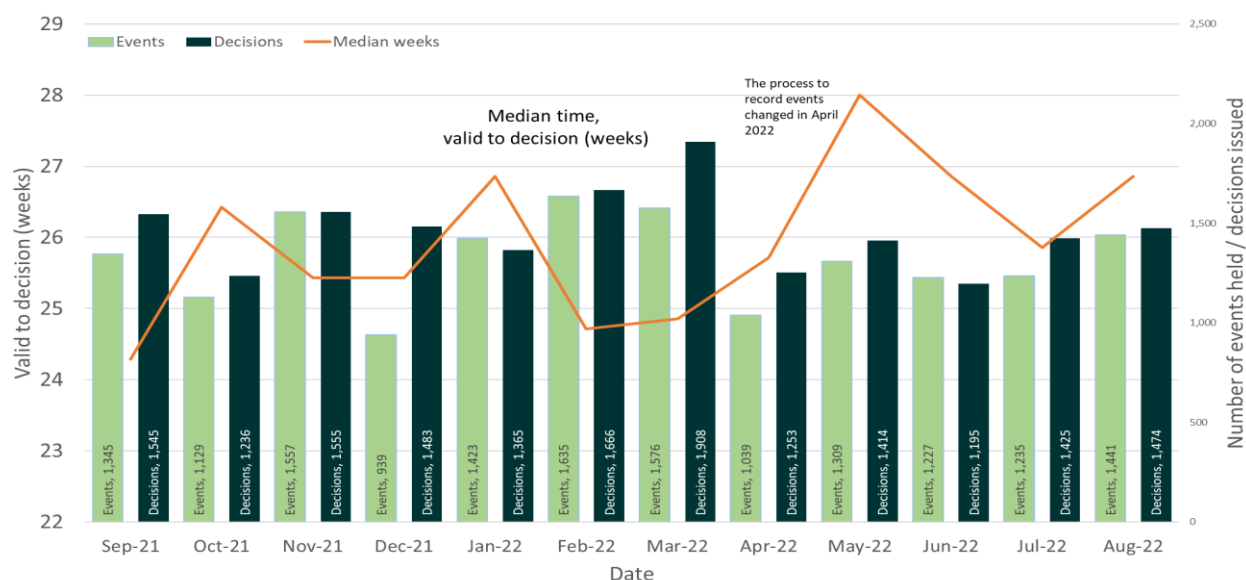
Data on events is being obtained from a different source from April 22 onwards and as a result statistics from that date onwards can not be meaningfully compared with statistics before that date. Further, it is possible that current events data is incomplete as staff transition to using an alternative admin system. We will review this each month going forward and make any revisions required in future editions of this publication.

The number of decisions issued in August 2022 was 1,474 an increase of 49 decisions compared to July 2022.

The number of events recorded for August 2022 was 1,441.

The median<sup>2</sup> time to decide a case during August 2022 was 27 weeks, 1 week higher than July 2022. The median time to decide was around 24 weeks at the start of the reporting period, and has been 24 – 28 weeks over the past 12 months.

Figure 1: Number of events held<sup>3</sup>, decisions issued and median time between valid date & decision date; September 2021 to August 2022.



Source: Horizon, Picaso, Inspector Scheduling System

Note: The process and admin system used for events data has changed from April 2022. See Background Quality Report for more information

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

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

Month	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Total
Events Held	1,345	1,129	1,557	939	1,423	1,635	1,576	1,039	1,309	1,227	1,235	1,441	15,855
Decisions	1,545	1,236	1,555	1,483	1,365	1,666	1,908	1,253	1,414	1,195	1,425	1,474	17,519
Median	24.3	26.4	25.4	25.4	26.9	24.7	24.9	25.7	28.0	26.9	25.9	26.9	25.9

Source: Horizon, Picaso, Inspector Scheduling System.

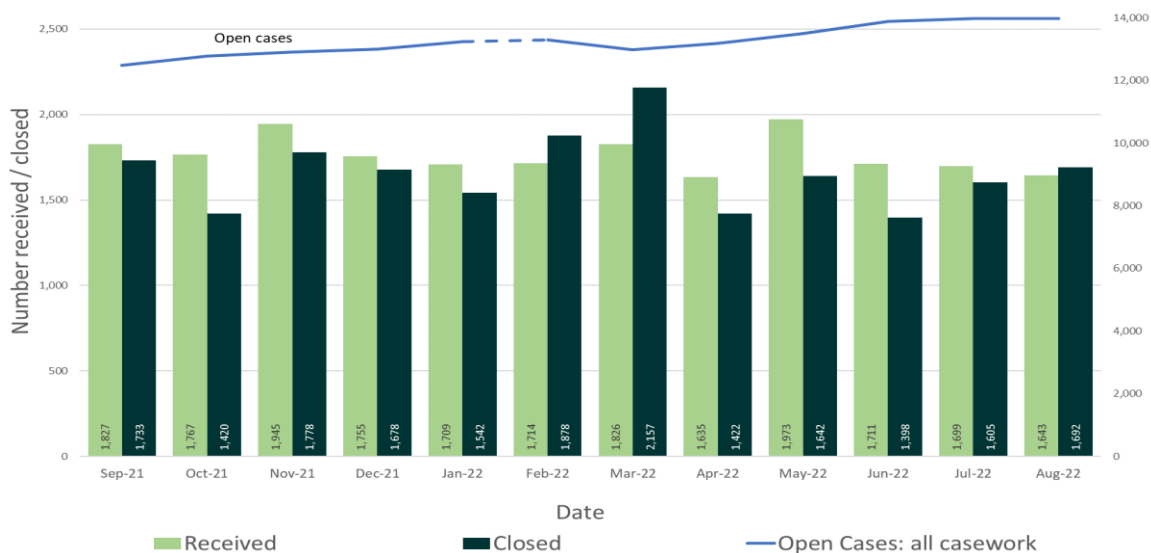
<sup>2</sup> See the section on Decision timeliness for more, including definitions of the average measures used in this release.

