



The Planning Inspectorate

Official Statistics
23rd May 2024

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 May 2023 to April 2024
- The time taken to reach decisions
- Provisional estimates of the number of open cases
- Number of Inspectors

Open cases data in Table 2 and Table 10

We are working to fix a problem with our open cases data. Unfortunately, because of this problem, we are unable to provide the statistics usually published in Table 10: a breakdown of currently open cases, by stage and procedure type. We expect this to be resolved in time for next month's release. We have provided a provisional estimate of the total number of open cases at the end April (Table 2), which may be revised next month.

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 April was 28 weeks.

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

Procedure type	Last 12 months	April 2024
Written Representations	30 weeks	27 weeks
Hearings	34 weeks	40 weeks
Inquiries	45 weeks	47 weeks
All Cases	30 weeks	28 weeks

The median time for planning cases was 26 weeks in April 2024. The 12-month median was 29 weeks.

Enforcement decisions made in April 2024 had a median decision time of 53 weeks, with the 12-month median being 53 weeks.

The median time for planning appeals decided by inquiry under the Rosewell Process in April was 25 weeks and over the 12 months to April 2024 was 30 weeks.

Decisions

The Planning Inspectorate made 18,278 appeal decisions¹ in the last 12 months, an average of 1,523 per month. The number of decisions in April 2024 was 1,451.

There were 1,348 written representations decisions in April 2024 and 17,035 in the last 12 months.

There were 763 decisions made on hearings during the last 12 months, and during April 2024, 51 decisions were issued.

There were 480 decisions made on inquiries during the last 12 months, with 52 in April 2024.

Planning Inspectors

There were 443 Planning Inspectors employed by the Inspectorate at the end of April 2024.

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 D explains the scope of this release and Background Notes has further information.

Decisions, Events & Open Cases

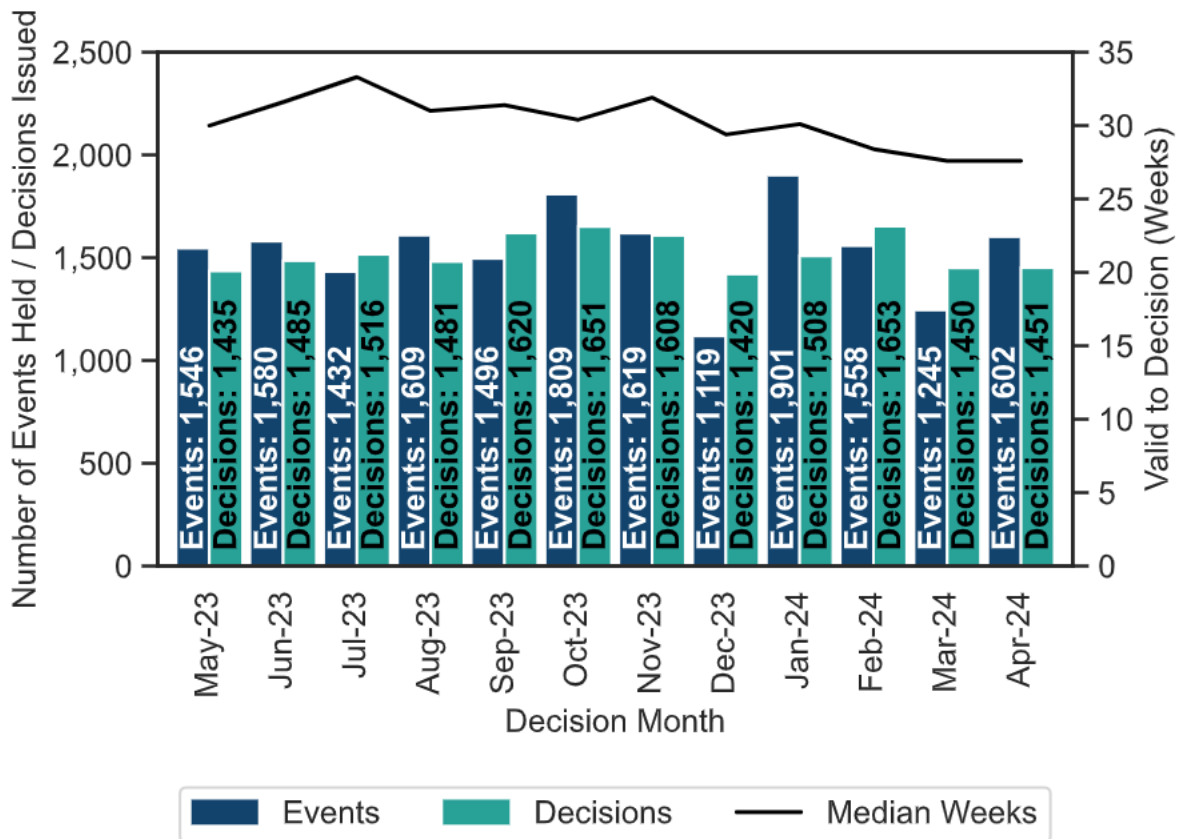
The number of decisions issued in April 2024 was 1,451, with a monthly average of 1,523 over the past 12 months.

The number of events recorded for April 2024 was 1,602, the average over the past 12 months was 1,543.

The median valid to decision time was 28 weeks in April 2024, as seen in Figure 1 and Table 1 below. The median valid to decision time for April is the same as for March.

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

Figure 1: Number of events held², decisions issued and median time between valid date & decision date; May 2023 to April 2024.



Source: Horizon

Table 1: Number of events held, decisions issued and median time between valid date & decision date; May 2023 to April 2024.

