



The Planning Inspectorate

Official Statistics
22nd June 2023

Introduction

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

These statistics are produced each month and the focus is on timeliness of decision-making, an area of particular interest for stakeholders. 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 June 2022 to May 2023
- 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.

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.

Summary

Time to decide cases

The median decision time for cases decided in May 2023 was 30 weeks.

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

Procedure type	Last 12 months	May 2023
Written Representations	28 weeks	30 weeks
Hearings	52 weeks	57 weeks
Inquiries	52 weeks	38 weeks
All Cases	29 weeks	30 weeks

The median time for planning cases was 29 weeks in May 2023, with the 12 month median being 27 weeks.

Enforcement decisions made in May 2023 had a median decision time of 58 weeks, with the 12 month median being 56 weeks.

The median time for planning appeals decided by inquiry under the Rosewell Process over the 12 months to May 2023 is 29 weeks.

Decisions

The Planning Inspectorate made 17,448 appeal decisions¹ in the last 12 months, an average of 1,454 per month. The number of decisions in May 2023 was 1,444.

There were 1,315 written representations decisions in May 2023 and 16,029 in the last 12 months.

There were 889 decisions made on hearings during the last 12 months, and during May 2023, 89 decisions were issued.

There were 530 decisions made on inquiries during the last 12 months, with 40 in May 2023.

Planning Inspectors

There were 420 Planning Inspectors employed by the Inspectorate at the end of May 2023.

¹ 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

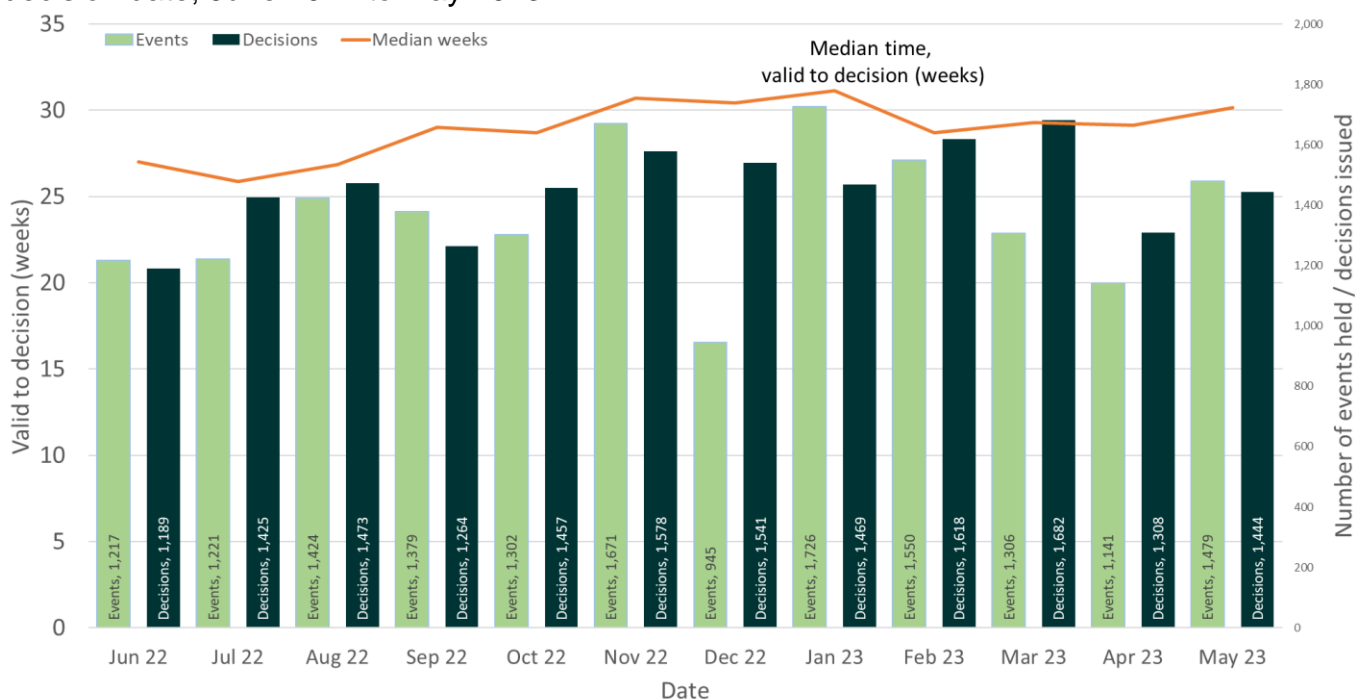
The number of decisions issued in May 2023 was 1,444, a monthly average of 1,454 over the past 12 months.

The number of events recorded for May 2023 was 1,479, the average over the past 12 months was 1,363.

The median valid to decision time was 30 weeks in May 2023, as seen in Figure 1 and Table 1 below.

There are no clear trends for the number of events and decisions per month. However, the Christmas and Easter breaks do impact on the number of events arranged during December and April.

