



Planning Inspectorate

Ministerial Measures - Experimental Statistics 20 February 2024

Introduction

This report provides information on how the Planning Inspectorate has performed against measures by which Ministers agreed to assess the organisation's casework performance for appeals.

These measures are:

- A. Appeals valid on first submission
- B. How long appeals take
 - There is also an ambition for more consistent, timely decisions
- C. Customer satisfaction
- D. Number of cases quality assured

Full details of these are available at

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

For measure A, this report covers the period July 2023 to September 2024.

Measure B covers the 12 months from January 2024 to December 2024.

For measure C, survey fieldwork was carried out in April and early May 2023.

Measure D covers the three months October to December 2024.

These statistics are designated as Official Statistics in Development. Any feedback would be welcome. Please send comments to

statistics@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

A. Appeals Valid on First Submission

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

For appeals received during July – September 2024, 51.5% were valid first time¹. Table 1 shows the proportion valid on first submission over the year.

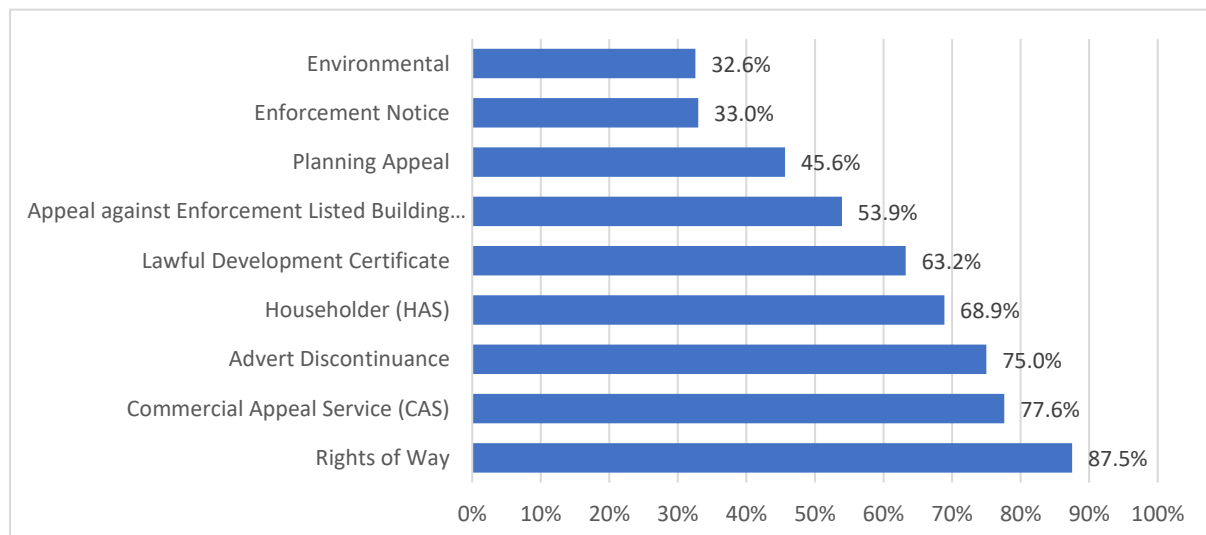
The figures in this time series are revised at each publication as some cases take many months to be validated.

Table 1 - Proportion of Appeals Valid on First Submission, By Quarter, for Appeals Received July 2023 to September 2024

Appeals Received	Jul – Sep 2023	Oct – Dec 2023	Jan – Mar 2024	Apr – Jun 2024	Jul – Sep 2024
% Valid First Time	53.7%	52.6%	50.2%	52.8%	51.5%

Source: Horizon

Figure 1 – Proportion of Appeals Valid on First Submission for Selected Appeal Types, Cases Received October 2023 to September 2024



Source: Horizon

B. How Long Appeals Take

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

Appeals decided entirely using written evidence in 16 – 20 weeks.

Appeals decided including at least some evidence through hearing or inquiry in

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

24 - 26 weeks (30 weeks to recommendation for called in or recovered cases)

This section provides information on how long it has taken to make decisions in the last 12 months (in this case, January 2024 to December 2024).