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

Month	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	Total
Events Held	1,546	1,580	1,432	1,609	1,496	1,809	1,619	1,119	1,901	1,558	1,245	1,602	18,516
Decisions	1,435	1,485	1,516	1,481	1,620	1,651	1,608	1,420	1,508	1,653	1,450	1,451	18,278
Median	30.0	31.6	33.3	31.0	31.4	30.4	31.9	29.4	30.1	28.4	27.6	27.6	30.1

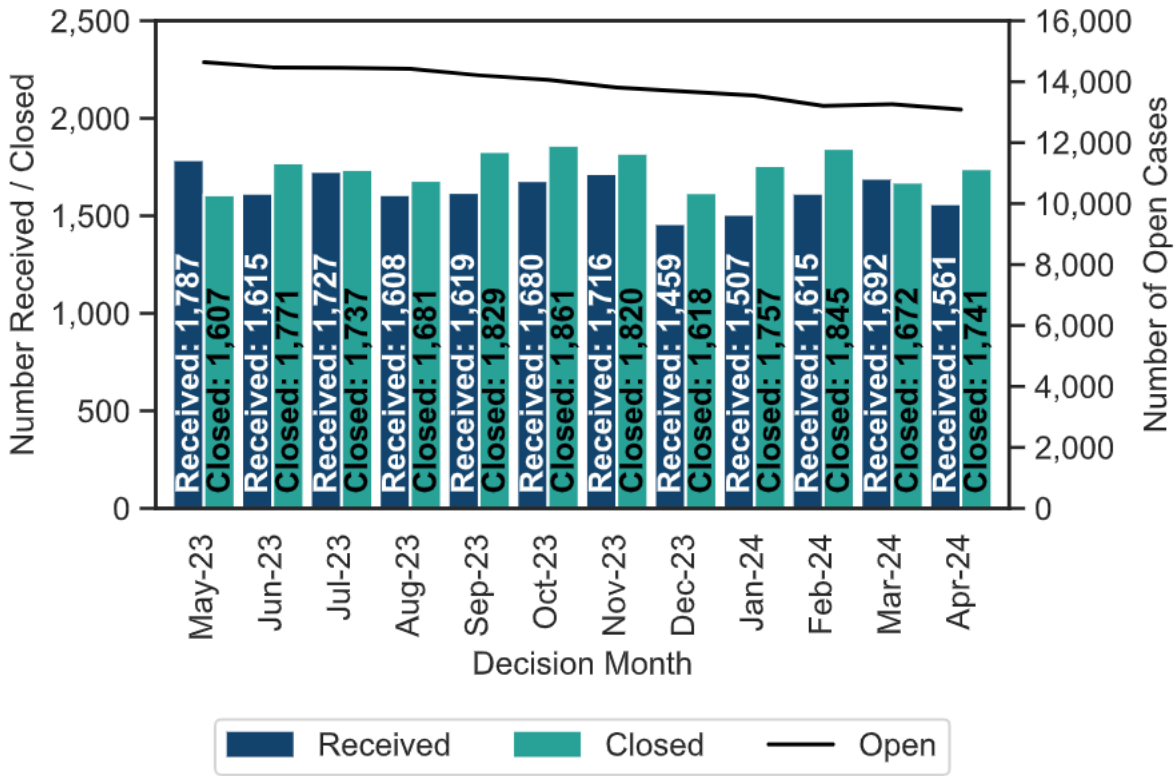
Source: Horizon

² A site visit, hearing, or inquiry.

Figure 2 below shows the number of cases received, closed and open for each of the last 12 months. The number of cases closed has exceeded the number of cases received for each of the past 10 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.

Figure 2: Number of cases received, closed and open; May 2023 to April 2024.



Source: Horizon

Note: 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.

Table 2: Number of cases received, closed and open; May 2023 to April 2024.

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

Note 2: The open case count for April is provisional. Please see the BQR for further information

Month	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	Total
Received	1,787	1,615	1,727	1,608	1,619	1,680	1,716	1,459	1,507	1,615	1,692	1,561	19,586
Closed	1,607	1,771	1,737	1,681	1,829	1,861	1,820	1,618	1,757	1,845	1,672	1,741	20,939
Open	14,645	14,473	14,455	14,427	14,210	14,062	13,814	13,682	13,551	13,203	13,264	13,084	

Source: Horizon

Number of Decisions

The Planning Inspectorate has made 18,278 appeal decisions³ in the last 12 months. There were 1,451 cases decided in April 2024.