Figure 1: Number of events held², decisions issued and median time between valid date & decision date; June 2022 to May 2023



Source: Horizon, Picaso, Inspector Scheduling System

Note 1: The number of cases decided include TPOs which were excluded in previous months – see the Background Quality report for more information

Table 1: Number of events held, decisions issued and median time between valid date & decision date; June 2022 to May 2023

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

Note 2: The number of cases decided include TPOs which were excluded in previous months – see the Background Quality report for more information

Month	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Total
Events Held	1,217	1,221	1,424	1,379	1,302	1,671	945	1,726	1,550	1,306	1,141	1,479	16,361
Decisions	1,189	1,425	1,473	1,264	1,457	1,578	1,541	1,469	1,618	1,682	1,308	1,444	17,448
Median	27.0	25.9	26.9	29.0	28.7	30.7	30.4	31.1	28.7	29.3	29.1	30.1	29.0

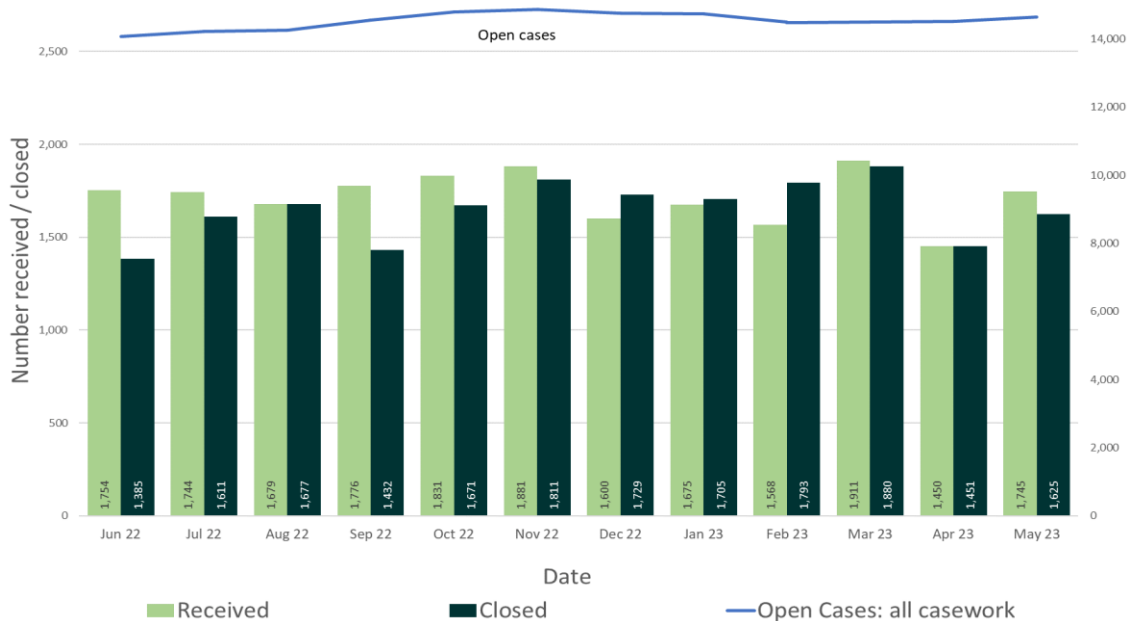
Source: Horizon, Picaso, Inspector Scheduling System.

Figure 2 below shows the number of cases received, closed and open for each of the last 12 months.

² A site visit, hearing, or inquiry.

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; June 2022 to May 2023



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: The number of cases received and decided and open include TPOs which were excluded in previous months. The count of open cases excludes TPOs – see the start of this document and the Background Quality report for more information

Table 2: Number of cases received, closed and open; June 2022 to May 2023

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

Note 2: The number of cases received and decided and open include TPOs which were excluded in previous publications.

Month	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Total
Received	1,754	1,744	1,679	1,776	1,831	1,881	1,600	1,675	1,568	1,911	1,450	1,745	20,614
Closed	1,385	1,611	1,677	1,432	1,671	1,811	1,729	1,705	1,793	1,880	1,451	1,625	19,770
Open	14,069	14,220	14,262	14,556	14,796	14,862	14,751	14,742	14,500	14,510	14,512	14,649	

Source: Horizon and Picaso

Number of Decisions

The Planning Inspectorate has made 17,448 appeal decisions³ in the last 12 months. There were 1,444 cases decided in May 2023.

Table 3 below shows the monthly breakdown with fewer decisions for the months of June and September 2022 and April 2023.

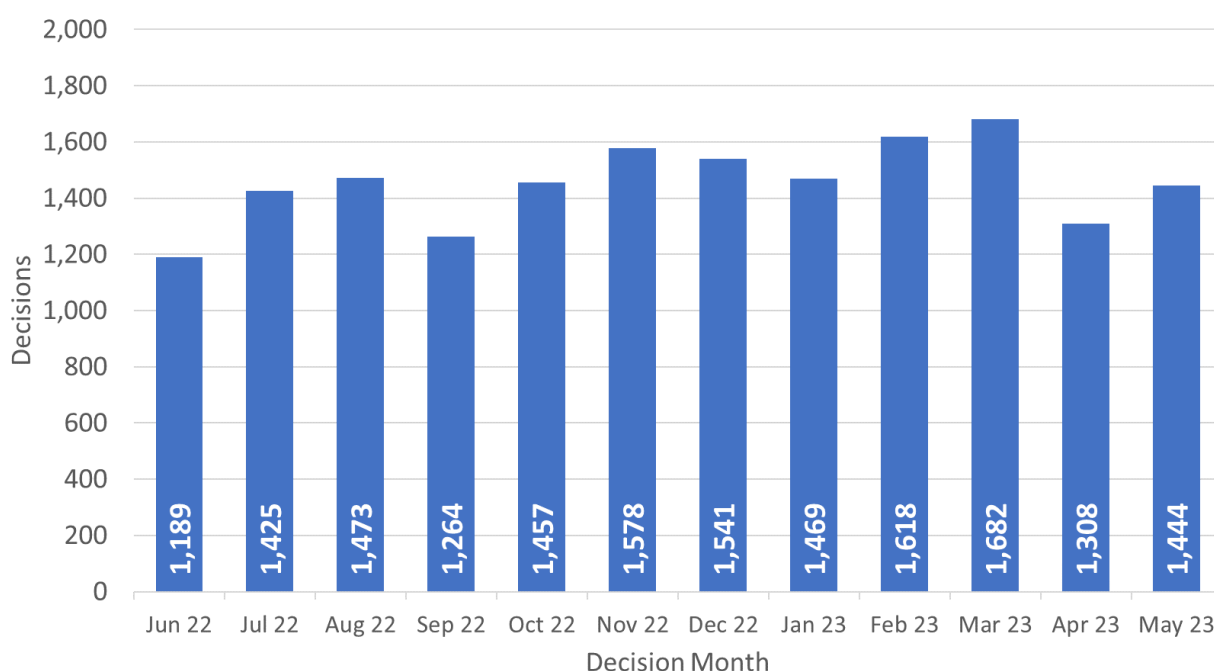
Table 3: Appeal Decisions; June 2022 to May 2023

