



# The Planning Inspectorate

## Official Statistics 21<sup>st</sup> September 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 September 2022 to August 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 and 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 August was 31 weeks.

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

Procedure type	Last 12 months	August 2023
Written Representations	30 weeks	31 weeks
Hearings	45 weeks	29 weeks
Inquiries	49 weeks	28 weeks
All Cases	30 weeks	31 weeks

The median time for planning cases was 29 weeks in August 2023. The the 12 month median being 28 weeks.

Enforcement decisions made in August 2023 had a median decision time of 50 weeks, with the 12 month median being 55 weeks.

The median time for planning appeals decided by inquiry under the Rosewell Process over the 12 months to August 2023 is 30 weeks.

### Decisions

The Planning Inspectorate made 17,856 appeal decisions<sup>1</sup> in the last 12 months, an average of 1,488 per month. The number of decisions in August 2023 was 1,479.

There were 1,392 written representations decisions in August 2023 and 16,448 in the last 12 months.

There were 924 decisions made on hearings during the last 12 months, and during August 2023, 62 decisions were issued.

There were 484 decisions made on inquiries during the last 12 months, with 25 in August 2023.

### Planning Inspectors

There were 435 Planning Inspectors employed by the Inspectorate at the end of August 2023.

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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

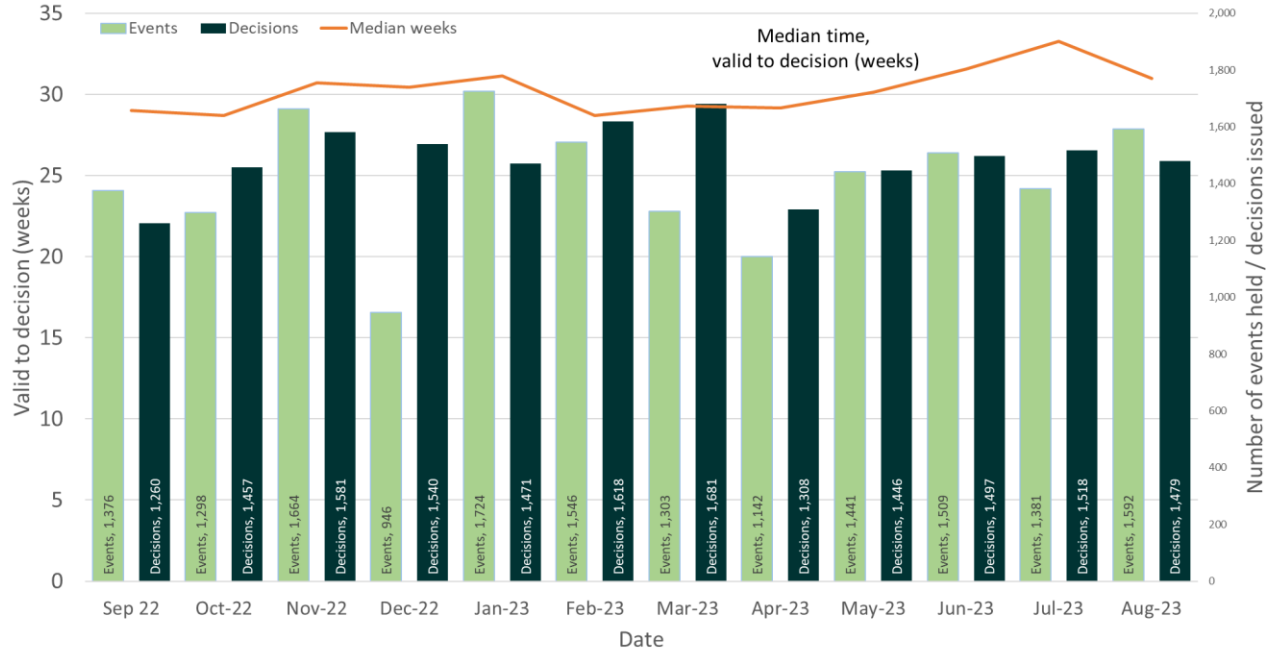
The number of decisions issued in August 2023 was 1,479, with a monthly average of 1,488 over the past 12 months.

The number of events recorded for August 2023 was 1,592, the average over the past 12 months was 1,410.

The median valid to decision time was 31 weeks in August 2023, as seen in Figure 1 and Table 1 below. The median valid to decision time has fallen for the first time in the past 3 months (2.3 weeks lower than in July).

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 for December and April.

Figure 1: Number of events held<sup>2</sup>, decisions issued and median time between valid date & decision date; September 2022 to August 2023.