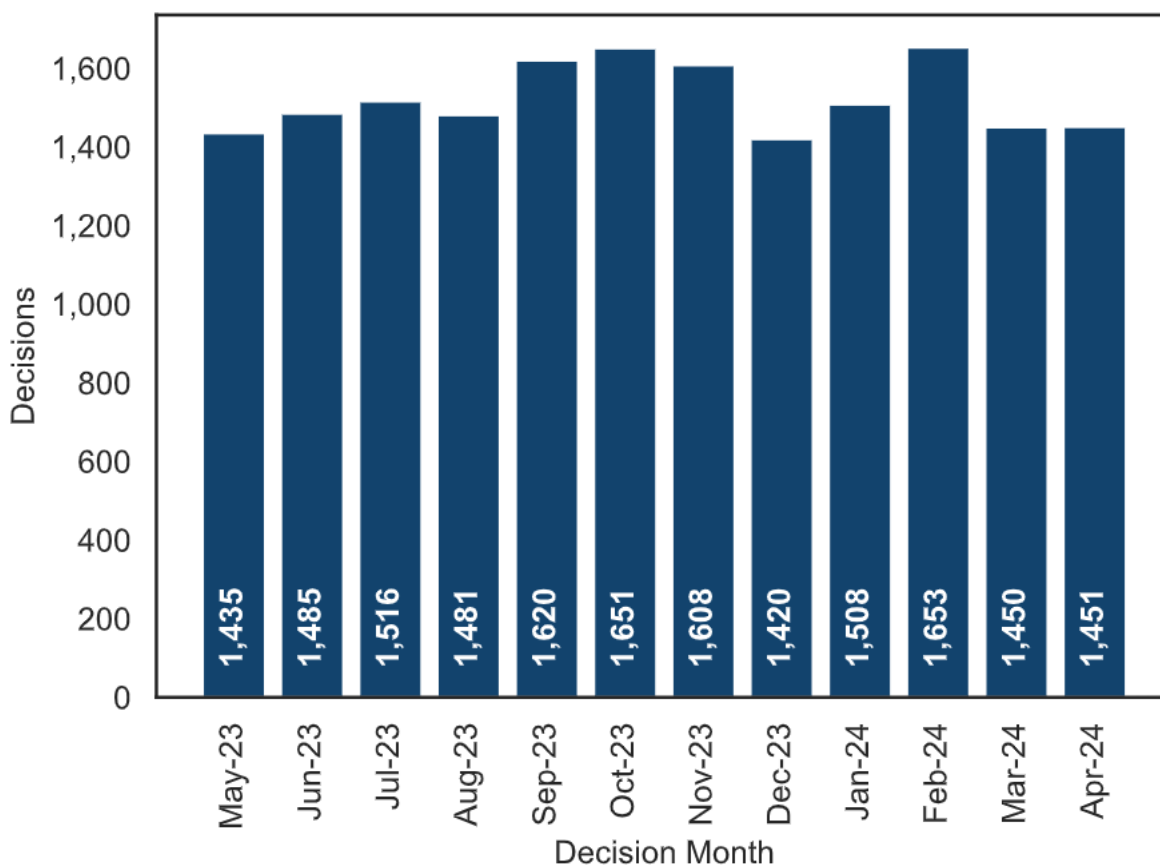
Table 3 below shows the monthly breakdown with the highest number of decisions in February and lowest in December.

Table 3: Appeal Decisions; May 2023 to April 2024.

Month	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	Total
Decisions	1,435	1,485	1,516	1,481	1,620	1,651	1,608	1,420	1,508	1,653	1,450	1,451	18,278

Source: Horizon

Figure 3 – Appeal Decisions; May 2023 to April 2024.



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 Plans⁴, Compulsory Purchase Order applications and many other specialist licencing/ application types.

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 D 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)

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 (17,035) were made on written representations. This is 93% of all appeal decisions made. Table 4 shows that written representation decisions have varied from around 1,300 to around 1,560 per month over the past 12 months. There were 1,348 decisions in April 2024.

There were 763 decisions made on hearings during the last 12 months, the monthly average being 64. During April 2024, 51 decisions were issued. In April 2024, 52 decisions were made for inquiries. Decisions for inquiries per month over the last 12 months have ranged between 28 and 52.

Table 4: Appeal Decisions by Procedure and Casework Category; May 2023 to April 2024.

Month	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	Total
Written Representations	1,307	1,397	1,417	1,390	1,516	1,557	1,493	1,313	1,407	1,560	1,330	1,348	17,035
Hearings	89	59	65	63	58	54	66	64	66	49	79	51	763
Inquiries	39	29	34	28	46	40	49	43	35	44	41	52	480
Total	1,435	1,485	1,516	1,481	1,620	1,651	1,608	1,420	1,508	1,653	1,450	1,451	18,278

Month	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	Total
Planning	1,187	1,256	1,256	1,256	1,339	1,402	1,338	1,211	1,246	1,409	1,132	1,207	15,239
Enforcement	149	166	208	192	224	187	228	151	206	207	175	180	2,273
Specialist	99	63	52	33	57	62	42	58	56	37	143	64	766
Total	1,435	1,485	1,516	1,481	1,620	1,651	1,608	1,420	1,508	1,653	1,450	1,451	18,278

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.

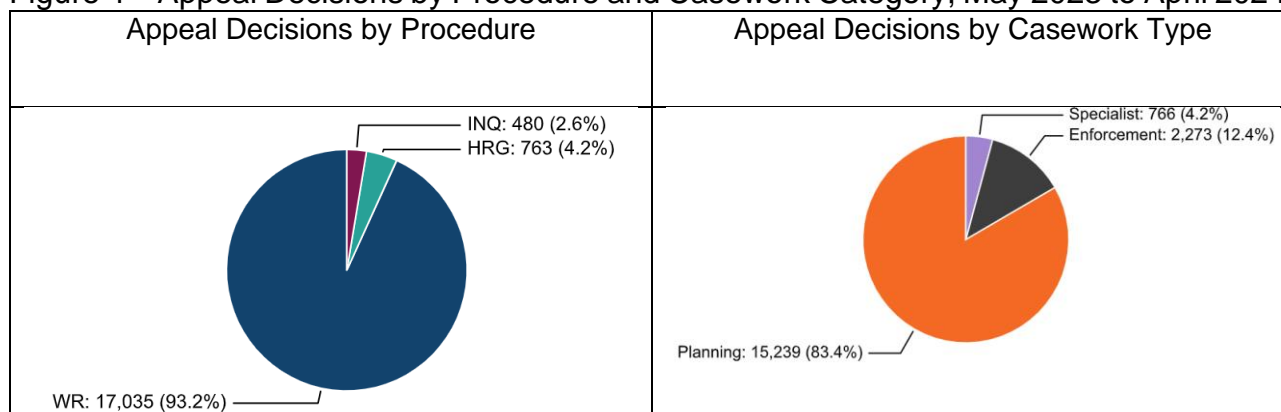
What are Enforcement cases? Enforcement covers enforcement appeals (i.e., appeals against the issue of an enforcement notice served by a local planning authority for alleged breaches of planning control), enforcement listed building notice appeals and lawful development certificate appeals.