Note 1: The number of cases decided include TPOs which were excluded in previous publications – see Background Quality report for more information

Month	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Total
Decisions	1,189	1,425	1,473	1,264	1,457	1,578	1,541	1,469	1,618	1,682	1,308	1,444	17,448

Source: Horizon and Picaso

Figure 3 – Appeal Decisions; June 2022 to May 2023



Note 1: The number of cases decided include TPOs which were excluded in previous publications – see the Background Quality report for more information

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 Plans⁴, 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.

³ 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.

⁴ 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)

The large majority of decisions (16,029) were made on written representations. This is 92% of all appeal decisions made. Table 4 shows that written representation decisions have varied from around 1,100 to over 1,500 per month over the past 12 months. There were 1,315 decisions in May 2023.

There were 889 decisions made on hearings during the last 12 months, the monthly average being 74. During May 2023 89 decisions were issued. In May 2023 40 decisions were made for inquiries. Decisions for inquiries since May 2022 have ranged between 24 and 80.

Table 4: Appeal Decisions by Procedure and Casework Category; June 2022 to May 2023

Note 1: The number of cases decided include TPOs which were excluded in previous publications –the Background Quality report for more information

Month	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Total
Written Representations	1,101	1,337	1,354	1,171	1,373	1,457	1,339	1,329	1,496	1,532	1,225	1,315	16,029
Hearings	54	62	39	69	53	89	156	64	76	83	55	89	889
Inquiries	34	26	80	24	31	32	46	76	46	67	28	40	530
Total	1,189	1,425	1,473	1,264	1,457	1,578	1,541	1,469	1,618	1,682	1,308	1,444	17,448
Month	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Total
Planning	999	1,171	1,156	1,014	1,259	1,336	1,289	1,225	1,398	1,394	1,113	1,196	14,550
Enforcement	138	166	224	184	142	174	192	184	169	238	140	150	2,101
Specialist	52	88	93	66	56	68	60	60	51	50	55	98	797
Total	1,189	1,425	1,473	1,264	1,457	1,578	1,541	1,469	1,618	1,682	1,308	1,444	17,448

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.

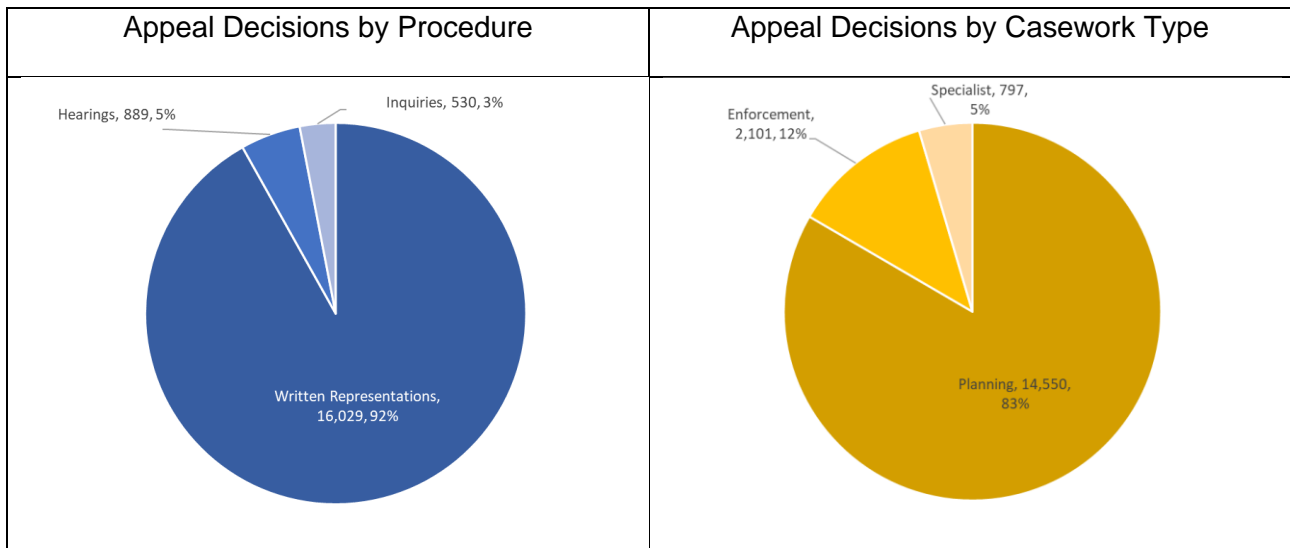
What are Enforcement cases? Enforcement covers enforcement appeals (i.e., appeals against the issue of an enforcement notice served by a local planning authority for alleged breaches of planning control), enforcement listed building notice appeals and lawful development certificate appeals.