<sup>3</sup> A site visit, hearing, or inquiry. From January 2022 onwards hearings and inquiries have been held in person.

Over recent months PINS has transitioned to a new system for scheduling casework and changed the way that specialist casework records are kept, bringing them in line with other case type records. This has resulted in approximately 200 extra cases being included in our open case counts from February 2022.

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

Figure 2: Number of cases received, closed and open; September 2021 to August 2022



Source: Horizon and Picaso

Note 1: there is a known anomaly that means that the number of open cases does not exactly follow the volumes of cases closed or received (for example the number of open cases can increase between months even though the number closed exceeded the number received). The main reasons for this have been identified and are detailed in the Background Quality Report. The inspectorate are Investigating how to introduce new processes to improve the quality of this data which once complete may result in revisions to the number of open cases.

Note 2: Additional specialist casetypes are included in open case counts from February 2022

Table 2: Number of cases received, closed and open; September 2021 to August 2022

Note 1: This table includes revision and correction to previously published data. Please see Annex D for further information

Note 2: Additional specialist casetypes are included in open case counts from February 2022

Month	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Total
Received	1,827	1,767	1,945	1,755	1,709	1,714	1,826	1,635	1,973	1,711	1,699	1,643	21,204
Closed	1,733	1,420	1,778	1,678	1,542	1,878	2,157	1,422	1,642	1,398	1,605	1,692	19,945
Open	12,475	12,775	12,914	13,000	13,241	13,292	12,974	13,183	13,499	13,882	13,980	13,981	

Source: Horizon and Picaso

## Number of Decisions

The Planning Inspectorate has made 17,519 appeal decisions<sup>4</sup> in the last 12 months. There were 1,474 cases decided in August 2022 which is slightly higher than the 12 month average

<sup>4</sup> The appeal types include planning & related appeals, Enforcement and Specialist casework (covering a range of casework types). Please note that some previous releases covered only Rights of Way orders within Specialist casework. Annex C shows the scope of this release and Background Notes has further information.

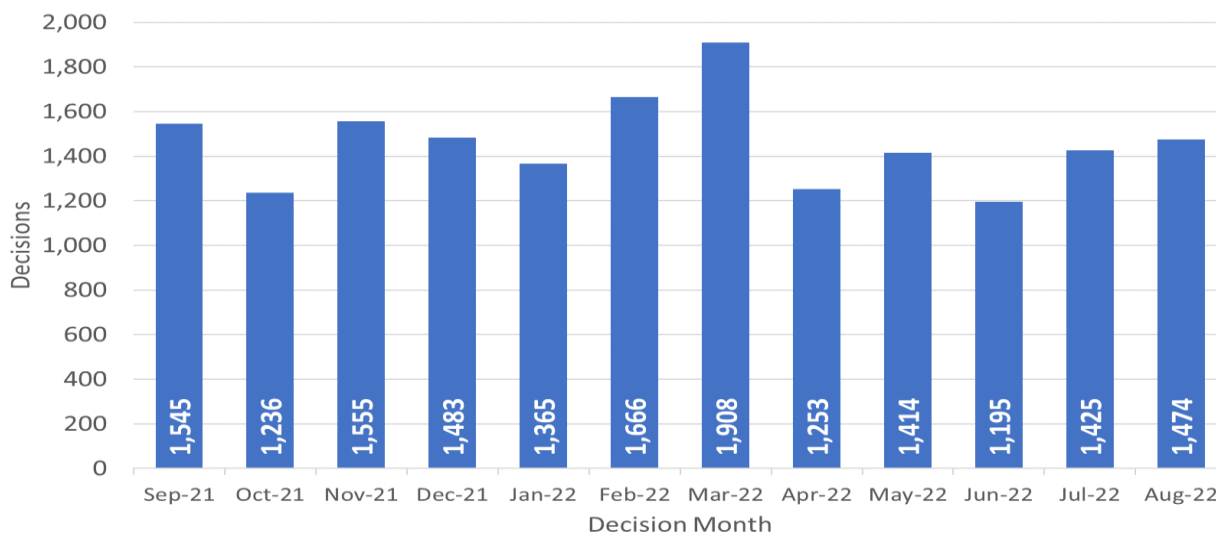
of 1,460 per month. Table 3 below shows the monthly breakdown with fewer decisions for the months of October, April and June.

Table 3: Appeal Decisions; September 2021 to August 2022

Month	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Total
Decisions	1,545	1,236	1,555	1,483	1,365	1,666	1,908	1,253	1,414	1,195	1,425	1,474	17,519

Source: Horizon and Picaso

Figure 3 – Appeal Decisions; September 2021 to August 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 Plans<sup>5</sup>, Compulsory Purchase Order applications and many other specialist licencing/ application types.

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

The large majority of decisions (16,420) were made on written representations. This is ninety four percent of all appeal decisions made. Table 4 shows that written representation decisions has varied from around 1,100 to over 1,800 per month over the past 12 months. (Pre-pandemic levels being between approximately 1,600 and 2,000 decisions per month). There were 1,357 decisions in August 2022.