What are Specialist cases? Specialist casework includes Common Land, Rights of Way orders (including Schedule 14 cases), Purchase orders, Tree Preservation Orders, 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 decided over the past 12 months were planning (15,239). This is about 83% of all appeal decisions made. There were 2,273 enforcement decisions and 766 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 189. Specialist casework figures continue to vary each month, from a high of 143 in March 2024 to a low of 33 in August 2023.

Figure 4 – Appeal Decisions by Procedure and Casework Category; May 2023 to April 2024.



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 28 weeks for April 2024. Figure 5 shows the median has ranged from 28 to 33 weeks for each of the last 12 months.

<p>How is timeliness measured?</p> <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.

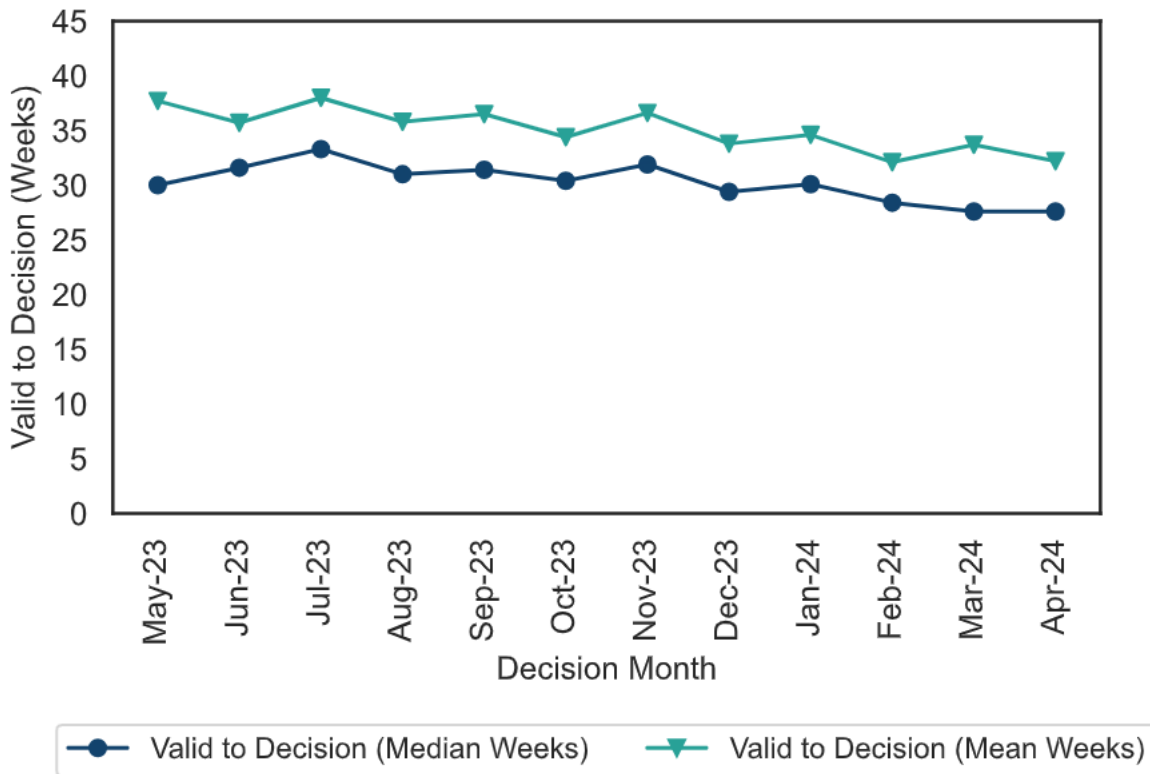
Table 5: Median, mean and Standard Deviation of Time to Decision; May 2023 to April 2024.

Month	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	Total
Valid to Decision (median weeks)	30.0	31.6	33.3	31.0	31.4	30.4	31.9	29.4	30.1	28.4	27.6	27.6	30.1
Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	37.7	35.7	38.0	35.8	36.5	34.4	36.6	33.8	34.6	32.1	33.7	32.2	35.1
Standard Deviation (weeks)	27.8	20.4	21.9	20.8	21.5	18.8	20.7	19.8	20.3	18.7	21.5	20.0	21.1

Source: Horizon

Figure 5: Median and mean Time to Decision; May 2023 to April 2024.

Note: Specialist casework timeliness measures exclude Tree Preservation Order cases



Source: Horizon

Procedure Type

Table 6 below shows decision timeliness broken down by the procedure type. Hearings and inquires have typically taken longer than written representations⁵, and been more variable. 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

⁵ 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 April 2024 is 30 weeks. The median time for hearings over the 12 months to April 2024 is 34 weeks. The median time to decide for inquiries over the 12 months to April 2024 was 45 weeks.

Table 6: Mean and Median Time to Decision, with Standard Deviation, by Procedure; May 2023 to April 2024.