What are Specialist cases? Specialist casework includes Common Land, Rights of Way orders (including Schedule 14 cases), Purchase orders, Tree Preservation Orders (excluding receipts and open cases), 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 over the past 12 months were planning (14,550). This is about 83% of all appeal decisions made. There were 2,101 enforcement decisions and 797 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 175. Specialist casework figures continue to vary each month, from a high of 93 in August 2022 to a low of 50 in March 2023.

Figure 4 – Appeal Decisions by Procedure and Casework Category; June 2022 to May 2023



Note 1: The number of cases decided include TPOs which were excluded in previous months – see the start of this document and the Background Quality report for more information

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 informed plans and decisions. 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 29 weeks; and 30 weeks for May 2023. Figure 5 shows the median has been between 25 and 31 weeks for each of the last 12 months.

How is timeliness measured?
<p>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. This means that any delay in 'validating' the appeal is included in the time to make a decision.</p>
<p>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 appeals submitted, or deemed 'valid' in that month, will take.</p>

Table 5 also shows the mean decision time for the last 12 months is 35 weeks. Each month the median is less than the mean, due to the impact of very long cases. Also included in the table is the *standard deviation* of decision timeliness, which is a measure of variation.

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.

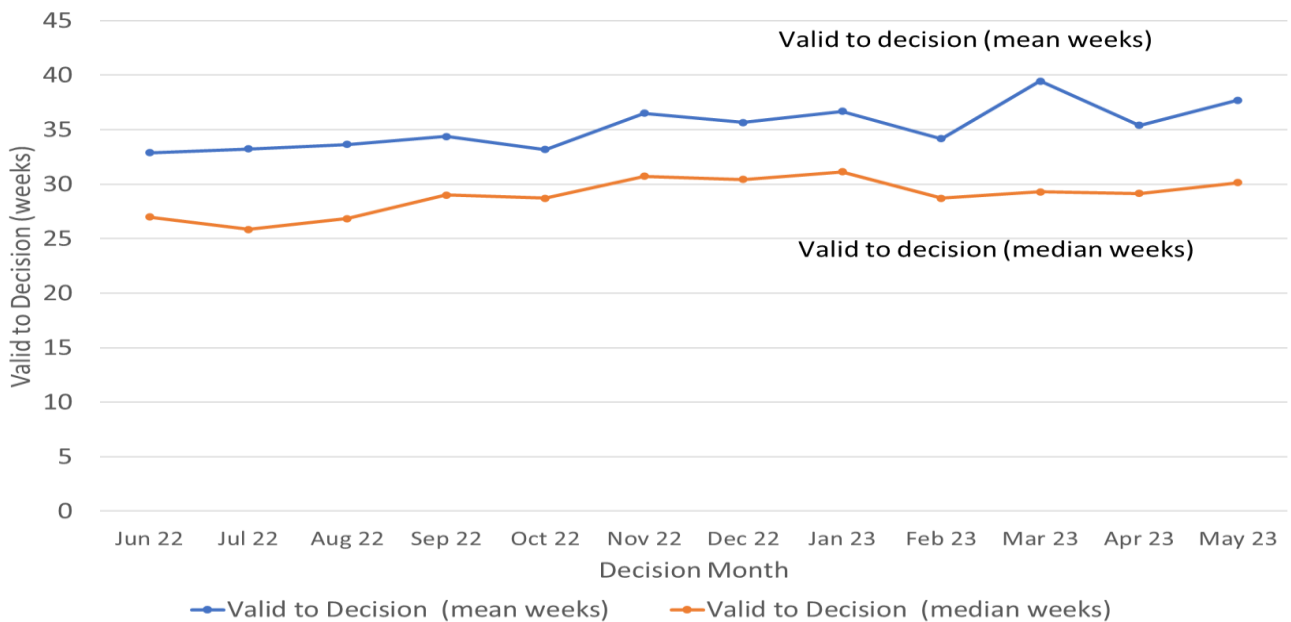
Median	This is the time taken by the 'middle' case if all cases were sorted from quickest to longest
Standard deviation	This is a measure of variability or spread. It is calculated by examining how much each value differs from the mean. A higher standard deviation means the individual decision times 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; June 2022 to May 2023

Month	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Total
Valid to Decision (median weeks)	27.0	25.9	26.9	29.0	28.7	30.7	30.4	31.1	28.7	29.3	29.1	30.1	29.0
Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	32.9	33.2	33.6	34.4	33.2	36.5	35.7	36.7	34.2	39.5	35.4	37.7	35.3
Standard Deviation (weeks)	25.0	27.0	23.2	22.8	19.8	22.4	22.1	24.1	22.6	35.1	22.4	27.4	25.0

Source: Horizon and Picaso

Figure 5: Median and mean Time to Decision; June 2022 to May 2023



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 representations⁵, both types take roughly 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.

⁵ Written representations includes Rights of Way Schedule 14 appeals

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 May 2023 is 28 weeks. The median time for hearings over the 12 months to May 2023 is 52 weeks. The median time to decide for hearings over the 12 months to May 2023 was 53 weeks.