Figure 2 below shows the proportion of cases decided:

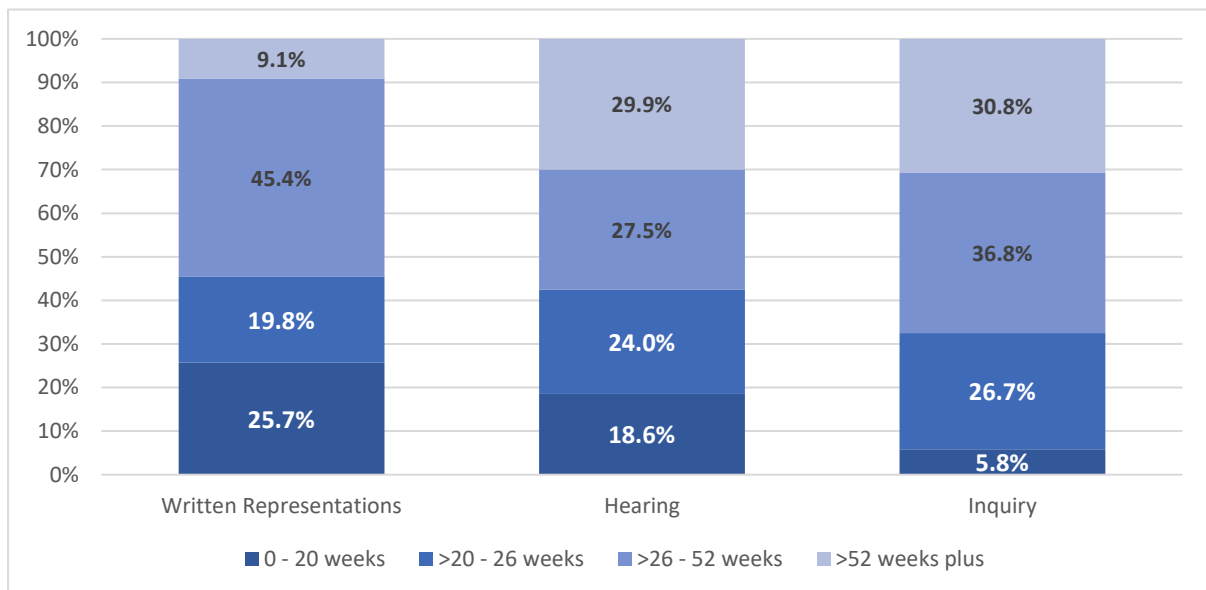
- within 20 weeks²;
- within 26 weeks (but more than 20 weeks);
- within 52 weeks (but more than 26 weeks); and
- more than 52 weeks.

The data applies to all cases decided in the year to the end of December 2024 and is broken down by the procedure used to arrive at the decision. The data for this Figure is available at Annex B.

Figure 2 shows that a much smaller proportion (9%) of cases decided by written representations take more than a year than those decided by hearings (30%) or inquiries (31%).

It also shows that a greater proportion of cases decided by written representations are decided within 20 weeks (26%) than those decided by hearings (19%) or inquiries (6%).

Figure 2: Time for Valid to Decision, for Decisions January 2024 to December 2024



Source: Horizon

Measures set by the Minister that apply to cases decided wholly by written representations are shown in Annex C.

Consultation

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

² The count of measures “within” a given number weeks, includes cases which took that number of weeks to decide. For example, cases that took 20 weeks are included in the “within 20 weeks” count.