Source: Horizon

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

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

Month	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Total
Events Held	1,376	1,298	1,664	946	1,724	1,546	1,303	1,142	1,441	1,509	1,381	1,592	16,922
Decisions	1,260	1,457	1,581	1,540	1,471	1,618	1,681	1,308	1,446	1,497	1,518	1,479	17,856
Median	29.0	28.7	30.7	30.4	31.1	28.7	29.3	29.1	30.1	31.6	33.3	31.0	30.3

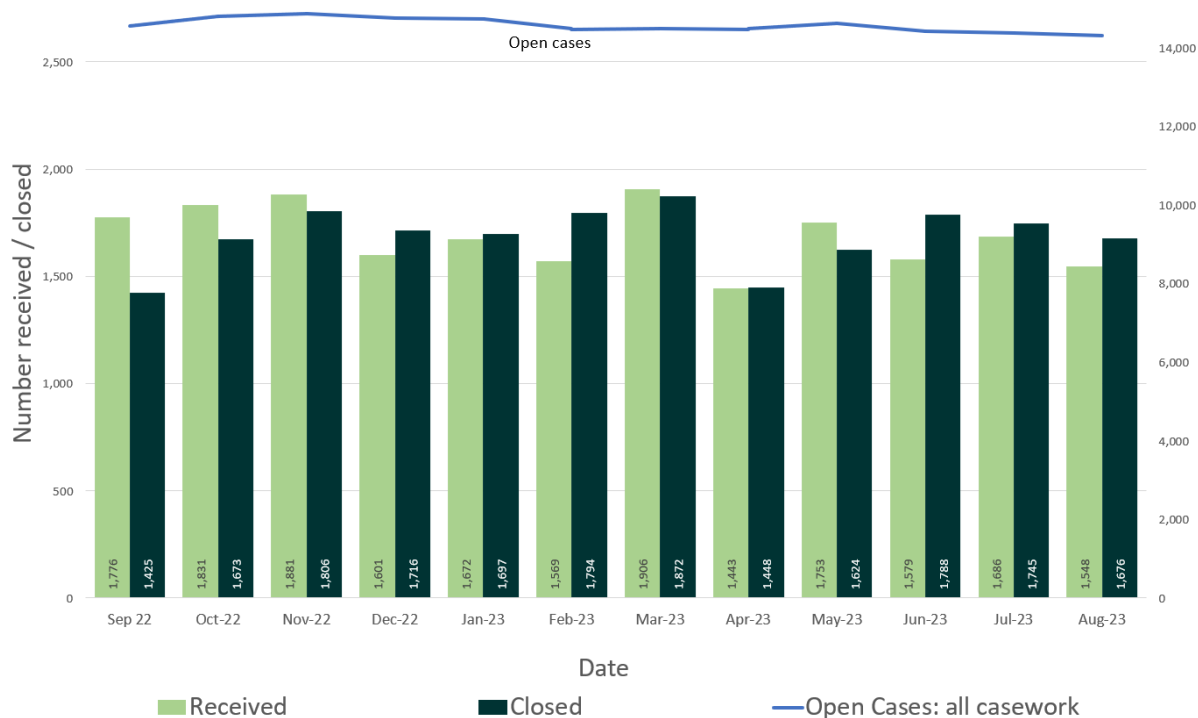
Source: Horizon

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

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.

<sup>2</sup> A site visit, hearing, or inquiry.

Figure 2: Number of cases received, closed and open; September 2022 to August 2023.



Source: Horizon

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.

Table 2: Number of cases received, closed and open; September 2022 to August 2023.

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

Month	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Total
Received	1,776	1,831	1,881	1,601	1,672	1,569	1,906	1,443	1,753	1,579	1,686	1,548	20,245
Closed	1,425	1,673	1,806	1,716	1,697	1,794	1,872	1,448	1,624	1,788	1,745	1,676	20,264
Open	14,552	14,792	14,858	14,746	14,734	14,490	14,495	14,487	14,610	14,415	14,371	14,312	

Source: Horizon

## Number of Decisions

The Planning Inspectorate has made 17,856 appeal decisions<sup>3</sup> in the last 12 months. There were 1,479 cases decided in July 2023.

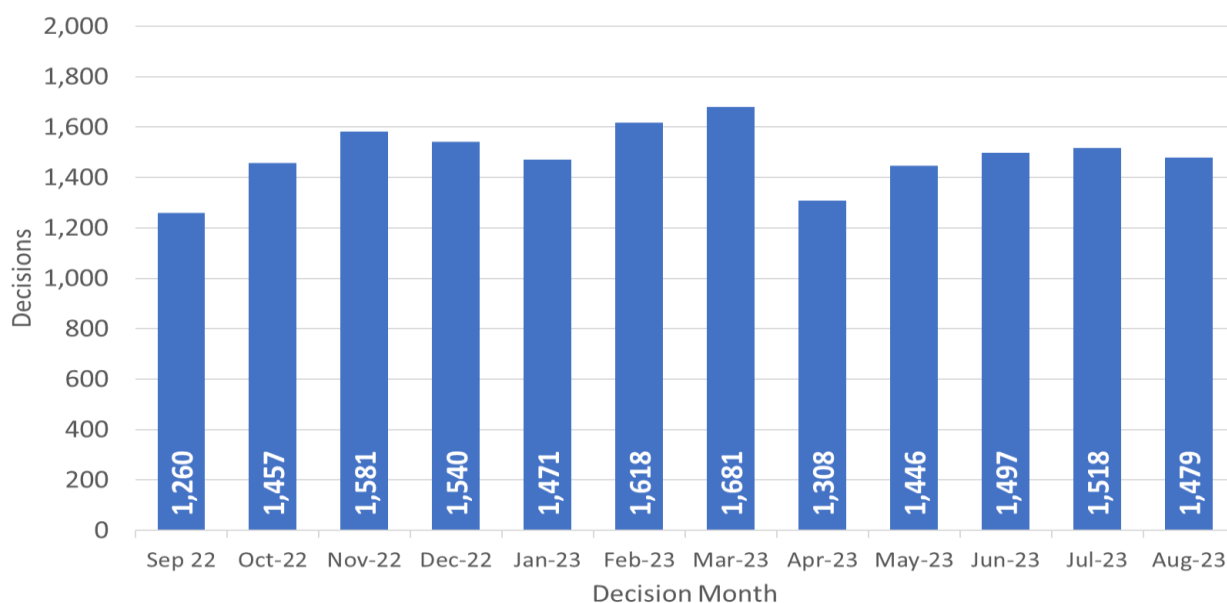
Table 3 below shows the monthly breakdown with fewer decisions for the months of September 2022 and April 2023.