Table 6: Mean and Median Time to Decision, with Standard Deviation, by Procedure; June 2022 to May 2023

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

Note 2: The number of cases decided include TPOs which were excluded in previous publications – see the Background Quality report for more information

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

Measure	Procedure	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Total
Valid to Decision (median weeks)	WR	26.1	25.1	26.0	28.4	28.4	30.1	29.0	29.7	27.8	28.1	28.6	30.0	28.0
	HRG	61.0	58.2	63.0	41.1	40.9	51.0	54.4	60.0	45.8	48.0	36.9	57.0	52.1
	INQ	39.6	29.6	68.6	36.5	29.6	41.1	38.6	74.4	58.0	204.6	79.1	38.4	52.5
	All	27.0	25.9	26.9	29.0	28.7	30.7	30.4	31.1	28.7	29.3	29.1	30.1	29.0
Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	WR	29.7	30.3	30.6	32.8	32.5	34.8	32.7	33.3	31.9	34.1	33.7	34.4	32.6
	HRG	86.7	85.3	67.8	51.4	45.1	56.5	58.8	62.0	54.0	58.5	49.5	71.3	61.6
	INQ	51.3	58.6	67.6	62.3	44.3	58.4	42.1	73.6	76.0	139.2	79.6	71.2	73.3
	All	32.9	33.2	33.6	34.4	33.2	36.5	35.7	36.7	34.2	39.5	35.4	37.7	35.3
Standard Deviation (weeks)	WR	17.0	20.8	19.1	20.1	18.6	19.7	18.1	18.1	17.5	20.6	20.0	20.3	19.3
	HRG	61.7	55.6	43.1	31.5	24.8	34.7	35.6	31.3	38.4	42.1	30.1	53.0	42.6
	INQ	35.4	53.7	30.6	54.9	40.8	43.4	18.3	50.6	54.6	89.0	40.7	57.2	58.8
	All	25.0	27.0	23.2	22.8	19.8	22.4	22.1	24.1	22.6	35.1	22.4	27.4	25.0
Decisions	WR	1,101	1,337	1,354	1,171	1,373	1,457	1,339	1,329	1,496	1,532	1,225	1,315	16,029
	HRG	54	62	39	69	53	89	156	64	76	83	55	89	889
	INQ	34	26	80	24	31	32	46	76	46	67	28	40	530
	All	1,189	1,425	1,473	1,264	1,457	1,578	1,541	1,469	1,618	1,682	1,308	1,444	17,448

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 specialist⁶ 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 times for specialist cases. Table 7 and Figure 6 show the median time for planning cases has been 24 weeks and above for each of the last twelve months.

⁶ See the box in the section on Number of Decisions for what these categories of casework include.

Table 7: Decisions, Mean, Median and Standard Deviation of Time to Decision – Planning, Enforcement, Specialist Cases; June 2022 to May 2023

Casework Category	Measure	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Total
Planning Cases	Valid to Decision (median weeks)	26.0	25.0	25.1	27.0	27.4	29.1	28.9	28.3	26.1	26.1	26.9	28.7	27.0
	Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	29.3	29.1	28.7	30.8	30.6	33.0	31.4	31.5	30.7	31.5	32.2	33.4	31.1
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	17.8	20.4	17.7	18.2	15.9	17.6	16.0	16.3	17.8	18.6	20.0	22.3	18.3
Enforcement Cases	Valid to Decision (median weeks)	40.9	42.2	58.6	44.7	44.1	52.1	62.5	63.4	54.0	67.6	57.9	58.4	56.0
	Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	56.3	56.8	56.1	51.1	50.5	59.6	62.0	67.9	59.3	85.8	60.0	68.9	62.0
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	47.0	40.9	29.6	29.3	26.7	32.3	31.6	36.6	35.3	62.0	26.6	40.9	39.9
Specialist Cases	Valid to Decision (median weeks)	31.6	24.9	30.6	29.4	34.6	34.2	26.9	36.7	35.6	25.9	36.9	36.7	33.0
	Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	40.1	44.5	41.3	43.2	47.0	47.9	43.6	46.0	45.9	41.2	38.1	43.0	43.4
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	24.9	41.2	30.4	37.5	39.8	34.7	33.7	32.7	28.9	38.2	17.4	26.4	33.0

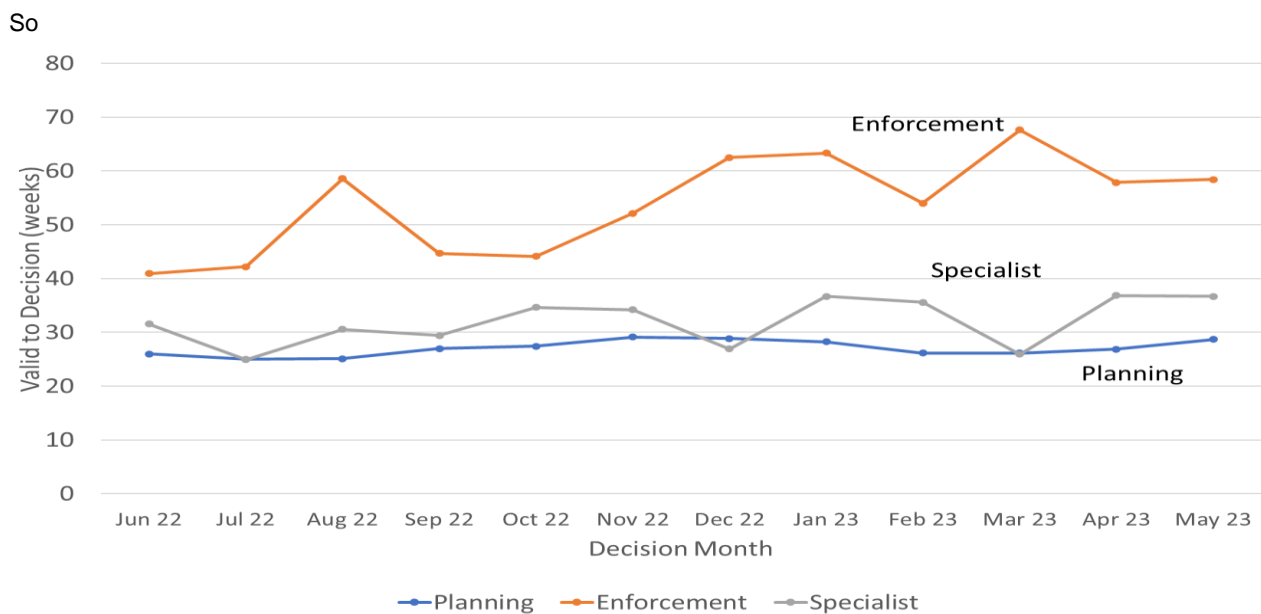
Source: Horizon and Picaso.