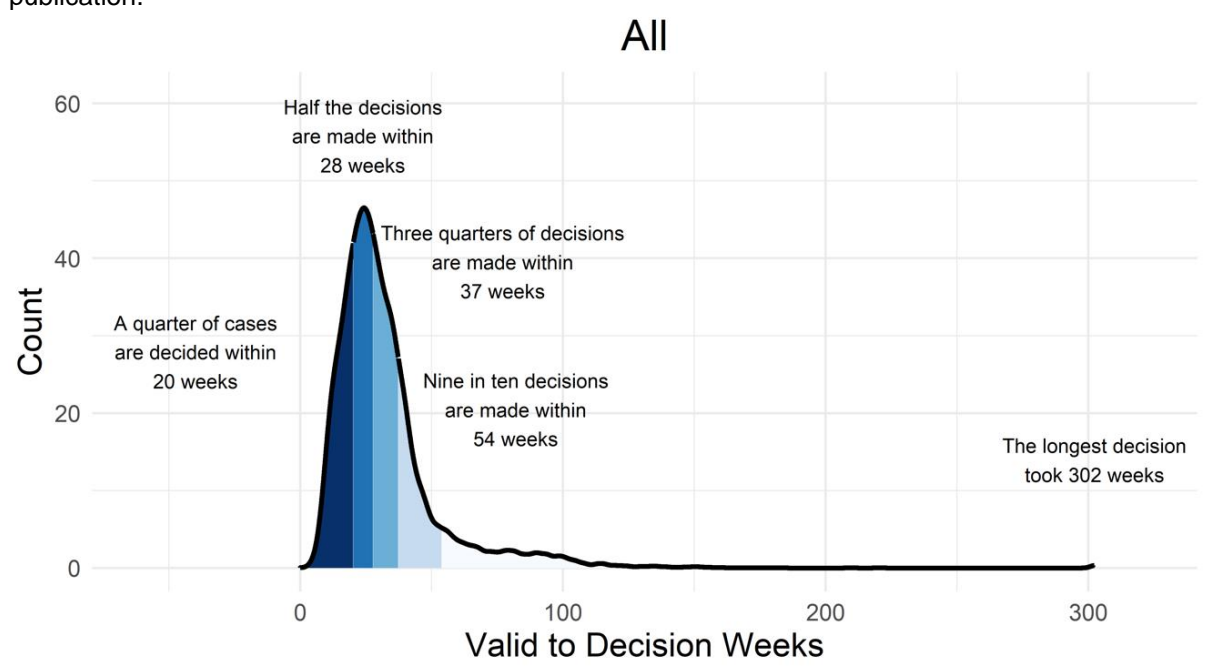
Figure 2 shows the proportion of cases decided in time bands. Figure 3 below shows more detail. It gives the full spread of time taken to decide cases, providing visibility of those cases far outside the accepted range. It shows all cases decided in the 12 months to the end of December 2024; and a breakdown by the decision procedure.

Figure 3 shows:

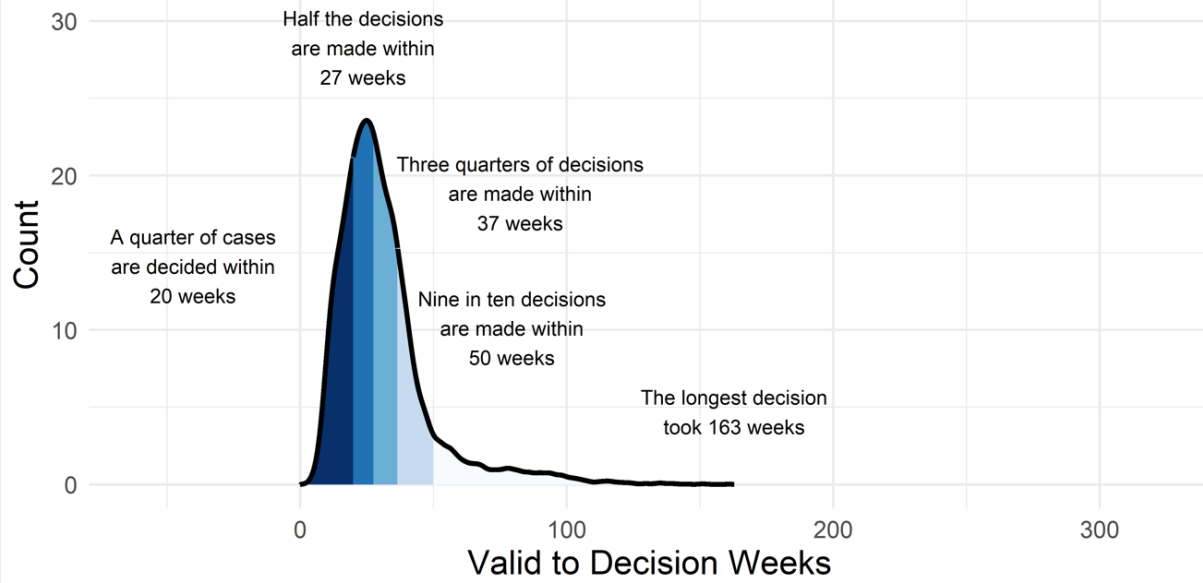
- The spread of time taken to decide for all cases, is similar to the spread for those decided wholly by written representations. This is because the large majority (16,734/18,034 which is 93%) of cases are decided this way.
- Three quarters of cases decided wholly by written representations are decided within 37 weeks. The corresponding time for three quarters of cases decided wholly or partly by hearings is 62 weeks and for those wholly or partly by inquiries is 68 weeks.
- Nine in ten cases decided wholly by written representations are decided within 50 weeks. The corresponding time for nine out of ten cases decided wholly or partly by hearings is 98 weeks and for inquiries it is 100 weeks.