There were 623 decisions made on hearings during the last 12 months, the monthly average being 52. During August 2022 39 decisions were issued. Pre-pandemic levels for hearing decisions were between 50 and 100 decisions per month. In August 2022 78 decisions were made for inquiries. Decisions for inquiries since September 2021 have ranged between 18 and 78. Pre-pandemic levels for inquiry decisions were between 15 and 90 decisions per month.

<sup>5</sup> Data on volumes for Nationally Significant Infrastructure projects and Local Plans can be seen here; <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-inspectorate-statistics> (Tables 1.1 and 1.2)

Table 4: Appeal Decisions by Procedure and Casework Category; September 2021 to August 2022

Month	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Total
Written Representations	1,475	1,186	1,457	1,398	1,250	1,594	1,811	1,155	1,291	1,109	1,337	1,357	16,420
Hearings	40	32	47	53	55	37	51	67	87	52	63	39	623
Inquiries	30	18	51	32	60	35	46	31	36	34	25	78	476
Total	1,545	1,236	1,555	1,483	1,365	1,666	1,908	1,253	1,414	1,195	1,425	1,474	17,519
Month	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Total
Planning	1,365	1,033	1,330	1,262	1,108	1,411	1,607	983	1,151	1,010	1,172	1,163	14,595
Enforcement	148	153	193	160	208	220	253	174	214	138	167	224	2,252
Specialist	32	50	32	61	49	35	48	96	49	47	86	87	672
Total	1,545	1,236	1,555	1,483	1,365	1,666	1,908	1,253	1,414	1,195	1,425	1,474	17,519

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.

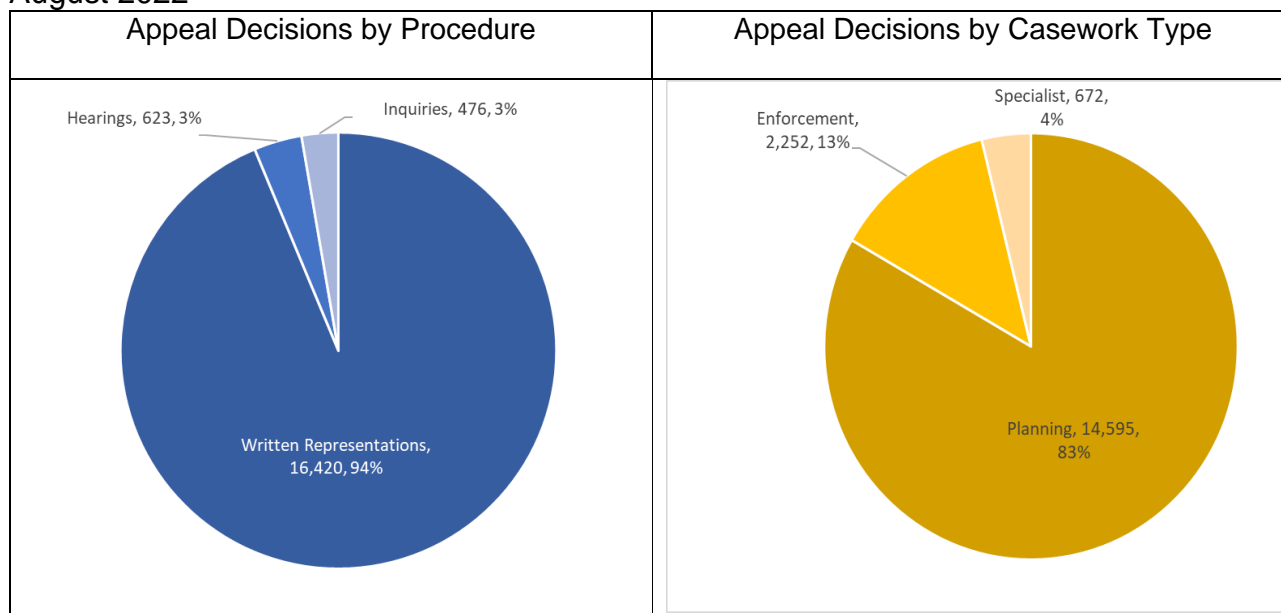
**What are Enforcement cases?** Enforcement covers enforcement appeals (i.e., appeals against the issue of an enforcement notice by a local planning authority), enforcement listed building notice appeals and lawful development certificate appeals.

**What are Specialist cases?** Specialist casework includes Common Land, Rights of Way orders (including Schedule 14 cases), Purchase orders, Tree Preservation Orders, High Hedges appeals, Hedgerow appeals, Wayleave, Compulsory Purchase Orders, Secretary of State, Transport, Environmental Permitting Appeals and Coastal Access. Additional casework types have been added to this category over time.

The large majority of cases were planning (14,595). This is about eighty-three per cent of all appeal decisions made. There were 2,252 enforcement decisions and 672 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 average number of enforcement decisions over the past 12 months was 188. March 22 had the most enforcement decisions of the last 12 months. Specialist casework figures continue to vary each month, from a low of 32 in September and November 2021 to a high of 96 in April 2022. The high number of cases decided in April was partly attributable to a large group of linked cases that were responded to at the same time.

Figure 4 – Appeal Decisions by Procedure and Casework Category; September 2021 to August 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 26 weeks. Figure 5 shows the median has been between 24 and 28 weeks for each of the last 12 months.