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 past 12 months had a median decision time of 56 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: June 2022 to May 2023



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 B⁷ 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 May 2023 is 29 weeks and the median time to decision for May 2023 was 29 weeks.

Table 8: Decisions, Mean and Median Time to Decision, Planning Inquiry Cases under Rosewell Process; June 2022 to May 2023

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

Measure	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Total
Decisions	21	13	18	11	22	19	38	22	15	18	9	20	226
Median (weeks)	31.0	23.3	26.0	28.6	25.9	29.4	38.6	28.6	31.7	29.4	24.9	28.6	29.2
Mean (weeks)	33.0	23.9	30.9	29.5	29.1	38.0	36.9	31.0	40.2	33.5	34.9	30.5	33.0
St. Dev. (weeks)	9.8	4.6	14.0	9.4	11.0	20.8	6.5	10.3	29.2	13.4	20.2	8.9	14.4

Most inquiry decisions now being issued are under the revised ‘Rosewell’⁸ 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; June 2022 to May 2023

Month	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Total
Decisions	1	2	3	0	1	1	1	3	5	3	3	0	23

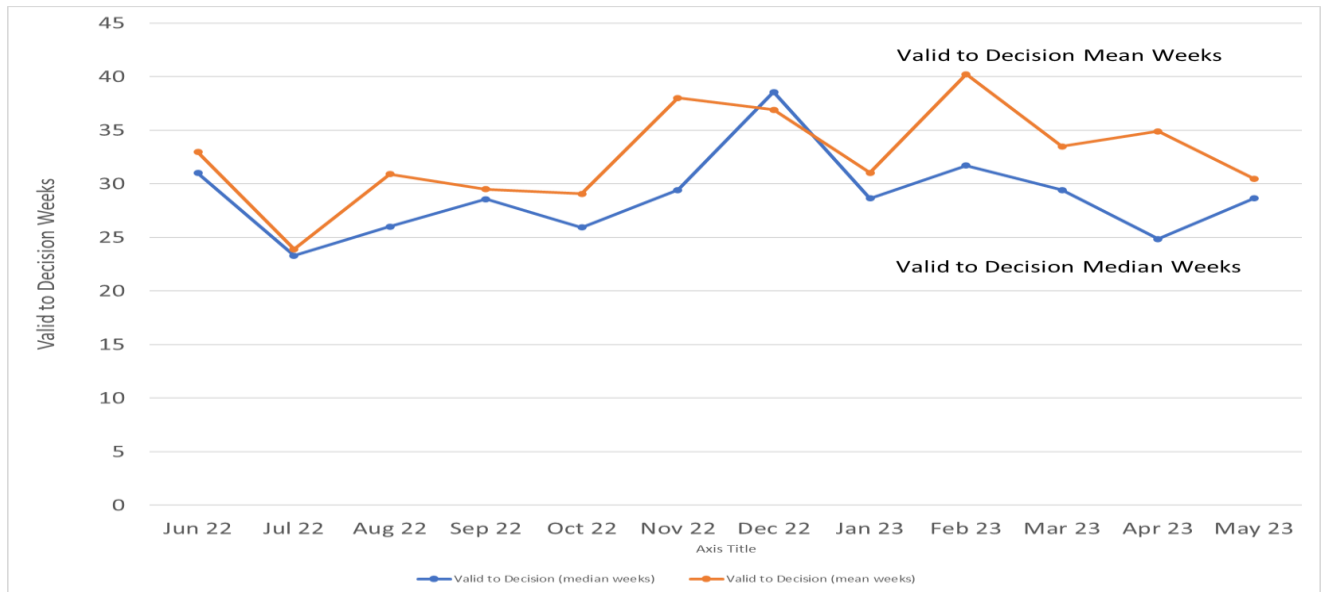
⁷ Data also published on gov.uk at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/appeals-average-timescales-for-arranging-inquiries-and-hearings>

⁸ 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>

Source: Horizon

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; June 2022 to May 2023



Source: Horizon

Open Cases

At the end of May 2023, the Planning Inspectorate had 14,649 cases open. 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 13,154 cases being handled through written representations; 788 through hearings; and 648 through inquiries, as well as 59 not currently allocated a procedure type. 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.