Table 3: Appeal Decisions; September 2022 to August 2023.

Month	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Total
Decisions	1,260	1,457	1,581	1,540	1,471	1,618	1,681	1,308	1,446	1,497	1,518	1,479	17,856

Source: Horizon

Figure 3 – Appeal Decisions; September 2022 to August 2023.



Source: Horizon

### 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>4</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 over the past 12 months (16,448) were made on written representations. This is 92% of all appeal decisions made. Table 4 shows that written representation decisions have varied from around 1,150 to over 1,500 per month over the past 12 months. There were 1,392 decisions in August 2023.

<sup>3</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.

<sup>4</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)

There were 924 decisions made on hearings during the last 12 months, the monthly average being 77. During August 2023 62 decisions were issued. In August 2023 25 decisions were made for inquiries. Decisions for inquiries since August 2022 have ranged between 24 and 79.

Table 4: Appeal Decisions by Procedure and Casework Category; September 2022 to August 2023.

Month	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Total
Written Representations	1,168	1,373	1,459	1,337	1,328	1,495	1,530	1,223	1,316	1,409	1,418	1,392	16,448
Hearings	68	53	90	156	64	77	83	57	90	59	65	62	924
Inquiries	24	31	32	47	79	46	68	28	40	29	35	25	484
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,260</b>	<b>1,457</b>	<b>1,581</b>	<b>1,540</b>	<b>1,471</b>	<b>1,618</b>	<b>1,681</b>	<b>1,308</b>	<b>1,446</b>	<b>1,497</b>	<b>1,518</b>	<b>1,479</b>	<b>17,856</b>
Month	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Total
Planning	1,010	1,259	1,336	1,289	1,228	1,397	1,391	1,111	1,197	1,262	1,260	1,261	15,001
Enforcement	183	142	174	192	184	169	237	140	150	174	207	193	2,145
Specialist	67	56	71	59	59	52	53	57	99	61	51	25	710
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,260</b>	<b>1,457</b>	<b>1,581</b>	<b>1,540</b>	<b>1,471</b>	<b>1,618</b>	<b>1,681</b>	<b>1,308</b>	<b>1,446</b>	<b>1,497</b>	<b>1,518</b>	<b>1,479</b>	<b>17,856</b>

Source: Horizon

**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.

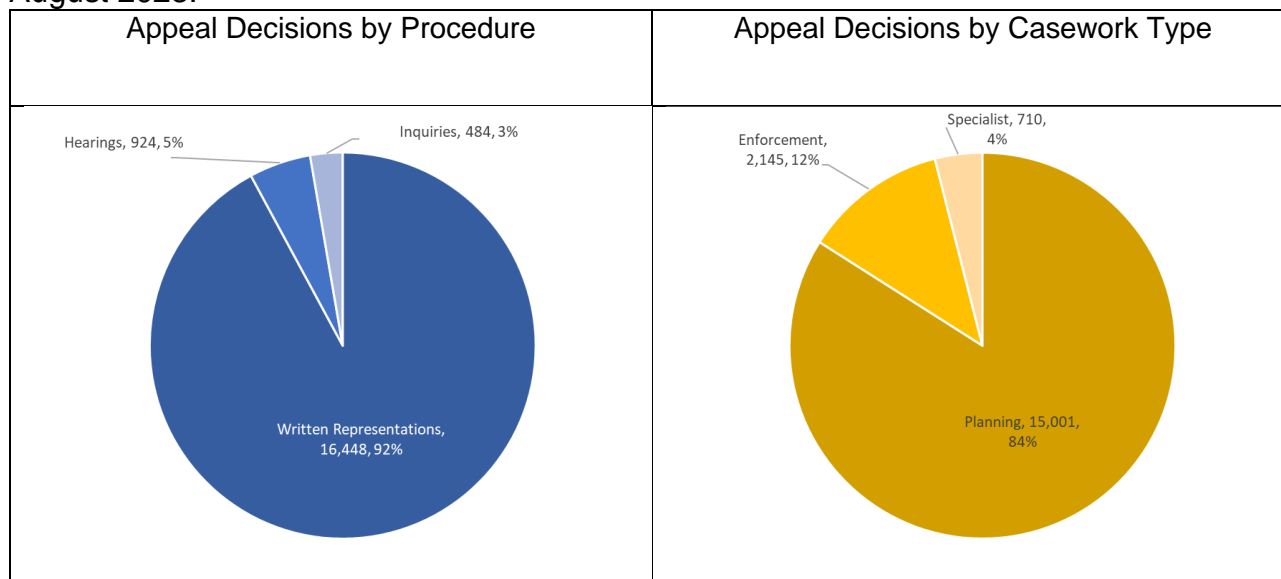
**What are Enforcement cases?** Enforcement covers enforcement appeals (i.e., appeals against the issue of an enforcement notice served by a local planning authority for alleged breaches of planning control), enforcement listed building notice appeals and lawful development certificate appeals.