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

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

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

Measure	Procedure	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	Total
Valid to Decision (median weeks)	WR	29.6	31.4	33.3	31.0	31.2	30.4	31.7	29.3	30.0	28.1	27.4	27.1	30.0
	HRG	56.6	33.6	32.9	29.6	32.0	28.1	32.1	33.6	39.0	38.3	27.4	40.4	33.8
	INQ	41.0	33.7	43.6	29.5	61.9	39.4	41.0	53.0	40.4	37.1	44.9	47.1	44.9
	All	30.0	31.6	33.3	31.0	31.4	30.4	31.9	29.4	30.1	28.4	27.6	27.6	30.1
Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	WR	34.3	34.9	36.9	34.8	35.3	34.0	35.7	32.3	33.3	31.0	32.1	30.3	33.8
	HRG	70.6	44.4	52.1	49.0	47.2	43.0	43.1	45.4	51.4	44.9	44.9	52.8	49.9
	INQ	72.4	56.2	56.4	56.1	63.6	39.3	56.4	59.6	55.6	54.8	60.4	60.5	57.8
	All	37.7	35.7	38.0	35.8	36.5	34.4	36.6	33.8	34.6	32.1	33.7	32.2	35.1
Standard Deviation (weeks)	WR	20.5	19.0	20.0	18.0	19.5	18.1	19.1	17.2	17.7	16.6	18.9	17.0	18.6
	HRG	53.2	29.4	37.2	40.1	36.6	34.2	27.1	30.4	39.7	26.1	34.0	39.3	38.1
	INQ	57.5	40.1	35.6	47.6	32.9	15.5	37.7	40.7	34.5	41.9	38.3	27.1	38.9
	All	27.8	20.4	21.9	20.8	21.5	18.8	20.7	19.8	20.3	18.7	21.5	20.0	21.1
Decisions	WR	1,307	1,397	1,417	1,390	1,516	1,557	1,493	1,313	1,407	1,560	1,330	1,348	17,035
	HRG	89	59	65	63	58	54	66	64	66	49	79	51	763
	INQ	39	29	34	28	46	40	49	43	35	44	41	52	480
	All	1,435	1,485	1,516	1,481	1,620	1,651	1,608	1,420	1,508	1,653	1,450	1,451	18,278

Source: Horizon

Note: Tree Preservation Order cases are not included in timeliness measures

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 inquiries 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

⁶ 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 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; May 2023 to April 2024.

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

Casework Category	Measure	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	Total
Planning Cases	Valid to Decision (median weeks)	28.7	29.9	31.5	29.0	29.9	29.3	29.9	27.9	29.0	26.9	26.1	26.1	28.6
	Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	33.3	32.5	34.9	32.7	33.3	32.0	32.5	30.2	30.6	28.5	28.7	27.9	31.4
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	22.3	17.4	19.8	17.4	18.7	16.7	16.5	15.6	14.6	13.5	14.3	14.0	17.0
Enforcement Cases	Valid to Decision (median weeks)	58.4	53.1	53.1	49.9	50.0	48.3	57.7	56.3	48.6	50.7	62.0	53.4	53.1
	Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	68.8	55.7	53.4	54.4	55.0	51.7	57.6	57.7	54.6	53.9	65.1	58.6	56.9
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	41.0	21.1	22.3	26.5	24.7	23.0	22.6	25.3	30.1	27.4	29.7	26.6	27.2
Specialist Cases	Valid to Decision (median weeks)	44.9	35.7	50.4	34.6	36.4	35.1	51.7	44.9	49.1	46.2	25.0	28.0	36.9
	Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	49.7	50.2	56.2	45.0	43.3	41.9	57.9	50.8	53.3	51.1	34.7	41.4	46.9
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	32.4	37.8	36.9	37.5	32.7	26.9	42.3	33.4	32.0	31.4	26.5	32.7	34.1