**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 31 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.

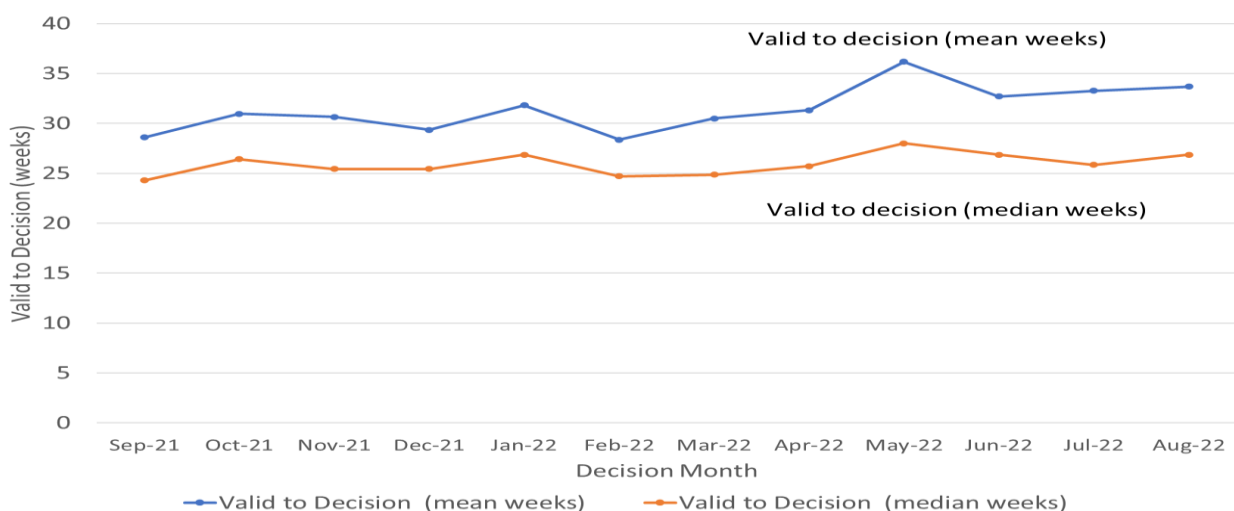
What are mean, median, and standard deviation?	
Measure	Definition
Mean	The total time taken divided by the number of cases. Also referred to as the 'average'. A measure of how long each case would take, if the total time taken was spread evenly across all cases.
Median	This is the time taken by the '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: Median, mean and Standard Deviation of Time to Decision; September 2021 to August 2022

Month	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Total
Valid to Decision (median weeks)	24.3	26.4	25.4	25.4	26.9	24.7	24.9	25.7	28.0	26.9	25.9	26.9	25.9
Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	28.6	31.0	30.6	29.4	31.8	28.4	30.5	31.3	36.2	32.7	33.3	33.7	31.3
Standard Deviation (weeks)	16.7	18.8	21.3	17.7	22.0	17.6	24.0	24.8	31.2	25.1	27.0	23.1	22.8

Source: Horizon and Picaso

Figure 5: Median and mean Time to Decision; September 2021 to August 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<sup>6</sup> 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

<sup>6</sup> Written representations includes Rights of Way Schedule 14 appeals



in the table caption below should be treated with caution as there are fewer than 20 cases decided.

Median times are less affected by a small number of large values than mean times, so are the focus of this commentary. The median time for written representations over the 12 months to August 2022 is 25 weeks; the last eleven months have longer median time to decision than September 2021. The median time for hearings over the 12 months to August 2022 is 59 weeks and 54 weeks for inquiries.

**Table 6: Mean and Median Time to Decision, with Standard Deviation, by Procedure; September 2021 to August 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 October 2021.

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

Measure	Procedure	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Total
Valid to Decision (median weeks)	WR	23.6	25.9	24.4	24.9	25.4	24.1	24.3	24.4	27.0	26.1	25.1	26.1	25.0
	HRG	50.4	53.6	47.9	53.1	64.1	45.7	52.9	108.3	94.0	59.1	58.4	63.0	59.1
	INQ	35.6	50.4	84.9	40.6	90.9	57.3	42.1	38.4	44.2	39.4	31.1	68.6	53.7
	All	24.3	26.4	25.4	25.4	26.9	24.7	24.9	25.7	28.0	26.9	25.9	26.9	25.9
Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	WR	27.3	29.5	27.9	27.7	28.1	27.0	28.9	27.3	30.4	29.6	30.3	30.7	28.7
	HRG	57.1	57.2	60.8	61.2	75.7	57.5	60.6	89.1	113.6	87.4	84.9	67.8	77.0
	INQ	56.5	77.6	82.3	47.3	69.4	60.7	60.7	57.7	55.8	49.8	60.6	68.0	63.4
	All	28.6	31.0	30.6	29.4	31.8	28.4	30.5	31.3	36.2	32.7	33.3	33.7	31.3
Standard Deviation (weeks)	WR	14.0	16.2	15.5	15.0	15.3	15.1	21.9	17.2	18.3	17.1	20.8	19.0	17.4
	HRG	27.5	22.9	38.6	32.0	43.8	33.1	27.3	38.3	59.8	62.7	55.2	43.1	48.3
	INQ	40.8	50.9	43.8	30.0	30.5	35.4	45.8	46.2	37.2	36.3	53.8	30.6	40.2
	All	16.7	18.8	21.3	17.7	22.0	17.6	24.0	24.8	31.2	25.1	27.0	23.1	22.8
Decisions	WR	1,475	1,186	1,457	1,398	1,250	1,594	1,811	1,155	1,291	1,109	1,337	1,357	16,420
	HRG	40	32	47	53	55	37	51	67	87	52	63	39	623
	INQ	30	18	51	32	60	35	46	31	36	34	25	78	476
	All	1,545	1,236	1,555	1,483	1,365	1,666	1,908	1,253	1,414	1,195	1,425	1,474	17,519

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 specialist<sup>7</sup> cases, as does Figure 6.