Figure 3 – Spread of time taken to decide cases (in weeks), for cases decided January 2024 – December 2024

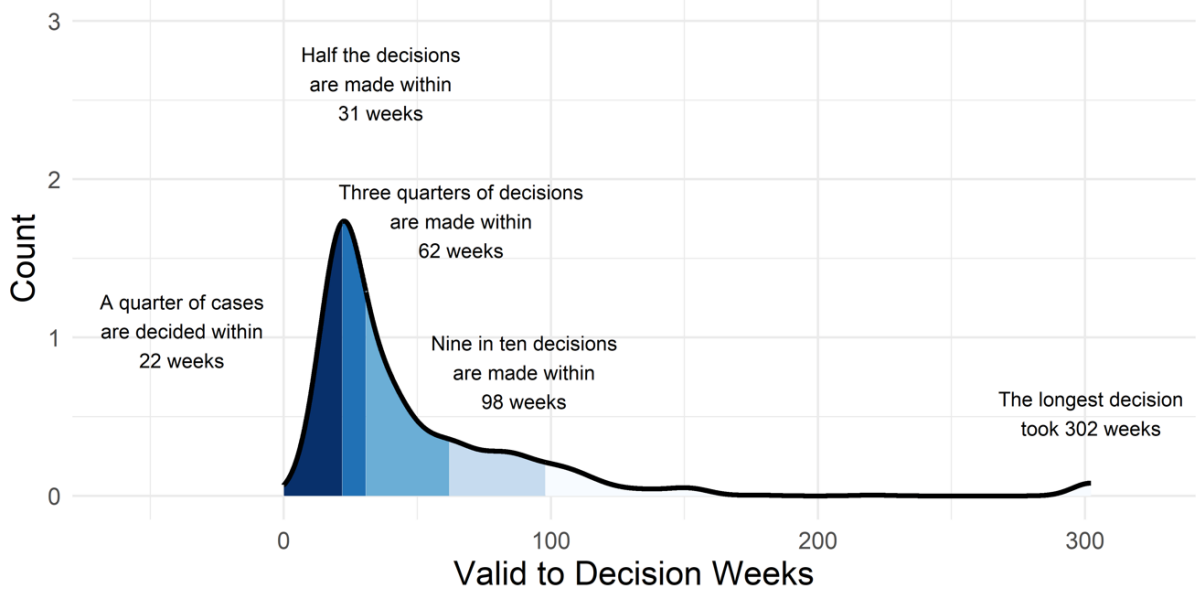
Note: The figure for “Half the decisions are made within” is the 50th percentile; this is the same as the median time to decide these cases, which is how this is presented in the monthly Official Statistics publication.