Table 10: Open cases by procedure and stage, as of end of May 2023

Stage	Written Representations	Hearings	Inquiries	Total
Cases received but yet to be deemed valid	2,371	22	9	2,404
Cases deemed valid but yet to 'start'	3,145	172	123	3,493
Case started but event (site visit/hearing/inquiry) has not yet happened	7,606	573	496	8,677
Event has happened/started but decision not yet issued	32	21	20	75
Total	13,154	788	648	14,649

Source: Horizon

Note 1 - there are 59 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.

Note 3: The number of open cases includes TPOs which were excluded in previous publications– see the Background Quality report for more information

Inspectors

Table 11 below shows the number of inspectors in the Planning Inspectorate in each month from June 2022 to May 2023⁹. 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 420 Planning Inspectors employed by the Inspectorate in April 2023 – with a full-time equivalent of 377.

Table 11: Planning Inspectors – Headcount and FTE; June 2022 to May 2023 (at end of month)

Month	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23
Headcount	371	378	376	388	391	390	390	406	409	421	419	420
FTE	331.5	337.7	335.0	346.2	348.9	348.3	348.3	363.2	365.3	377.4	375.5	376.8

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

⁹ Data as at the last day of the month.

employees (it does not include fixed term contract Inspectors or Planning and Appeal Decision Suppliers (previously referred to as 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 the number of cases have changed by more than five, or the timeliness measures have changed by greater than 0.5 weeks, this is indicated – more minor changes are made but not noted. The tables in this release give the most recent figures. Information about which tables this applies to, can be found in Annex C 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 July, September 2022 and April 2023 for inquiries decisions.

Procedure	Measure	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Total
Written Representations	Decisions	940	1,110	1,108	956	1,195	1,253	1,168	1,161	1,325	1,313	1,062	1,114	13,705
	Median Average Weeks	25.4	24.4	24.9	26.9	27.4	29.0	28.0	28.1	26.0	25.9	26.6	28.5	26.9
	Mean Average Weeks	27.7	26.9	27.9	30.1	30.3	32.3	30.3	30.9	29.9	30.6	31.5	31.9	30.1
	Standard Deviation	14.5	13.9	15.7	17.2	15.6	16.4	14.3	15.3	15.9	17.0	18.7	18.2	16.2
Hearings	Decisions	37	46	27	47	41	63	82	39	53	60	39	62	596
	Median Average Weeks	51.1	55.9	42.6	38.3	32.0	39.0	34.5	44.7	25.7	41.6	27.0	40.2	40.0
	Mean Average Weeks	66.4	81.2	55.4	45.8	39.7	44.8	43.1	48.5	42.3	48.2	42.7	61.4	50.9
	Standard Deviation	41.6	55.3	43.0	30.5	23.1	30.1	29.6	27.5	31.7	32.8	30.6	52.9	38.6
Inquires	Decisions	22	15	21	11	23	20	39	25	20	21	12	20	249
	Median Average Weeks	31.1	24.0	26.0	28.6	25.9	29.4	38.6	29.7	32.5	31.1	28.8	28.6	29.9
	Mean Average Weeks	34.6	29.4	37.5	29.5	28.5	41.2	38.6	35.6	55.5	42.0	56.6	30.5	38.0
	Standard Deviation	12.0	14.8	27.2	9.4	11.1	24.6	12.4	19.2	41.4	30.9	43.9	8.9	24.4
All Planning Cases	Decisions	999	1,171	1,156	1,014	1,259	1,336	1,289	1,225	1,398	1,394	1,113	1,196	14,550
	Median Average Weeks	26.0	25.0	25.1	27.0	27.4	29.1	28.9	28.3	26.1	26.1	26.9	28.7	27.0
	Mean Average Weeks	29.3	29.1	28.7	30.8	30.6	33.0	31.4	31.5	30.7	31.5	32.2	33.4	31.1
	Standard Deviation	17.8	20.4	17.7	18.2	15.9	17.6	16.0	16.3	17.8	18.6	20.0	22.3	18.3

Enforcement

Note: where there are fewer than 20 decisions, the measures mean, median and standard deviation are less meaningful. This applies to all months for hearing other than November and December 2022 and March and May 2023 and all months for inquiry decisions other than August 2022 and January, February and March 2023.

Procedure	Measure	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Total
Written Representations	Decisions	119	153	164	159	128	145	118	122	130	176	114	112	1,640
	Median Average Weeks	37.3	39.6	40.0	44.4	39.7	49.3	53.8	53.5	47.9	58.1	53.1	56.7	48.3
	Mean Average Weeks	43.1	53.0	46.3	48.1	49.0	54.1	54.1	56.7	50.6	60.7	53.6	56.6	52.2
	Standard Deviation	24.2	36.3	25.3	23.4	26.9	28.5	27.8	23.6	20.5	24.8	22.0	24.5	26.5
Hearings	Decisions	11	10	6	14	11	20	71	15	17	21	12	24	232
	Median Average Weeks	223.7	75.0	99.6	39.7	53.7	93.0	68.1	74.7	73.6	69.3	69.9	78.9	69.3
	Mean Average Weeks	165.3	107.1	101.1	57.5	64.6	85.5	75.2	80.8	87.9	84.1	70.5	96.0	84.8
	Standard Deviation	70.8	64.4	25.4	30.0	22.2	19.6	33.1	22.3	40.8	50.1	17.8	47.9	44.4
Inquires	Decisions	8	3	54	11	3	9	3	47	22	41	14	14	229
	Median Average Weeks	96.1	52.7	68.6	62.3	67.6	58.6	45.1	82.0	72.6	224.3	114.2	149.3	82.0
	Mean Average Weeks	103.3	81.7	80.9	85.9	61.2	89.2	63.4	92.9	89.0	194.1	103.3	120.8	109.1
	Standard Deviation	35.9	43.7	22.2	62.5	12.2	57.6	28.7	51.4	61.9	62.9	23.2	63.3	64.1
All Enforcement Cases	Decisions	138	166	224	184	142	174	192	184	169	238	140	150	2,101
	Median Average Weeks	40.9	42.2	58.6	44.7	44.1	52.1	62.5	63.4	54.0	67.6	57.9	58.4	56.0
	Mean Average Weeks	56.3	56.8	56.1	51.1	50.5	59.6	62.0	67.9	59.3	85.8	60.0	68.9	62.0
	Standard Deviation	47.0	40.9	29.6	29.3	26.7	32.3	31.6	36.6	35.3	62.0	26.6	40.9	39.9