Source: Horizon

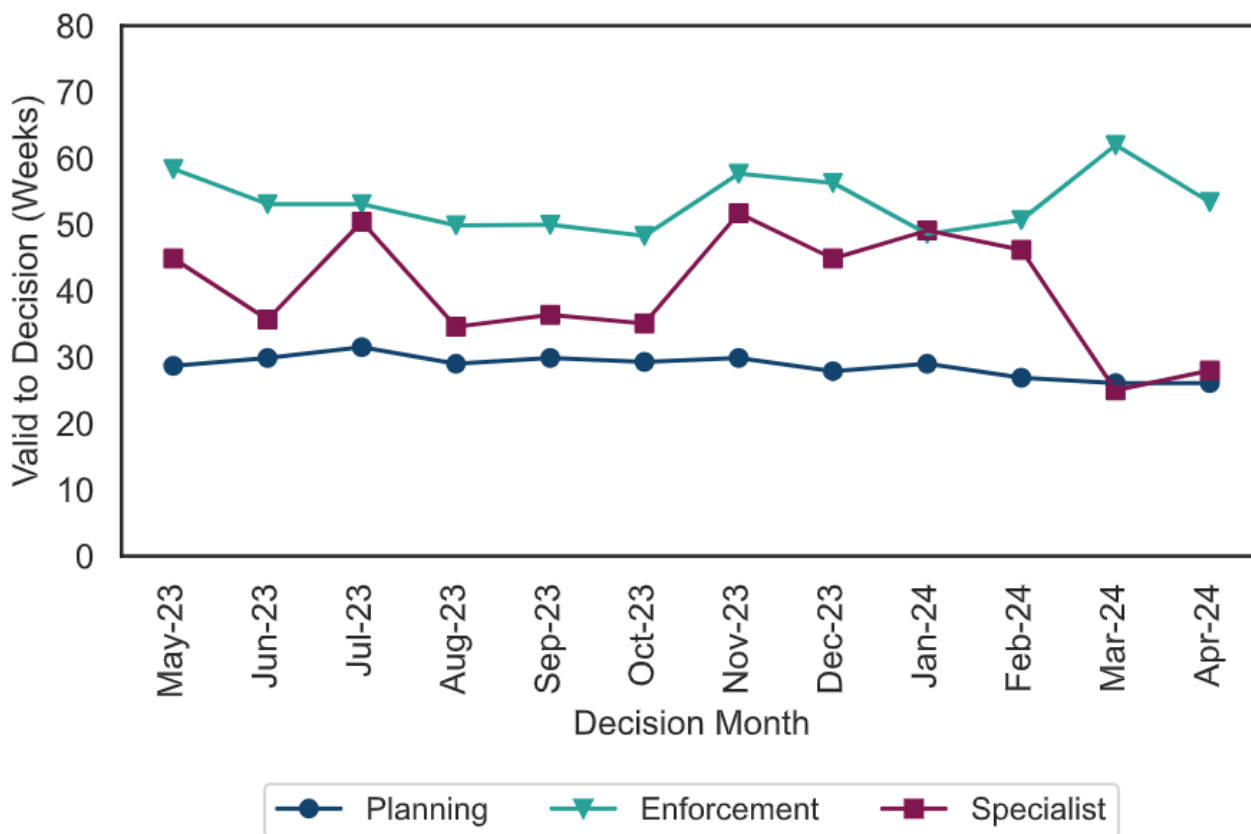
Note: Specialist casework timeliness measures exclude Tree Preservation Order cases

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 53 weeks.

There are considerably fewer specialist cases which means results are more liable to be distorted by extreme values.

Figure 6 – Median Time to Decision by Casework Category: May 2023 to April 2024^P.



Source: Horizon

Note: Specialist casework timeliness measures exclude Tree Preservation Order cases

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 April 2024 is 30 weeks and the median time to decision for April 2024 was 25 weeks.

Table 8: Decisions, Mean and Median Time to Decision, Planning Inquiry Cases under Rosewell Process; May 2023 to April 2024.

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

Measure	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	Total
Decisions	19	17	15	20	32	16	24	21	15	16	15	4	214
Median (weeks)	28.7	30.0	24.9	26.1	61.9	37.1	26.2	29.1	35.0	31.9	25.3	25.1	29.6
Mean (weeks)	30.7	34.3	30.0	33.9	47.1	35.2	31.6	44.2	36.0	31.2	27.2	25.7	35.5
St. Dev. (weeks)	9.1	25.8	12.2	17.0	16.2	9.0	11.7	23.0	9.3	7.9	7.0	1.9	16.3

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

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.

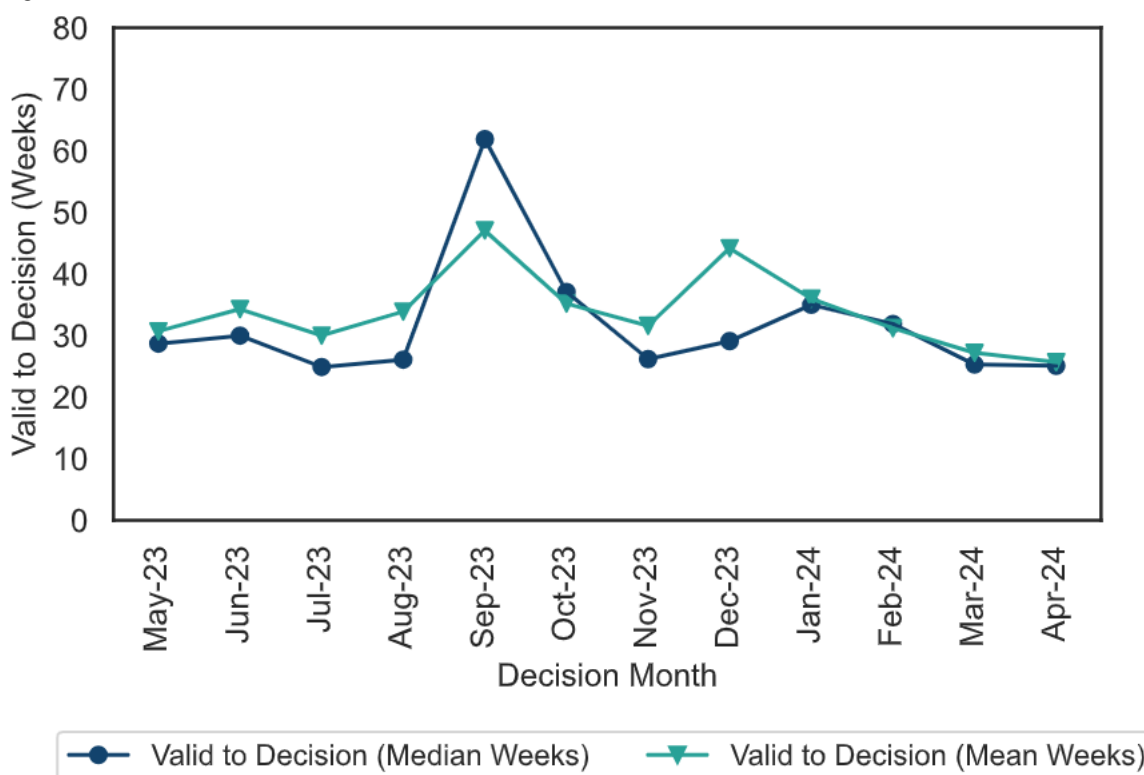
Table 9: Decisions, Planning Inquiry Cases under non-Rosewell Process; May 2023 to April 2024.