**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 (15,001). This is about 84% of all appeal decisions made. There were 2,145 enforcement decisions and 710 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 179. Specialist casework figures continue to vary each month, from a high of 99 in May 2023 to a low of 25 in August 2023.

Figure 4 – Appeal Decisions by Procedure and Casework Category; September 2022 to August 2023.



Source: Horizon

## 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 30 weeks; and 31 weeks for August 2023. Figure 5 shows the median has been between 29 and 33 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. This means that any delay in 'validating' the appeal is included in the time to make a decision.

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.

Table 5 also shows the mean decision time for the last 12 months is 36 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.

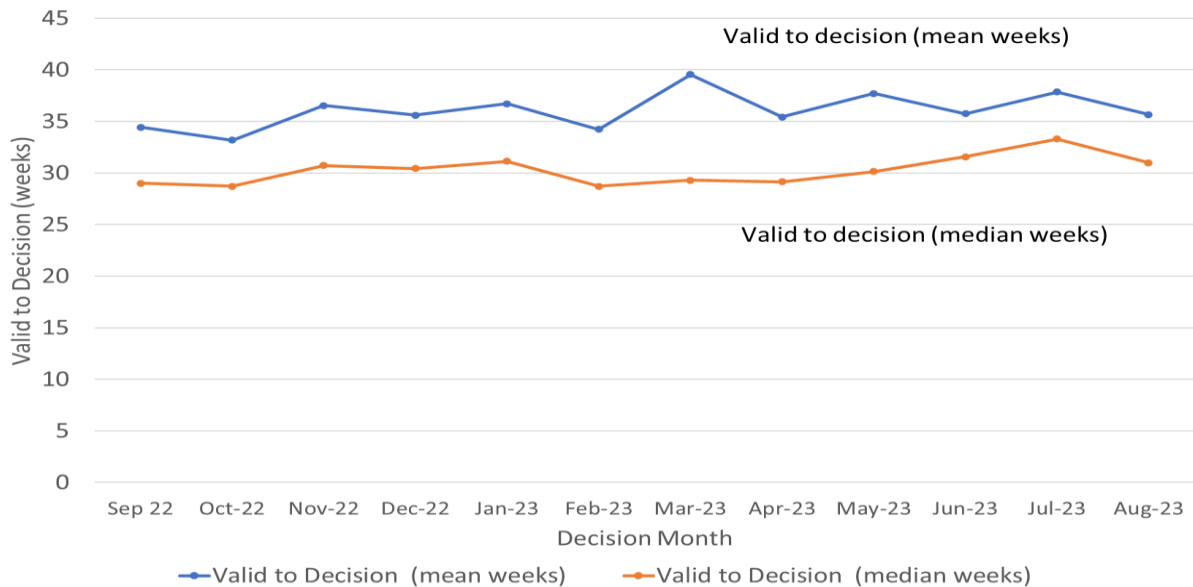
What are mean, median, and standard deviation?	
Measure	Definition
Mean	The total time taken divided by the number of cases. Also referred to as the 'average'. A measure of how long each case would take, if the total time taken was spread evenly across all cases.
Median	This is the time taken by the '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; September 2022 to August 2023.

Month	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Total
Valid to Decision (median weeks)	29.0	28.7	30.7	30.4	31.1	28.7	29.3	29.1	30.1	31.6	33.3	31.0	30.3
Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	34.4	33.2	36.5	35.6	36.7	34.2	39.5	35.4	37.7	35.7	37.9	35.7	36.1
Standard Deviation (weeks)	22.8	19.8	22.4	21.9	24.1	22.8	35.1	22.5	27.4	20.4	21.8	20.4	24.0

Source: Horizon

Figure 5: Median and mean Time to Decision; September 2022 to August 2023.



Source: Horizon

### Procedure Type

Table 6 below shows decision timeliness broken down by the procedure type. Hearings and inquires take longer than written representations<sup>5</sup>, both types have taken roughly twice as long on average across the last 12 months. Because 19 of every 20 cases are by written

<sup>5</sup> Written representations includes Rights of Way Schedule 14 appeals



representation, the timeliness measures for written representations are similar to the measure across all cases.

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

Median times are less affected by 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 2023 is 30 weeks. The median time for hearings over the 12 months to August 2023 is 45 weeks. The median time to decide for inquiries over the 12 months to August 2023 was 49 weeks.