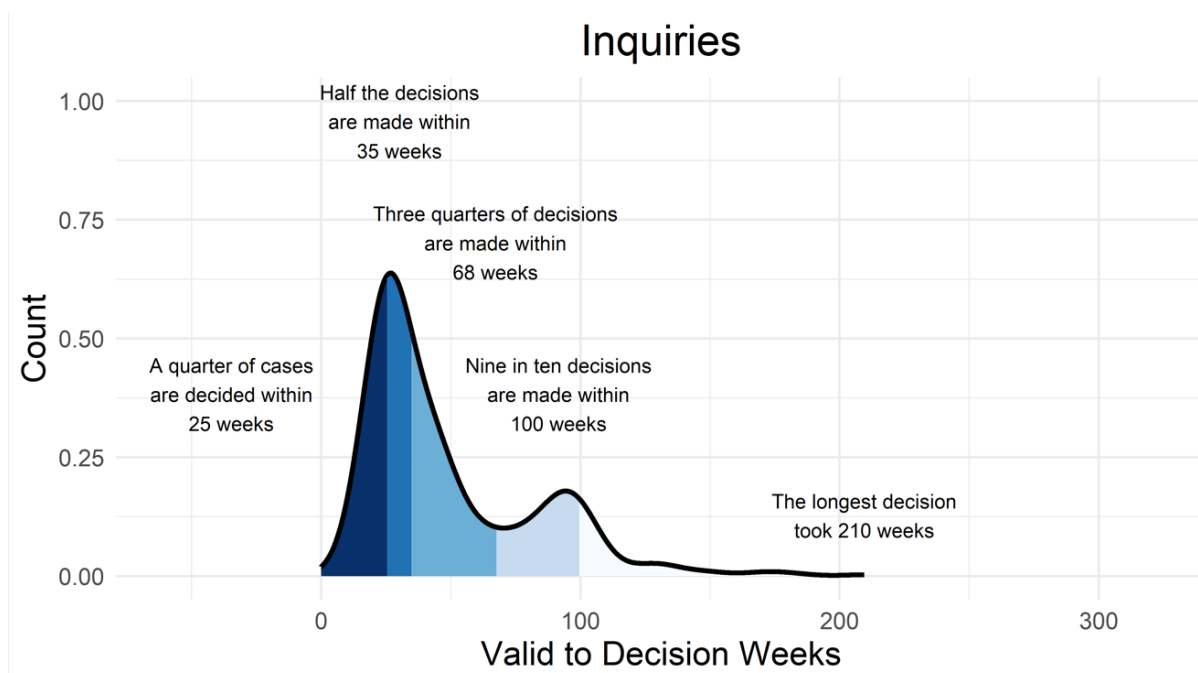


Written Representation



Hearings





Source: Horizon

The Ministerial measure³ requires information on how long appeal decisions take from valid receipt to decision⁴, with information on various percentiles.

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

The ambition is that cases are decided more quickly, and the time taken for longest cases is reduced. If the ambition is met, the gap between the 50th percentile and 90th percentile needs to reduce.

What is a percentile?

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

For example, if we tell you the 25th percentile for decision times, then you know that 25% of decisions are issued in less time (or the same time) as that.

Table 2 below shows the 25th, 50th, 75th and 90th percentiles for valid to decision, in weeks, for the decisions made from January 2024 to December 2024. Note that these match the timings given in text on the shapes in Figure 3 above.

Table 2 - Percentiles for Valid to Decision (in weeks) for decisions made January 2024 to December 2024 – and number of decisions in that time

Procedure	25th percentile	50th percentile	75th percentile	90th percentile	100th percentile	Number of decisions

³ Measure: How long appeal decisions take from valid receipt to decision with information on 25th, 50th, 75th, 90th and 100th percentiles accompanied by reasons to explain what factors affected longer or shorter timeframes.

⁴ As noted in Footnote 1 above, the date for 'validly received' is the date on which the information was received, even if it is assessed as being valid on a later date.

Written reps	20 weeks	27 weeks	37 weeks	50 weeks	163 weeks	16,734
Hearing	22 weeks	31 weeks	62 weeks	98 weeks	302 weeks	835
Inquiry	25 weeks	35 weeks	68 weeks	100 weeks	210 weeks	465
All	20 weeks	28 weeks	37 weeks	54 weeks	302 weeks	18,034

Source: Horizon

If performance changes, it will be more quickly apparent by looking at quarterly data than 12 monthly data. Annex E shows the same percentiles, for decisions in the three months October to December 2024. There are relatively few hearings and inquiries in each quarter, which means quarterly percentiles for these appeals are susceptible to extreme values - so they should be viewed with caution.