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

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

times for specialist cases. Table 7 and Figure 6 show the median time for planning cases has been above 23 weeks for the last twelve months.

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

Casework Category	Measure	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Total
Planning Cases	Valid to Decision (median weeks)	23.6	25.3	24.6	24.6	25.2	24.3	23.6	24.9	27.0	26.0	25.0	25.1	24.9
	Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	26.9	28.3	27.2	26.8	28.1	26.3	25.8	26.7	30.3	29.2	29.1	28.7	27.6
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	13.5	13.6	14.1	13.7	16.2	13.9	15.1	15.3	21.6	17.9	20.5	17.7	16.2
Enforcement Cases	Valid to Decision (median weeks)	33.2	34.0	39.9	39.1	37.5	31.1	44.6	48.0	57.8	40.9	42.1	58.6	41.7
	Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	40.7	43.6	53.5	45.0	49.5	39.9	57.5	59.7	66.9	56.3	56.5	56.1	52.5
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	26.3	30.2	37.6	26.4	32.4	26.7	39.8	40.8	50.1	47.0	41.0	29.6	37.4
Specialist Cases	Valid to Decision (median weeks)	27.7	32.1	19.7	27.1	29.4	26.0	27.2	12.7	27.3	28.1	24.9	31.3	26.5
	Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	46.8	47.4	36.4	40.8	41.6	40.3	46.7	27.4	40.4	40.7	45.3	42.6	40.7
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	35.7	35.4	40.7	32.5	37.0	37.3	45.5	30.0	34.8	27.3	41.7	29.8	35.9

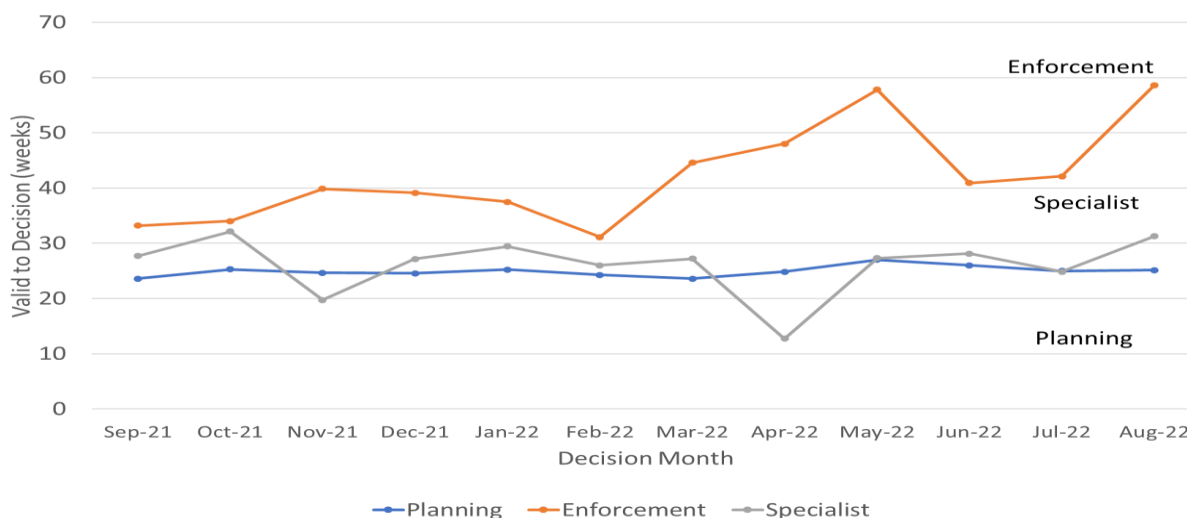
Source: Horizon and Picaso.

Annex A 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 42 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 quite similar to the median for planning decisions.

Figure 6 – Median Time to Decision by Casework Category: September 2021 to August 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 B<sup>8</sup> for further details.

### Planning Inquiry Decisions

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

The median time for inquiries under Rosewell process over the 12 months to August 2022 is 29 weeks and the mean time to decision for August 2022 was 35 weeks.

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

Note 1: where there are fewer than 20 decisions, the measures mean, median and standard deviation are less meaningful.

Measure	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Total
Decisions	19	8	19	14	21	23	22	14	25	22	13	18	218
Median (weeks)	26.9	43.2	28.6	27.4	31.9	42.1	30.0	30.2	30.6	30.9	23.3	26.0	29.0
Mean (weeks)	30.5	40.0	36.8	29.2	37.8	47.0	35.5	35.5	40.0	31.6	23.9	30.9	35.4
St. Dev. (weeks)	10.7	13.5	18.7	8.5	19.6	19.7	14.2	13.6	20.5	11.4	4.6	14.0	16.6

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

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

Month	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Total
Decisions	1	0	0	3	2	0	3	3	1	1	2	3	19