**Table 6: Mean and Median Time to Decision, with Standard Deviation, by Procedure; September 2022 to August 2023.**

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

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

Measure	Procedure	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Total
Valid to Decision (median weeks)	WR	28.5	28.4	30.1	29.0	29.7	27.7	28.1	28.6	29.9	31.4	33.1	31.0	29.7
	HRG	41.4	40.9	51.1	54.4	60.0	45.0	48.0	37.6	56.8	33.7	30.4	29.1	45.3
	INQ	36.5	29.6	41.1	38.6	73.3	58.0	179.6	79.1	38.4	33.7	42.7	27.6	48.5
	All	29.0	28.7	30.7	30.4	31.1	28.7	29.3	29.1	30.1	31.6	33.3	31.0	30.3
Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	WR	32.8	32.5	34.8	32.7	33.3	32.0	34.1	33.7	34.4	35.0	36.8	34.8	33.9
	HRG	51.7	45.1	56.7	58.7	62.0	53.6	58.5	50.7	70.7	44.3	51.2	49.2	55.6
	INQ	62.3	44.3	58.4	42.4	72.8	76.0	137.8	79.6	71.2	56.2	55.9	47.9	72.7
	All	34.4	33.2	36.5	35.6	36.7	34.2	39.5	35.4	37.7	35.7	37.9	35.7	36.1
Standard Deviation (weeks)	WR	20.1	18.6	19.7	17.9	18.1	17.8	20.7	20.0	20.3	19.0	20.0	18.1	19.3
	HRG	31.6	24.8	34.5	35.7	31.3	38.3	42.1	30.2	53.0	29.1	37.1	40.4	37.8
	INQ	54.9	40.8	43.4	18.2	49.8	54.6	89.1	40.7	57.2	40.1	35.2	39.7	60.6
	All	22.8	19.8	22.4	21.9	24.1	22.8	35.1	22.5	27.4	20.4	21.8	20.4	24.0
Decisions	WR	1,168	1,373	1,459	1,337	1,328	1,495	1,530	1,223	1,316	1,409	1,418	1,392	16,448
	HRG	68	53	90	156	64	77	83	57	90	59	65	62	924
	INQ	24	31	32	47	79	46	68	28	40	29	35	25	484
	All	1,260	1,457	1,581	1,540	1,471	1,618	1,681	1,308	1,446	1,497	1,518	1,479	17,856

Source: Horizon

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>6</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 times for specialist cases. Table 7 and Figure 6 show the median time for planning cases has been 26 weeks and above for each of the last twelve months.

**Table 7: Decisions, Mean, Median and Standard Deviation of Time to Decision – Planning, Enforcement, Specialist Cases; September 2022 to August 2023.**

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

Casework Category	Measure	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Total
Planning Cases	Valid to Decision (median weeks)	27.0	27.4	29.1	28.9	28.3	26.1	26.1	26.7	28.7	29.9	31.6	29.0	28.3
	Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	30.8	30.6	33.0	31.4	31.6	30.7	31.5	32.1	33.4	32.5	34.9	32.7	32.1
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	18.3	15.9	17.6	16.0	16.3	17.8	18.6	20.0	22.3	17.5	19.8	17.4	18.2
Enforcement Cases	Valid to Decision (median weeks)	45.0	44.1	52.1	62.5	63.4	54.1	67.7	57.9	58.4	53.1	53.3	50.0	55.1
	Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	51.3	50.5	59.6	62.0	67.9	60.1	86.0	60.0	68.9	55.9	53.5	54.5	61.5
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	29.1	26.7	32.3	31.6	36.6	36.1	62.0	26.6	40.9	21.1	22.3	26.6	36.7
Specialist Cases	Valid to Decision (median weeks)	29.4	34.6	34.7	26.9	36.9	38.2	28.7	37.6	35.1	32.9	40.1	34.6	34.6
	Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	42.9	47.0	47.9	41.8	46.2	45.9	42.3	39.7	42.6	44.6	47.2	41.9	44.2
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	37.3	39.8	34.3	31.3	32.9	28.6	37.9	19.2	26.4	33.8	35.2	24.9	32.5

Source: Horizon

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.

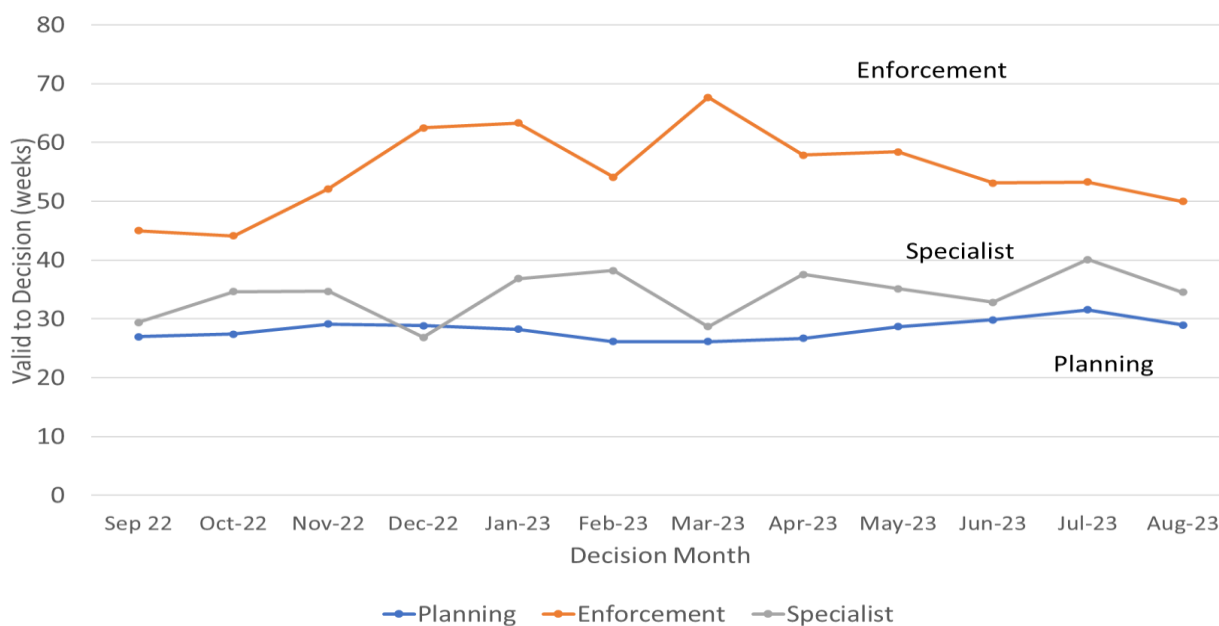
Enforcement decisions made in the past 12 months had a median decision time of 55 weeks.