Figure 4: All Appeal Decisions, 50th and 90th Percentile for Valid to Decision, By Quarter, January 2023 – December 2024

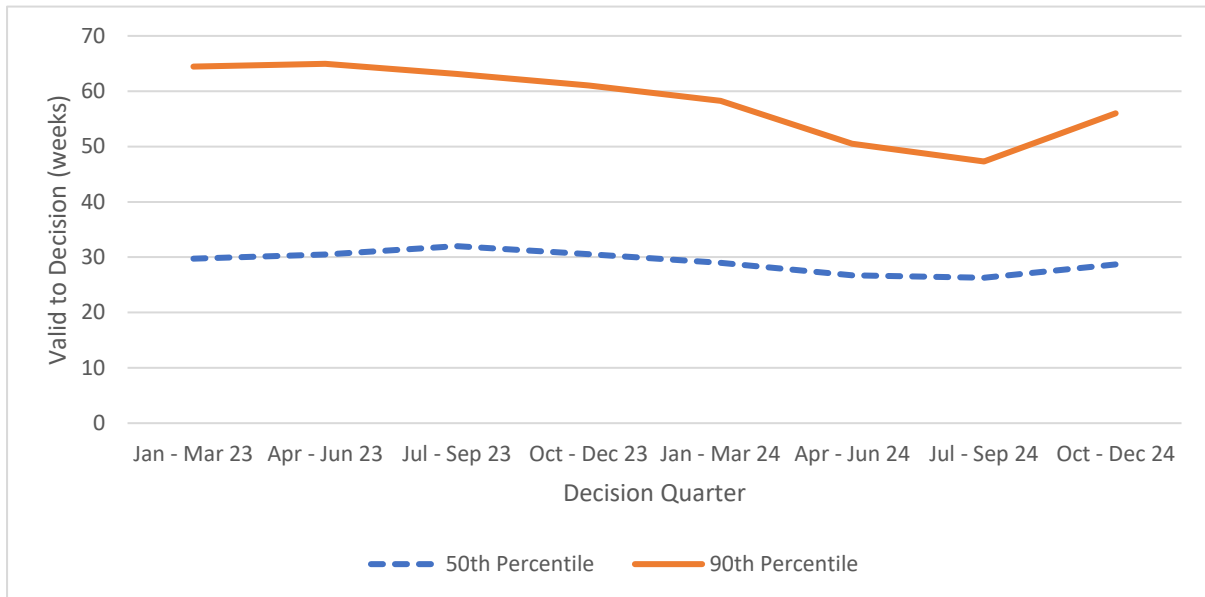


Table 3 - All appeal Decisions, 50th and 90th percentiles of Valid to Decision (weeks), January 2023 – December 2024

Decision made:	50th percentile	90th percentile	Gap
Jan - Mar 23	30 Weeks	64 Weeks	35 Weeks
Apr - Jun 23	30 Weeks	65 Weeks	34 Weeks
Jul - Sep 23	32 Weeks	63 Weeks	31 Weeks
Oct - Dec 23	31 Weeks	61 Weeks	30 Weeks
Jan - Mar 24	29 Weeks	58 Weeks	29 Weeks
Apr - Jun 24	27 Weeks	51 Weeks	24 Weeks

Jul - Sep 24	26 Weeks	47 Weeks	21 Weeks
Oct - Dec 24	29 Weeks	56 Weeks	27 Weeks

Source: Horizon

The table above covers all appeal decisions. Annex F gives figures for appeals decided wholly by written representations; wholly or partially through hearings; and wholly or partially through inquiries.

C. Customer Satisfaction

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

No new analysis relevant to this measure is presented this quarter. The Planning Inspectorate have worked with the Institute for Customer Service to conduct a satisfaction survey. The data capture phase was carried out in April and early May 2023. The results of this survey show that Planning Inspectorate was given an overall satisfaction score of 56.8.

It is not simple to compare these customer service results against other organisations, given the nature of the services the Planning Inspectorate provides. For instance, based on customer complaint data, almost a half of the complaints that the Inspectorate received were complaints about an Inspector's decision, rather than a complaint about how the process was run.

The results suggested that the organisation is underperforming in these key areas:

- Experience
- Complaint handling
- Customer Ethos
- Emotional Connection
- Ethics

Action plans will be put in place to address these areas of concern to optimise, evolve and ultimately improve our performance.