Specialist

Note 1: 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: The number of cases decided include TPOs which were excluded in previous publications – see the Background Quality report for more information

Procedure	Measure	Jun 22	Jul 22	Aug 22	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Total
Written Representations	Decisions	42	74	82	56	50	59	53	46	41	43	49	89	684
	Median Average Weeks	26.4	23.1	27.5	25.9	33.7	31.3	26.9	30.8	31.4	24.0	35.0	34.6	29.5
	Mean Average Weeks	36.1	35.0	37.2	36.3	41.0	41.9	38.7	33.5	37.8	32.0	36.3	38.5	37.1
	Standard Deviation	24.6	30.3	27.6	33.2	30.6	29.5	29.8	20.4	20.9	22.9	16.4	22.4	26.6
Hearings	Decisions	6	6	6	8	1	6	3	10	6	2	4	3	61
	Median Average Weeks	71.4	76.4	82.6	67.5	50.4	60.6	85.1	88.5	53.9	99.1	42.6	77.9	72.0
	Mean Average Weeks	68.0	80.7	90.5	73.5	50.4	83.6	101.4	86.6	61.3	99.1	52.6	78.6	78.0
	Standard Deviation	12.0	24.4	28.4	27.5	0.0	45.5	33.5	27.1	23.2	55.9	23.2	11.3	31.5
Inquires	Decisions	4	8	5	2	5	3	4	4	4	5	2	6	52
	Median Average Weeks	43.9	133.2	35.6	112.9	126.7	91.1	48.1	73.8	111.6	92.7	51.9	97.5	72.6
	Mean Average Weeks	39.1	104.7	50.4	112.9	106.9	80.0	60.0	85.0	106.1	97.1	51.9	91.3	84.4
	Standard Deviation	13.6	65.7	22.5	51.2	66.6	27.6	31.1	41.7	26.3	60.5	3.0	23.6	50.3
All Specialist Cases	Decisions	52	88	93	66	56	68	60	60	51	50	55	98	797
	Median Average Weeks	31.6	24.9	30.6	29.4	34.6	34.2	26.9	36.7	35.6	25.9	36.9	36.7	33.0
	Mean Average Weeks	40.1	44.5	41.3	43.2	47.0	47.9	43.6	46.0	45.9	41.2	38.1	43.0	43.4
	Standard Deviation	24.9	41.2	30.4	37.5	39.8	34.7	33.7	32.7	28.9	38.2	17.4	26.4	33.0

Annex B – Detailed Information on timeliness (May 2023)

The information below is published today on the number and length of decisions made in May 2023¹⁰:

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

Casework Type	Procedure Type	Median (weeks)	Mean (weeks)	Decisions
s78 planning appeals	Written Representations	32.0	36.8	669
	Hearings	40.2	61.4	62
	Inquiries	28.0	28.6	18
Householder appeals	Written Representations	17.0	21.2	360
Enforcement appeals	Written Representations	56.7	56.6	112
	Hearings	78.9	96.0	24
	Inquiries	149.3	120.8	14

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:

	s78 planning appeals			Householder appeals
	Written Representations	Hearings	Inquiries	
Weeks between valid date & start date				
Median (average)	14.3	4.2	3.1	8.4
Mean (average)	14.5	6.2	3.6	9.1
Cases that started in May 2023	658	38	23	268
Weeks between start date & event date				
Median (average)	11.1	12.9	14.6	7.7
Mean (average)	16.3	21.6	16.7	10.3
Cases where an event occurred during May 2023	753	47	19	350
Weeks between event date & decision date				
Median (average)	5.1	5.2	9.0	3.0
Mean (average)	6.3	9.4	9.6	3.9
Cases that have been decided in May 2023	612	48	17	357

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.

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
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¹⁰ Also published on gov.uk here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/appeals-average-timescales-for-arranging-inquiries-and-hearings>

	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.

Open case numbers have been revised for each of the eleven months June 2022- April 2023. This is because open case counts had previously excluded TPO (tree reservation order) cases. More information is available in the accompanying Background Quality Report.

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: December 2022
Table 2	Closed: March 2023 Open Cases: June, July, August, September, October, November and December 2022 and January, February, March and April 2023.
Table 3	Decisions: February and March 2023.
Table 6	Valid to Decision Median weeks: February 2023.
Table 7	Valid to Decision Median Weeks Enforcement: February 2023 Valid to Decision Mean Weeks: Specialist: March 2023
Annex A	Mean Valid to Decision Weeks Specialist Written Representations: March 2023; Median and Mean Valid to Decisions Specialist Casework Hearings: February 2023; Standard Deviation Specialist Hearings: February 2023.

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 appellants.
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>
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>

Term	Explanation
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 (includes Rights of Way Schedule 14)	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>