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 2022 to August**

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

2023.



Source: Horizon

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>7</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 2023 is 30 weeks and the median time to decision for August 2023 was 25 weeks.

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

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

Measure	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Total
Decisions	11	22	19	39	25	15	18	9	20	17	16	21	232
Median (weeks)	28.6	25.9	29.4	38.6	30.0	31.7	29.4	24.9	28.6	30.0	26.3	25.3	29.9
Mean (weeks)	29.5	29.1	38.0	37.4	33.5	40.2	33.5	34.9	30.5	34.3	30.6	33.5	34.0
St. Dev. (weeks)	9.4	11.0	20.8	7.0	11.7	29.2	13.4	20.2	8.9	25.8	12.0	16.8	16.2

Most inquiry decisions now being issued are under the revised ‘Rosewell’<sup>8</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 2022 to August 2023.

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

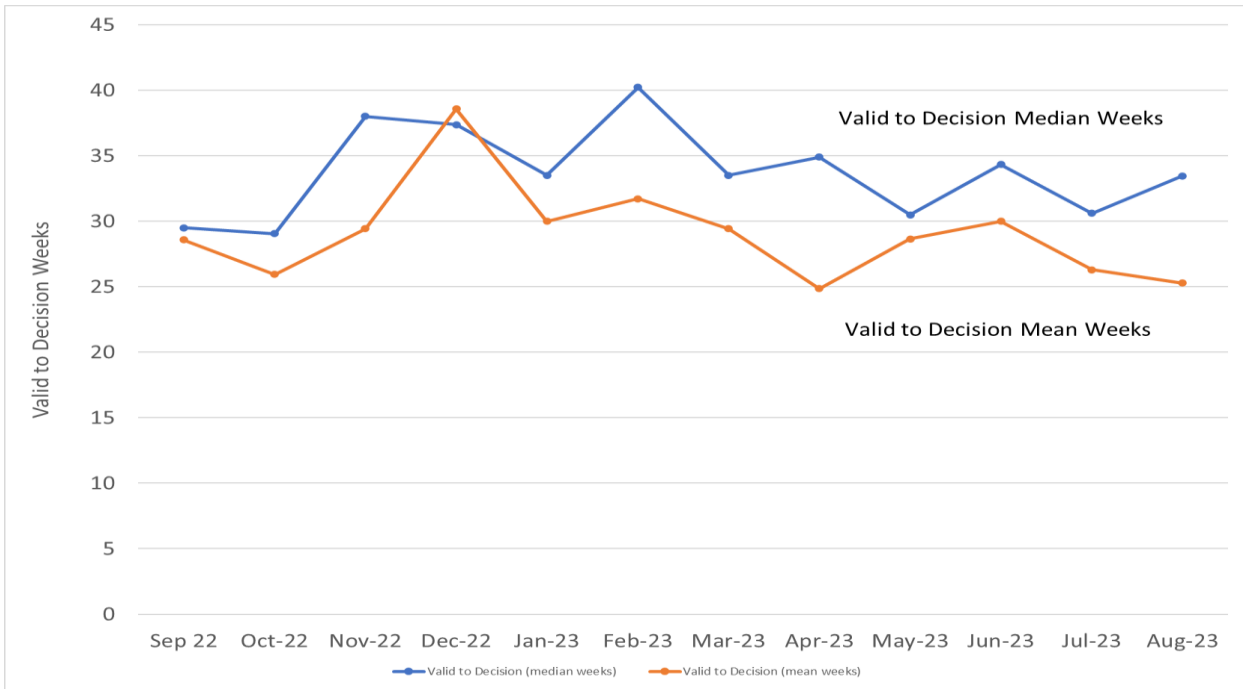
<sup>8</sup> The ‘Rosewell’ process introduced changes to how the inquiry event date was agreed and a firm timetable for submission of documentation. Further information on what the Rosewell Review concluded is at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-review-of-planning-appeal-inquiries-report>

Month	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Total
Decisions	0	1	1	1	3	5	3	3	0	0	2	0	19

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; September 2022 to August 2023.



Source: Horizon

## Open Cases

At the end of July 2023, the Planning Inspectorate had 14,312 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 12,866 cases being handled through written representations; 766 through hearings; and 630 through inquiries, as well as 50 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 August 2023

Stage	Written Representations	Hearings	Inquiries	Total
Cases received but yet to be deemed valid	2,835	35	3	2,875
Cases deemed valid but yet to 'start'	2,320	136	96	2,597
Case started but event (site visit/hearing/inquiry) has not yet happened	7,697	583	518	8,799
Event has happened/started but decision not yet issued	14	12	13	41
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,866</b>	<b>766</b>	<b>630</b>	<b>14,312</b>

Source: Horizon

Note 1 - there are 50 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 2022 to August 2023<sup>9</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 435 Planning Inspectors employed by the Inspectorate in August 2023 – with a full-time equivalent of 391.