D. Number of Cases Quality Assured

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

During the three months October to December, 757 appeal cases were quality assured. These are shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4 - Number of appeal decisions quality assured, October to December 2024

Number	Category	Explanation
274	Inspector Manager team reading	Inspector Managers are expected to review a proportion of their Inspectors' decisions post-decision. This is to ensure quality standards and to identify learning opportunities and to check for consistency with the relevant quality framework.

130	APOs	Recommendations made by Appeals Planning Officers (APOs) are all reviewed as part of routine quality assurance before a decision is issued by an Inspector.
353	Inspector in Training – pre-decision	Most decisions made by Inspectors in Training (IITs) are reviewed for teaching purposes. Each review is by an experienced Inspector.
757	Total Appeal decisions	

Source: MiPINS

To put these totals in context, the 757 appeal decisions quality assured constitutes approximately a fifth (17%) of all decisions (4,537) issued over that period.

Table 5 shows the number of cases quality assured, beyond appeal cases, for the same quarter. These are much larger, more complex cases than the typical appeal case.

Table 5 - Number of Other Cases Quality Assured, October to December 2024

Number	Category	Explanation
5	Local Plans	All Local Plans are quality assured as part of the examination process. One Local Plan Report was issued in this quarter; quality assurance also took place for plans yet to be published.
5	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP)	All NSIP decisions are quality assured as part of the examination process. 5 recommendation reports were submitted to the Secretary of State this quarter.

Source: Local Plan and NSIP case records

Annex A - Proportion of Appeals Valid First Time for Selected Appeal Types, Appeals Received October 2023 to September 2024

Appeal Type	Proportion valid on first submission	Number of Appeals Received
Planning Appeal	45.6%	10,002
Householder (HAS)	68.9%	4,485
Enforcement Notice	33.0%	2,589
Lawful Development Certificate	63.2%	871
Commercial Appeal Service (CAS)	77.6%	462
Environmental	32.6%	207
Appeal against Enforcement Listed Building Notice/Enforcement Conservation Area Notice	53.9%	83
Rights of Way	87.5%	235
Advert Discontinuance	75.0%	5

Source: Horizon

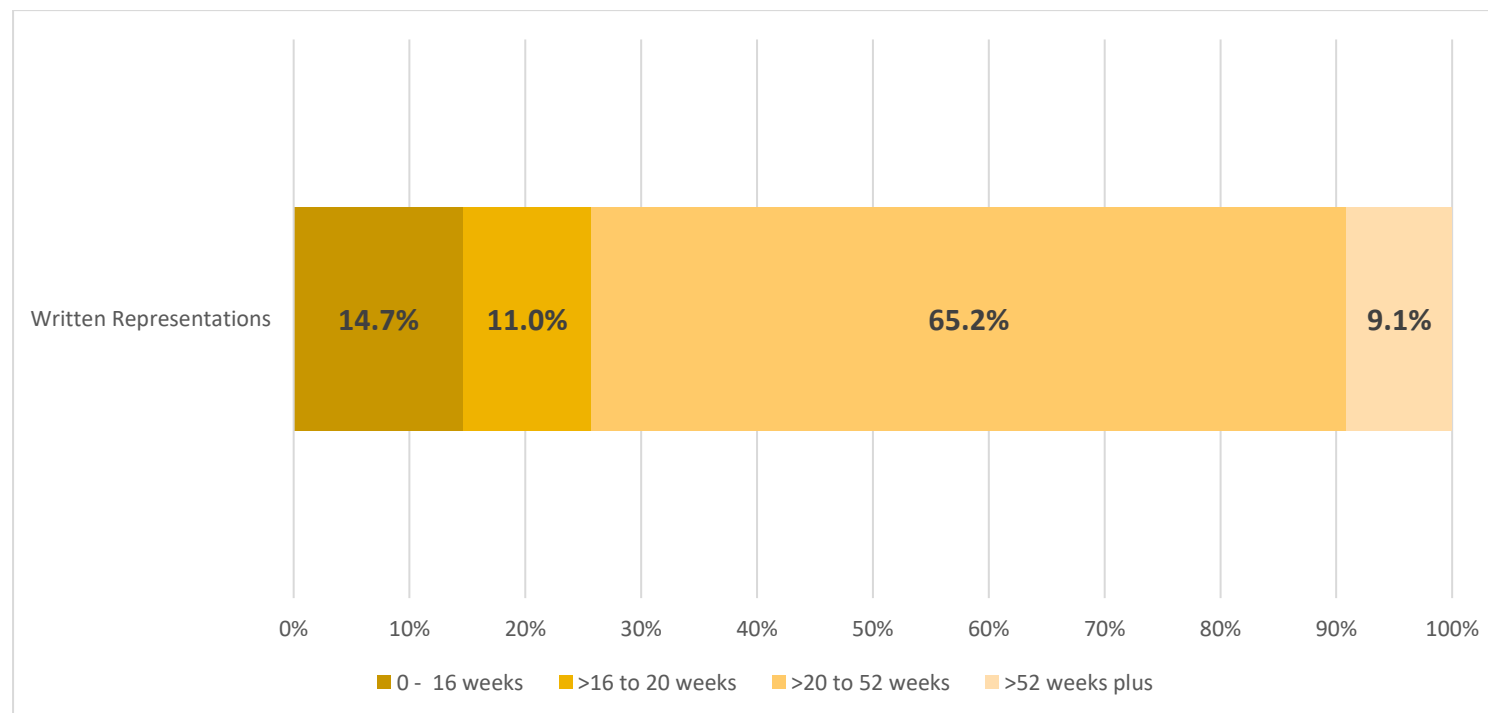
Note: Appeals not yet validated are included in the number of appeals received but excluded from the calculation on proportion valid on first submission