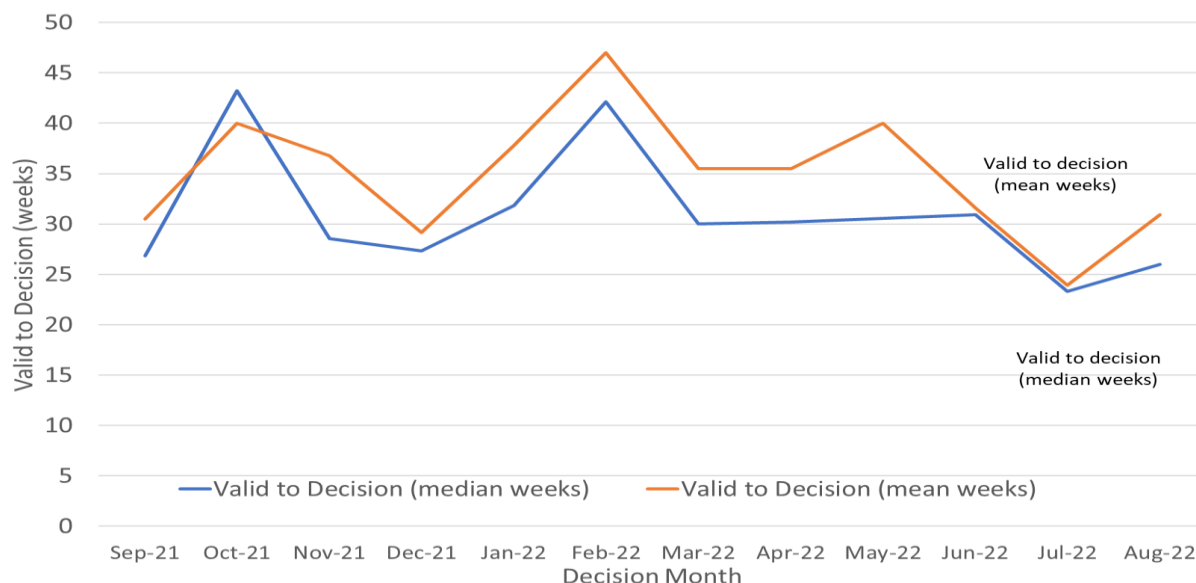
Source: Horizon

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

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

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

Figure 7: Mean and Median Time to Decision, Rosewell Inquiry Process; September 2021 to August 2022



Source: Horizon

## Open Cases

At the end of August 2022, the Planning Inspectorate had just under fourteen thousand cases open<sup>10</sup> (13,981). More information on the number of open cases, and how it has changed over the past 12 months, is in Table 2 and Figure 2 above.

The open cases comprised of 12,226 cases being handled through written representations; 961 through hearings; and 694 through inquiries. This is not the number of 'live' hearings and inquiries since it includes cases where the event (hearing or inquiry) has yet to start, as well as those where the event has finished but the decision has yet to be issued.

For each procedure type, there are more cases with an event yet to start, than at any other stage in the process. Event refers to either a site visit, hearing, or inquiry.

<sup>10</sup> Open cases are any that have been received but on which a decision has not yet been made/ issued. Cases included comprise Planning, Enforcement, and many types of specialist casework. The types of specialist casework included in open case counts has increased over time. See Background Quality report for more information.

Table 10: Open cases by procedure and stage, as of end of August 2022

Stage	Written Representations	Hearings	Inquiries	Total
Cases received but yet to be deemed valid	1,696	54	14	1,764
Cases deemed valid but yet to 'start'	2,543	93	74	2,772
Case started but event (site visit/hearing/inquiry) has not yet happened	7,693	719	512	8,947
Event has happened/started but decision not yet issued	294	95	94	498
Total	12,226	961	694	13,981

Source: Horizon

Note 1 -there are 100 cases that have no procedure type recorded (see Background Quality Report for more detail) These are included in the total but excluded from the breakdown by procedure.

Note 2 – there is a known anomaly that means that the number of open cases does not exactly follow the volumes of cases closed or received (for example the number of open cases can increase between months even though the number closed exceeded the number received). The main reasons for this have been identified and are detailed in the Background Quality Report. The inspectorate are Investigating how to introduce new processes to improve the quality of this data which once complete may result in revisions to the number of open cases.

## Inspectors

Table 11 below shows the number of inspectors in the Planning Inspectorate in each month from September 2021 to August 2022<sup>11</sup>. This includes headcount (i.e. the number of different individuals) and full-time equivalents (FTE) where those working part time are counted in proportion with their contracted hours. There were 376 Planning Inspectors employed by the Inspectorate in August 2022 – with a full-time equivalent of 335.

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

Month	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22
Headcount	345	351	360	361	360	357	357	355	365	371	378	376
FTE	306.6	314.0	323.2	322.8	320.9	318.9	319.1	316.6	325.9	331.5	337.7	335.0

Source: SAP HR

As above, Planning Inspectors work on a broader range of work than the appeals featured in this Release. 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

<sup>11</sup> Data as at the last day of the month.

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 D and the separate Background Quality Report.

## Annex A – 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 October, November and December 2021 and April and July 2022 for inquiries decisions.