Month	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	Total
Decisions	0	0	2	0	1	0	2	3	0	4	2	2	16

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; May 2023 to April 2024.



Source: Horizon

Open Cases

At the end of April 2024, the Planning Inspectorate had an estimated 13,084 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.

We are unable to provide a break down of which stage these cases are at this month due to an issue with our open cases data. More information is available in the background quality report.

Inspectors

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>

Table 11 below shows the number of inspectors in the Planning Inspectorate in each month from May 2023 to April 2024⁹. 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 443 Planning Inspectors employed by the Inspectorate in April 2024 – with a full-time equivalent of 400.

Table 11: Planning Inspectors – Headcount and FTE; May 2023 to April 2024.
(at end of month)

Month	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24
Headcount	422	428	439	437	432	430	428	426	424	426	434	443
FTE	379	384	394	393	388	386	385	384	382	383	391	400

Source: SAP HR and Employee Central

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

⁹ 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 1: where there are fewer than 20 decisions, the measures mean, median and standard deviation are less meaningful. This applies to May, June, July and October 2023 and January, March and April 2024 for inquiries decisions.

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

Procedure	Measure	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	Total
Written Representations	Decisions	1,106	1,187	1,190	1,186	1,264	1,344	1,268	1,141	1,191	1,353	1,063	1,166	14,459
	Median Average Weeks	28.3	29.9	31.8	29.1	29.7	29.3	30.0	27.9	28.9	26.9	26.4	26.1	28.6
	Mean Average Weeks	31.8	32.0	34.2	32.2	32.7	31.7	32.5	29.6	30.2	28.1	28.5	27.5	30.9
	Standard Deviation	18.2	16.4	18.1	15.7	17.8	15.8	16.4	14.4	13.8	12.8	13.6	12.3	15.7
Hearings	Decisions	62	52	49	50	42	42	44	46	40	36	52	35	550
	Median Average Weeks	40.2	31.5	25.4	26.3	25.1	25.0	25.4	24.0	29.0	29.7	23.4	26.9	26.4
	Mean Average Weeks	61.4	42.9	50.7	43.4	38.0	39.5	31.4	38.2	39.5	35.5	31.2	37.2	41.6
	Standard Deviation	52.9	29.5	40.5	39.3	31.7	35.0	15.8	28.6	29.2	17.7	21.5	36.2	35.1
Inquiries	Decisions	19	17	17	20	33	16	26	24	15	20	17	6	230
	Median Average Weeks	28.7	30.0	27.7	26.1	61.9	37.1	26.2	31.1	35.0	33.6	26.0	27.4	30.1
	Mean Average Weeks	30.7	34.3	36.1	33.9	50.2	35.2	34.4	45.4	36.0	38.5	34.9	46.5	38.5
	Standard Deviation	9.1	25.8	20.4	17.0	23.7	9.0	19.9	24.0	9.3	31.4	22.0	37.5	22.5
All Planning Cases	Decisions	1,187	1,256	1,256	1,256	1,339	1,402	1,338	1,211	1,246	1,409	1,132	1,207	15,239
	Median Average Weeks	28.7	29.9	31.5	29.0	29.9	29.3	29.9	27.9	29.0	26.9	26.1	26.1	28.6
	Mean Average Weeks	33.3	32.5	34.9	32.7	33.3	32.0	32.5	30.2	30.6	28.5	28.7	27.9	31.4
	Standard Deviation	22.3	17.4	19.8	17.4	18.7	16.7	16.5	15.6	14.6	13.5	14.3	14.0	17.0

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 May and November 2023 and January 2024 and all months for inquiry decisions other than October 2023 and February, March and April 2024.

Procedure	Measure	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	Total
Written Representations	Decisions	112	153	185	180	203	156	189	124	166	174	135	124	1,901
	Median Average Weeks	56.7	52.9	51.9	48.2	47.6	49.4	55.3	54.5	46.1	48.9	58.6	50.5	51.7
	Mean Average Weeks	56.6	53.7	51.9	51.9	51.0	52.8	55.2	54.5	51.4	51.5	61.1	53.5	53.5
	Standard Deviation	24.5	17.3	21.3	22.3	19.7	22.9	19.9	19.0	24.6	23.3	25.4	25.2	22.2
Hearings	Decisions	23	6	11	9	12	11	22	15	23	11	19	16	178
	Median Average Weeks	78.9	50.5	34.0	58.3	71.5	61.0	63.8	62.3	69.7	60.9	71.7	87.6	67.3
	Mean Average Weeks	96.5	56.6	50.4	74.8	81.1	56.6	66.7	66.3	71.7	69.4	74.8	87.0	73.4
	Standard Deviation	48.9	25.1	24.8	40.6	36.0	27.0	29.5	26.2	48.1	28.4	37.8	19.0	38.0
Inquiries	Decisions	14	7	12	3	9	20	17	12	17	22	21	40	194
	Median Average Weeks	149.3	101.3	80.1	146.1	94.6	46.3	72.7	69.4	81.0	50.6	90.6	47.1	73.1
	Mean Average Weeks	120.8	98.2	78.6	146.1	110.2	40.3	73.3	80.5	63.0	65.2	82.2	63.1	74.9
	Standard Deviation	63.3	39.2	19.8	0.0	20.2	17.0	29.9	52.6	37.1	45.4	37.9	25.5	42.5
All Enforcement Cases	Decisions	149	166	208	192	224	187	228	151	206	207	175	180	2,273
	Median Average Weeks	58.4	53.1	53.1	49.9	50.0	48.3	57.7	56.3	48.6	50.7	62.0	53.4	53.1
	Mean Average Weeks	68.8	55.7	53.4	54.4	55.0	51.7	57.6	57.7	54.6	53.9	65.1	58.6	56.9
	Standard Deviation	41.0	21.1	22.3	26.5	24.7	23.0	22.6	25.3	30.1	27.4	29.7	26.6	27.2