Annex B: Proportion of Appeals decided within 20, 26 and 52 weeks - Decisions January 2024 to December 2024

	Within 20 weeks	Within 26 weeks	Within 52 weeks	More than 52 weeks
Wholly Written Reps	25.7%	19.8%	45.4%	9.1%
Wholly or partly Hearings	18.6%	24.0%	27.5%	29.9%
Wholly or partly Inquiries	5.8%	26.7%	36.8%	30.8%

Annex C: Decisions made wholly through written representations – Decisions January 2024 to December 2024 - Weeks from valid to Decision

Performance against Ministerial measures – note this takes different groupings (16 weeks and 20 weeks)



Annex D - Percentiles for Valid to Decision (in weeks) for decisions made October to December 2024 and number of decisions in that time.

Procedure	25 th percentile	50 th percentile	75 th percentile	90 th percentile	100 th percentile	Number of decisions
Written reps	21 weeks	29 weeks	38 weeks	53 weeks	151 weeks	4,181
Hearing	22 weeks	33 weeks	77 weeks	105 weeks	302 weeks	247
Inquiry	25 weeks	28 weeks	42 weeks	79 weeks	183 weeks	109
All	21 weeks	29 weeks	39 weeks	56 weeks	302 weeks	4,537

Source: Horizon

Annex E - Appeal Decisions, 50th and 90th percentiles of Valid to Decision (weeks), January 2023 to December 2024 - by procedure

Note: all measurements are in weeks

Wholly by written representations

Decision made:	50th percentile	90th percentile	Gap
Jan - Mar 23	29	59	30
Apr - Jun 23	30	62	32
Jul - Sep 23	32	61	29
Oct - Dec 23	30	59	28
Jan - Mar 24	29	54	26
Apr - Jun 24	26	47	21
Jul - Sep 24	26	45	19
Oct - Dec 24	29	53	24

Wholly or partially through Hearings

Decision made:	50th percentile	90th percentile	Gap
Jan - Mar 23	48	102	54
Apr - Jun 23	43	108	65
Jul - Sep 23	31	104	73
Oct - Dec 23	31	89	58
Jan - Mar 24	36	109	73
Apr - Jun 24	29	88	59
Jul - Sep 24	28	90	62
Oct - Dec 24	33	105	72

Wholly or partially through Inquiries

Decision made:	50th percentile	90th percentile	Gap
Jan - Mar 23	76	224	149
Apr - Jun 23	60	142	82
Jul - Sep 23	55	120	65
Oct - Dec 23	41	100	59
Jan - Mar 24	41	105	64
Apr - Jun 24	47	100	52
Jul - Sep 24	31	86	56
Oct - Dec 24	28	79	51

Source: Horizon