Procedure	Measure	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Total
Written Representations	Decisions	1,323	1,000	1,274	1,204	1,052	1,358	1,546	933	1,082	950	1,110	1,115	13,947
	Median Average Weeks	23.1	25.0	24.1	24.2	24.6	23.9	23.1	24.3	26.4	25.3	24.4	25.0	24.3
	Mean Average Weeks	26.2	27.5	26.3	25.8	26.4	25.4	25.0	25.2	27.6	27.6	26.9	27.9	26.4
	Standard Deviation	12.3	12.7	12.0	11.5	12.4	12.5	14.3	12.3	13.7	14.5	13.9	15.7	13.2
Hearings	Decisions	22	25	37	41	33	30	36	33	43	37	47	27	411
	Median Average Weeks	50.4	54.3	45.9	49.4	55.9	43.6	48.8	52.7	61.4	51.1	55.9	42.6	51.9
	Mean Average Weeks	54.7	54.7	54.3	56.7	70.7	51.5	52.8	63.0	90.0	66.4	80.8	55.4	64.2
	Standard Deviation	24.0	20.6	34.1	29.7	39.0	27.0	20.0	34.7	58.4	41.6	54.8	43.0	41.1
Inquires	Decisions	20	8	19	17	23	23	25	17	26	23	15	21	237
	Median Average Weeks	27.9	43.2	28.6	23.9	31.9	42.1	28.0	33.7	32.1	31.0	24.0	26.0	29.6
	Mean Average Weeks	36.6	40.0	36.8	29.1	41.0	47.0	35.6	37.4	43.6	33.2	29.4	37.5	37.6
	Standard Deviation	28.8	13.5	18.7	10.5	25.4	19.7	15.1	13.7	27.0	13.4	14.8	27.2	21.3
All Planning Cases	Decisions	1,365	1,033	1,330	1,262	1,108	1,411	1,607	983	1,151	1,010	1,172	1,163	14,595
	Median Average Weeks	26.9	28.3	27.2	26.8	28.1	26.3	25.8	26.7	30.3	29.2	29.1	28.7	27.6
	Mean Average Weeks	23.6	25.3	24.6	24.6	25.2	24.3	23.6	24.9	27.0	26.0	25.0	25.1	24.9
	Standard Deviation	13.5	13.6	14.1	13.7	16.2	13.9	15.1	15.3	21.6	17.9	20.5	17.7	16.2

- The median time to decision for planning written representations was 0.6 of a week higher in August 2022 compared to July 2022.
- The median for planning hearings during August 2022 reduced by 13.3 weeks compared to July 2022
- The median for planning inquiries during August 2022 increased by 2 weeks compared to July 2022

## Enforcement

Note: where there are fewer than 20 decisions, the measures mean, median and standard deviation are less meaningful. This applies to all month for hearing decisions and all months for inquiry decisions other than November 2021, January 2022 and August 2022.

Procedure	Measure	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Total
Written Representations	Decisions	122	139	156	137	155	203	225	131	166	119	154	164	1,871
	Median Average Weeks	28.1	32.7	31.6	37.4	31.7	28.6	42.6	36.7	45.8	37.3	39.0	40.0	34.6
	Mean Average Weeks	33.8	38.7	42.1	41.5	37.2	36.6	55.0	44.8	47.9	43.1	52.7	46.3	43.8
	Standard Deviation	16.8	22.4	28.2	23.9	22.1	21.9	38.9	29.1	28.8	24.2	36.3	25.3	28.6
Hearings	Decisions	18	7	9	10	19	6	11	31	41	11	10	6	179
	Median Average Weeks	50.8	53.0	55.3	60.5	66.7	55.7	63.0	118.9	170.3	223.7	75.0	99.6	94.0
	Mean Average Weeks	60.0	66.1	82.7	71.6	81.8	72.3	64.9	111.8	140.5	165.3	107.1	101.1	102.9
	Standard Deviation	31.1	27.9	46.6	33.7	47.4	36.3	22.5	19.0	50.7	70.8	64.4	25.4	53.7
Inquires	Decisions	8	7	28	13	34	11	17	12	7	8	3	54	202
	Median Average Weeks	94.5	147.4	118.3	48.0	90.9	71.9	58.3	49.3	78.0	96.1	52.7	68.6	88.6
	Mean Average Weeks	101.6	117.6	107.6	60.9	87.3	84.0	86.0	88.5	86.7	103.3	81.7	80.9	86.9
	Standard Deviation	32.0	52.2	26.8	27.1	15.4	44.0	48.0	60.7	37.2	35.9	43.7	22.2	35.5
All Enforcement Cases	Decisions	148	153	193	160	208	220	253	174	214	138	167	224	2,252
	Median Average Weeks	33.2	34.0	39.9	39.1	37.5	31.1	44.6	48.0	57.8	40.9	42.1	58.6	41.7
	Mean Average Weeks	40.7	43.6	53.5	45.0	49.5	39.9	57.5	59.7	66.9	56.3	56.5	56.1	52.5
	Standard Deviation	26.3	30.2	37.6	26.4	32.4	26.7	39.8	40.8	50.1	47.0	41.0	29.6	37.4

- The mean and median measures for enforcement written representation decisions show considerable variation month to month but no clear trend. The median for August 2022 increased by 1 week compared to July 2022.
- The time to decision for enforcement hearings and inquiries is generally more than twice the time for written representation decisions. The median for hearings during August was 100 weeks.
- 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.
- There were 54 enforcement cases decided with inquiry in August 2022 which is much higher than usual. This has contributed to the overall number of inquiry decisions and time to decision measures being higher than is typical in August.
- As with planning hearings, the effect of the pandemic is still evident in enforcement timeliness. 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.