Table 11: Planning Inspectors – Headcount and FTE; September 2022 to August 2023. (at end of month)

Month	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23
Headcount	388	391	390	390	406	409	421	419	420	426	437	435
FTE	346.2	348.9	348.3	348.3	363.2	365.3	377.4	375.5	376.8	381.9	392.4	391.4

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 Planning and Appeal Decision Suppliers, previously referred to as non-salaried Inspectors).

<sup>9</sup> Data as at the last day of the month.

## 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 September 2022, April, June and July 2023 for inquiries decisions.

Procedure	Measure	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Total
Written Representations	Decisions	953	1195	1253	1167	1161	1323	1310	1060	1115	1193	1192	1190	14112
	Median Average Weeks	26.9	27.4	29.0	28.0	28.1	26.0	25.9	26.6	28.6	29.9	31.9	29.1	28.1
	Mean Average Weeks	30.1	30.3	32.3	30.3	30.9	29.8	30.6	31.5	31.9	32.0	34.3	32.2	31.4
	Standard Deviation	17.2	15.6	16.4	14.3	15.3	15.9	17.0	18.7	18.2	16.5	18.1	15.7	16.6
Hearings	Decisions	46	41	63	82	39	54	60	39	62	52	50	50	638
	Median Average Weeks	38.6	32.0	39.0	34.3	44.7	25.4	41.6	27.0	40.2	31.5	25.6	26.3	31.9
	Mean Average Weeks	46.1	39.7	44.8	42.9	48.5	41.9	48.2	42.7	61.4	42.9	50.2	43.4	46.3
	Standard Deviation	30.8	23.1	30.1	29.6	27.5	31.5	32.8	30.6	52.9	29.5	40.3	39.3	34.9
Inquires	Decisions	11	23	20	40	28	20	21	12	20	17	18	21	251
	Median Average Weeks	28.6	25.9	29.4	38.6	30.0	32.5	31.1	28.8	28.6	30.0	28.6	25.3	30.1
	Mean Average Weeks	29.5	28.5	41.2	39.0	37.3	55.5	42.0	56.6	30.5	34.3	36.3	33.5	38.4
	Standard Deviation	9.4	11.1	24.6	12.5	18.8	41.4	30.9	43.9	8.9	25.8	19.9	16.8	24.5
All Planning Cases	Decisions	1010	1259	1336	1289	1228	1397	1391	1111	1197	1262	1260	1261	15001
	Median Average Weeks	27.0	27.4	29.1	28.9	28.3	26.1	26.1	26.7	28.7	29.9	31.6	29.0	28.3
	Mean Average Weeks	30.8	30.6	33.0	31.4	31.6	30.7	31.5	32.1	33.4	32.5	34.9	32.7	32.1
	Standard Deviation	18.3	15.9	17.6	16.0	16.3	17.8	18.6	20.0	22.3	17.5	19.8	17.4	18.2

## 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 January, February and March 2023.

Procedure	Measure	Sep 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Total
Written Representations	Decisions	158	128	145	118	122	130	175	114	112	161	184	181	1728
	Median Average Weeks	44.7	39.7	49.3	53.8	53.5	48.2	58.1	53.1	56.7	52.9	52.4	48.7	51.4
	Mean Average Weeks	48.4	49.0	54.1	54.1	56.7	51.6	60.9	53.6	56.6	54.1	52.1	52.0	53.6
	Standard Deviation	23.2	26.9	28.5	27.8	23.6	22.6	24.7	22.0	24.5	17.6	21.3	22.4	24.0
Hearings	Decisions	14	11	20	71	15	17	21	12	24	6	11	9	231
	Median Average Weeks	39.7	53.7	93.0	68.1	74.7	73.6	69.3	69.9	78.9	50.5	34.0	58.3	68.1
	Mean Average Weeks	57.5	64.6	85.5	75.2	80.8	87.9	84.1	70.5	96.0	56.6	50.4	74.8	76.9
	Standard Deviation	30.0	22.2	19.6	33.1	22.3	40.8	50.1	17.8	47.9	25.1	24.8	40.6	36.5
Inquires	Decisions	11	3	9	3	47	22	41	14	14	7	12	3	186
	Median Average Weeks	62.3	67.6	58.6	45.1	82.0	72.6	224.3	114.2	149.3	101.3	80.1	146.1	82.4
	Mean Average Weeks	85.9	61.2	89.2	63.4	92.9	89.0	194.1	103.3	120.8	98.2	78.6	146.1	116.2
	Standard Deviation	62.5	12.2	57.6	28.7	51.4	61.9	62.9	23.2	63.3	39.2	19.8	0.0	68.6
All Enforcement Cases	Decisions	183	142	174	192	184	169	237	140	150	174	207	193	2145
	Median Average Weeks	45.0	44.1	52.1	62.5	63.4	54.1	67.7	57.9	58.4	53.1	53.3	50.0	55.1
	Mean Average Weeks	51.3	50.5	59.6	62.0	67.9	60.1	86.0	60.0	68.9	55.9	53.5	54.5	61.5
	Standard Deviation	29.1	26.7	32.3	31.6	36.6	36.1	62.0	26.6	40.9	21.1	22.3	26.6	36.7