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	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	Total
Written Representations	Decisions	89	57	42	24	49	57	36	48	50	33	132	58	675
	Median Average Weeks	37.9	31.9	48.6	23.6	28.1	34.0	43.6	40.7	42.4	42.3	24.1	25.7	31.9
	Mean Average Weeks	42.1	47.7	50.9	31.6	40.4	40.6	49.0	45.7	48.9	45.5	31.5	39.3	42.0
	Standard Deviation	28.7	38.3	33.3	20.7	33.5	27.6	35.0	29.2	29.4	28.6	24.0	33.5	31.1
Hearings	Decisions	4	1	5	4	4	1	0	3	3	2	8	0	35
	Median Average Weeks	71.5	-	70.9	63.8	37.2	-	-	65.6	57.1	79.9	77.9	-	64.4
	Mean Average Weeks	64.4	-	70.0	61.9	37.2	-	-	65.6	57.1	79.9	82.1	-	66.6
	Standard Deviation	26.4	-	12.2	16.4	1.1	-	-	0.0	7.8	21.4	28.2	-	22.6
Inquiries	Decisions	6	5	5	5	4	4	6	7	3	2	3	6	56
	Median Average Weeks	97.5	68.3	42.7	65.9	59.9	47.1	93.6	78.4	113.6	101.9	50.1	52.6	67.2
	Mean Average Weeks	91.3	71.7	71.9	90.6	68.9	50.2	103.9	72.3	111.8	101.9	52.1	57.1	77.9
	Standard Deviation	23.6	23.9	58.4	59.4	21.9	20.7	46.6	43.1	16.6	1.2	14.2	19.4	40.8
All Specialist Cases	Decisions	99	63	52	33	57	62	42	58	56	37	143	64	766
	Median Average Weeks	44.9	35.7	50.4	34.6	36.4	35.1	51.7	44.9	49.1	46.2	25.0	28.0	36.9
	Mean Average Weeks	49.7	50.2	56.2	45.0	43.3	41.9	57.9	50.8	53.3	51.1	34.7	41.4	46.9
	Standard Deviation	32.4	37.8	36.9	37.5	32.7	26.9	42.3	33.4	32.0	31.4	26.5	32.7	34.1

Tree Preservation order decisions have been removed from the average time calculations in this table due to problems with recorded validation dates, which mean that we are currently unable to accurately calculate their decision times.

Annex B – Detailed Information on timeliness (April 2024)

The information below is published today on the number and length of decisions made in April 2024¹⁰:

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	29.1	31.4	711
	Hearings	27.1	37.7	34
	Inquiries	28.9	50.9	5
Householder appeals	Written Representations	18.1	20.0	385
Enforcement appeals	Written Representations	50.5	53.5	124
	Hearings	87.6	87.0	16
	Inquiries	47.1	63.1	40

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.

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)	8.7	2.1	2.0	4.3
Mean (average)	8.3	3.0	2.1	4.7
Cases that started in April 2024	1001	45	23	296
Weeks between start date & event date				
Median (average)	12.0	13.8	15.9	7.6
Mean (average)	14.3	18.8	24.6	8.7
Cases where an event occurred during April 2024	827	52	20	345
Weeks between event date & decision date				
Median (average)	4.4	5.4	8.3	3.7
Mean (average)	6.0	7.1	8.5	5.4
Cases that have been decided in April 2024	707	33	5	385

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 after the date it was validly received, it is the date it was validly received that is the valid date.
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¹⁰ Also published on gov.uk here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/appeals-average-timescales-for-arranging-inquiries-and-hearings>

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).

Timeliness measures for all 12 months have been reproduced without Tree Preservation Order cases in this publication. This is due to problems with recorded validation dates, which mean that we are currently unable to accurately calculate their decision times.

Table	Revisions
Table 1	Events held: February and March 2024
Table 2	Received: January, February and March 2024
Table 2	Closed: July, August and October 2023, January and March 2024
Table 6	Inquiries Valid to decision (Median weeks): March 2024
Table 6	Inquiries Valid to decision (Mean weeks): March 2024
Table 7	Specialist cases Valid to decision (Mean weeks) February 2024
Annex A Specialist	Written Reps Median weeks: February and March 2024
Annex A Specialist	Written Reps Mean weeks: February 2024
Annex A Specialist	Inquiries Median weeks: March 2024
Annex A Specialist	Inquiries Mean weeks: March 2024
Annex A Specialist	Inquiries Standard Deviation: March 2024

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. 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)

Term	Explanation
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. 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	A hearing involves the submission of written evidence by the main parties and a hearing once all the written submissions have been received. 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. Source: Planning Portal
Inquiries	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. At some point during or on conclusion of the inquiry the inspector and the main parties will undertake a site visit. Source: Planning Portal
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.

Term	Explanation
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>