Procedure	Measure	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Total
Written Representations	Decisions	30	47	27	57	43	33	40	91	43	40	73	78	602
	Median Average Weeks	24.3	30.4	17.3	24.9	29.0	24.9	24.1	11.3	23.3	25.8	22.9	27.9	24.0
	Mean Average Weeks	44.9	45.0	21.3	36.1	35.0	34.4	32.4	23.2	33.5	38.1	35.3	38.7	34.4
	Standard Deviation	36.1	34.1	14.7	27.5	30.1	29.6	29.8	22.1	27.8	27.1	30.7	26.9	29.0
Hearings	Decisions	0	0	1	2	3	1	4	3	3	4	6	6	33
	Median Average Weeks	-	-	101.9	101.9	130.1	149.1	127.9	141.0	90.9	75.1	76.4	82.6	90.9
	Mean Average Weeks	0.0	-	101.9	101.9	93.2	149.1	118.7	141.5	85.7	68.0	80.7	90.5	96.7
	Standard Deviation	-	-	0.0	26.2	58.0	0.0	22.9	15.4	29.0	14.7	24.4	28.4	35.8
Inquires	Decisions	2	3	4	2	3	1	4	2	3	3	7	3	37
	Median Average Weeks	75.2	105.3	113.4	113.9	95.1	119.7	109.4	44.8	66.9	39.7	165.6	35.6	83.4
	Mean Average Weeks	75.2	84.7	121.7	113.9	84.0	119.7	110.0	44.8	89.4	34.9	118.5	48.8	91.1
	Standard Deviation	8.2	33.7	43.4	15.6	29.6	0.0	61.3	1.6	49.0	13.2	58.4	18.7	50.4
All Specialist Cases	Decisions	32	50	32	61	49	35	48	96	49	47	86	87	672
	Median Average Weeks	27.7	32.1	19.7	27.1	29.4	26.0	27.2	12.7	27.3	28.1	24.9	31.3	26.5
	Mean Average Weeks	46.8	47.4	36.4	40.8	41.6	40.3	46.7	27.4	40.4	40.7	45.3	42.6	40.7
	Standard Deviation	35.7	35.4	40.7	32.5	37.0	37.3	45.5	30.0	34.8	27.3	41.7	29.8	35.9

- The number of decisions for Specialist cases is relatively low (compared to Planning and Enforcement), 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 11 weeks (April 22) and 30 weeks (October 21).

## Annex B – Detailed Information on timeliness (August 2022)

The information below is published today on the number and length of decisions made in August 2022<sup>12</sup>:

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

Casework Type	Procedure Type	Median (weeks)	Mean (weeks)	Decisions
s78 planning appeals	Written Representations	32.9	29.9	658
	Hearings	55.7	42.6	25
	Inquiries	38.6	26.1	20
Householder appeals	Written Representations	19.4	15.9	386
Enforcement appeals	Written Representations	46.3	40.0	164
	Hearings	101.1	99.6	6
	Inquiries	80.9	68.6	54

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.

	s78 planning appeals			Householder appeals
	Written Representations	Hearings	Inquiries	
<b>Weeks between valid date &amp; start date</b>				
Median (average)	10.9	5.3	2.6	5.4
Mean (average)	11.3	7.8	10.1	5.4
Cases that started in August 2022	770	71	34	247
<b>Weeks between start date &amp; event date</b>				
Median (average)	13.6	14.4	16.0	9.9
Mean (average)	16.3	17.3	17.5	12.6
Cases where an event occurred during August 2022	688	44	12	410
<b>Weeks between event date &amp; decision date</b>				
Median (average)	3.9	3.7	7.3	3.0
Mean (average)	4.5	11.2	10.1	3.8
Cases that have been decided in August 2022	590	25	17	381

Note: Only cases with both dates recorded appear in this table, meaning that numbers for cases decided and events recorded may be lower than those presented elsewhere.

<sup>12</sup> 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 C – 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	Events held
Table 2	Open cases
Table 6	Inquiries, valid to decision median weeks and standard deviation
Table 7	Specialist casework, median, mean and standard deviation.
Annex B	Planning inquiries: median valid to decision weeks.

In addition to the above, a correction has been made to the December 2021 open cases count (Table 2). A duplication error was identified and corrected in the data during the process of compiling these statistics and the number of open cases for December 2021 only is now 47 lower than previously reported.

## 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	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.

Term	Explanation
	When a Local Planning Authority has finished preparing and consulting on a local plan it must be submitted to the Secretary of State who appoints an Inspector to carry out an independent examination.
FTE	Full Time Equivalent – a count of employees where those working part time are counted in proportion with their contracted hours.
Headcount	Total number of staff employed regardless of how many hours they work (i.e. the number of different individuals).
Hearings	<p>A hearing involves the submission of written evidence by the main parties and a hearing once all the written submissions have been received.</p> <p>This takes the form of a round-the-table discussion (in person or virtually) that will be led by the planning inspector. It allows for all parties to respond to any questions that the inspector might have, and to let everyone make their case known.</p> <p>Source: Planning Portal</p>
Inquiries	<p>An inquiry is usually used for complex cases where legal issues may need to be considered. The main parties will usually have legal representatives to present their case and to cross-examine any witnesses. Prior to the inquiry date, the Planning Inspectorate will expect to have received various documents from all parties that will be taking part in the appeal. These may include statements of case and proofs of evidence from expert witnesses. Third parties may also take part. The inquiry will be led by the inspector and will follow a formal procedure.</p> <p>At some point during or on conclusion of the inquiry the inspector and the main parties will undertake a site visit.</p> <p>Source: Planning Portal</p>
Live appeals	Number of live appeals in that have an appeal valid date but no end date (either decision date or a closed date, e.g. for appeals that have been withdrawn).
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.

<b>Term</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
(includes Rights of Way Schedule 14)	

## 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:

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

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

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