## 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 22	Oct 22	Nov 22	Dec 22	Jan 23	Feb 23	Mar 23	Apr 23	May 23	Jun 23	Jul 23	Aug 23	Total
Written Representations	Decisions	57	50	61	52	45	42	45	49	89	55	42	21	608
	Median Average Weeks	25.9	33.7	31.3	26.9	30.3	31.9	24.3	35.0	34.1	31.4	35.0	24.3	31.0
	Mean Average Weeks	36.1	41.0	41.7	36.6	33.5	38.0	33.6	36.3	38.3	42.2	42.4	37.1	38.2
	Standard Deviation	33.0	30.6	29.1	26.2	20.6	20.7	24.3	16.4	22.4	33.8	30.9	24.1	26.8
Hearings	Decisions	8	1	7	3	10	6	2	6	4	1	4	3	55
	Median Average Weeks	67.5	50.4	66.3	85.1	88.5	53.9	99.1	65.2	71.5	38.9	63.5	63.9	70.9
	Mean Average Weeks	73.5	50.4	82.0	101.4	86.6	61.3	99.1	63.4	64.4	38.9	66.6	70.2	74.6
	Standard Deviation	27.5	0.0	42.3	33.5	27.1	23.2	55.9	24.3	26.4	0.0	11.3	9.1	31.8
Inquires	Decisions	2	5	3	4	4	4	6	2	6	5	5	1	47
	Median Average Weeks	112.9	126.7	91.1	48.1	73.8	111.6	69.9	51.9	97.5	68.3	42.7	57.3	68.3
	Mean Average Weeks	112.9	106.9	80.0	60.0	85.0	106.1	88.7	51.9	91.3	71.7	71.9	57.3	84.3
	Standard Deviation	51.2	66.6	27.6	31.1	41.7	26.3	58.3	3.0	23.6	23.9	58.4	0.0	46.2
All Specialist Cases	Decisions	67	56	71	59	59	52	53	57	99	61	51	25	710
	Median Average Weeks	29.4	34.6	34.7	26.9	36.9	38.2	28.7	37.6	35.1	32.9	40.1	34.6	34.6
	Mean Average Weeks	42.9	47.0	47.9	41.8	46.2	45.9	42.3	39.7	42.6	44.6	47.2	41.9	44.2
	Standard Deviation	37.3	39.8	34.3	31.3	32.9	28.6	37.9	19.2	26.4	33.8	35.2	24.9	32.5



## Annex B – Detailed Information on timeliness (August 2023)

The information below is published today on the number and length of decisions made in August 2023<sup>10</sup>:

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	35.0	37.6	722
	Hearings	26.1	43.4	48
	Inquiries	24.9	32.4	20
Householder appeals	Written Representations	18.1	21.5	392
Enforcement appeals	Written Representations	52.6	53.8	136
	Hearings	58.3	74.8	9
	Inquiries	146.1	146.1	2

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	
<b>Weeks between valid date &amp; start date</b>				
Median (average)	14.3	4.0	2.4	6.0
Mean (average)	12.5	4.8	2.8	6.7
Cases that started in August 2023	647	39	31	462
<b>Weeks between start date &amp; event date</b>				
Median (average)	11.6	15.9	15.9	6.0
Mean (average)	15.7	18.0	15.5	7.5
Cases where an event occurred during August 2023	768	33	13	389
<b>Weeks between event date &amp; decision date</b>				
Median (average)	5.3	5.6	6.9	3.1
Mean (average)	6.1	7.9	8.2	4.1
Cases that have been decided in August 2023	697	46	19	388

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>10</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: June and July 2023
Table 2	Received: July 2023
Table 2	Closed: June and July 2023
Table 2	Open Cases: January, February, March, April, May, June and July 2023
Table 6	Valid to decision median weeks: hearings June 2023
Table 6	Valid to decision median weeks: inquiries January and July 2023
Table 6	Valid to decision mean weeks: hearings June 2023
Table 6	Valid to decision mean weeks: inquiries January and June 2023
Table 6	Standard deviation: hearings June 2023
Table 6	Standard deviation: inquiries January and June 2023
Table 7	Valid to decision median weeks: March 2023
Annex A	Valid to decision median weeks: Planning Appeals hearings June 2023
Annex A	Valid to decision mean weeks: Planning Appeals hearings June 2023
Annex A	Standard deviation: Planning Appeals hearings June 2023
Annex A	Valid to decision mean weeks: Planning Appeals inquiries January 2023
Annex A	Standard deviation: Planning Appeals inquiries June 2023

Annex A	Valid to decision median weeks: Enforcement Appeals hearings June 2023
Annex A	Valid to decision mean weeks: Enforcement Appeals hearings June 2023
Annex A	Standard deviation: Enforcement Appeals hearings June 2023
Annex A	Valid to decision mean weeks: Inquires July 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 appellant.
Event	A site visit, hearing, or inquiry (may be virtual)
Event Type	The different options of how an Inspector visits a site for a written representations appeal.
Examinations	<p>The process of examining local plans is dealt with by the Planning Inspectorate. Every Local Planning Authority is required to have a local plan. This includes a vision for the future and plan to address housing needs in the area.</p> <p>When a Local Planning Authority has finished preparing and consulting on a local plan it must be submitted to the Secretary of State who appoints an Inspector to carry out an independent examination.</p>
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](mailto:press.office@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

**Public enquiries** email [statistics@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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>