



Planning Inspectorate

Official Statistics 22nd October 2026

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. For details of what cases are included within the release see the textbox after Table 9.

These statistics are produced each quarter, 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.

We have released tables of statistics at the same time as this report. The tables show the time series of cases received, decided and allowed rates since 2010, broken down by case type; as well as annual total for decisions by Local Planning Authority.

[Planning Inspectorate Quarterly and Annual Volume Statistics - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/planning-inspectorate-quarterly-and-annual-volume-statistics)

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:

- The time taken to reach decisions
- Appeals, decisions and events held, from **October 2025 to September 2026**
- The number of open cases
- The number of Inspectors
- The number of Section 78 appeals received compared to decided, and the proportion allowed, in the last 5 years

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 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Summary

Time to decide cases

The median decision time for cases decided in September was 19 weeks.

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

Procedure type	Last 12 months	September 2026
Written Representations	18 weeks	19 weeks
Hearings	24 weeks	22 weeks
Inquiries	27 weeks	27 weeks
All Cases	18 weeks	19 weeks

The median time for planning cases was 17 weeks in September 2026. The 12-month median was 16 weeks. The median decision time for all cases has been relatively stable over the year.

Enforcement decisions made in September 2026 had a median decision time of 65 weeks, with the 12-month median being 66 weeks.

The median time for planning appeals decided by inquiry over the 12 months to September 2026 was 29 weeks

Decisions

The Planning Inspectorate made 18,478 appeal decisions in the last 12 months, an average of 1,540 per month. The number of decisions in September 2026 was 1,365.

There were 16,966 decisions made on written representations during the last 12 months, with 1,274 in September 2026.

There were 593 decisions made on hearings during the last 12 months, with 41 in September 2026.

There were 343 decisions made on inquiries during the last 12 months, with 20 in September 2026.

Planning Inspectors

There were 491 Planning Inspectors employed by the Inspectorate at the end of September 2026.

Section 78 Appeals

The allowed rate for Section 78 planning appeals was 31% for July 2026 to September 2026.

Receipts generally declined from 2022 to early 2025, followed by an increase in more recent quarters. Decisions were higher than receipts throughout much of 2023 to 2025, while in 2026 receipts have exceeded decisions in each quarter so far.

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.

Planning Inspectors work on a broader range of work than the cases featured in this release. For example, they also work on examining Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project applications, Local Plans, Compulsory Purchase Order applications and many other specialist licencing/ application types.

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 1 below shows that the median time to make a decision, across all cases in the last 12 months, was 18 weeks. The median time for decisions made in September 2026 was 19 weeks. Figure 1 shows the monthly median has ranged from around 18 to 20 weeks over last 12 months. Table 1 also shows the mean decision time for the last 12 months is 29 weeks. Each month the median is less than the mean, due to the impact of very long cases. This is illustrated in Figure 1. Also included in the table is the standard deviation of decision timeliness, which is a measure of variation.

The figure and table show a reduction in the median time to make a decision over the last year, but the mean is not showing the same pattern. This could be caused by quicker decision making on newer cases, accompanied by closing of older cases. A more detailed view of decision timeliness is available in the related Ministerial Measures release. This will next be published in November 2026 (covering the same time period as this document).

Table 1: Median, Mean and Standard Deviation of Time to Decision; October 2025 to September 2026.

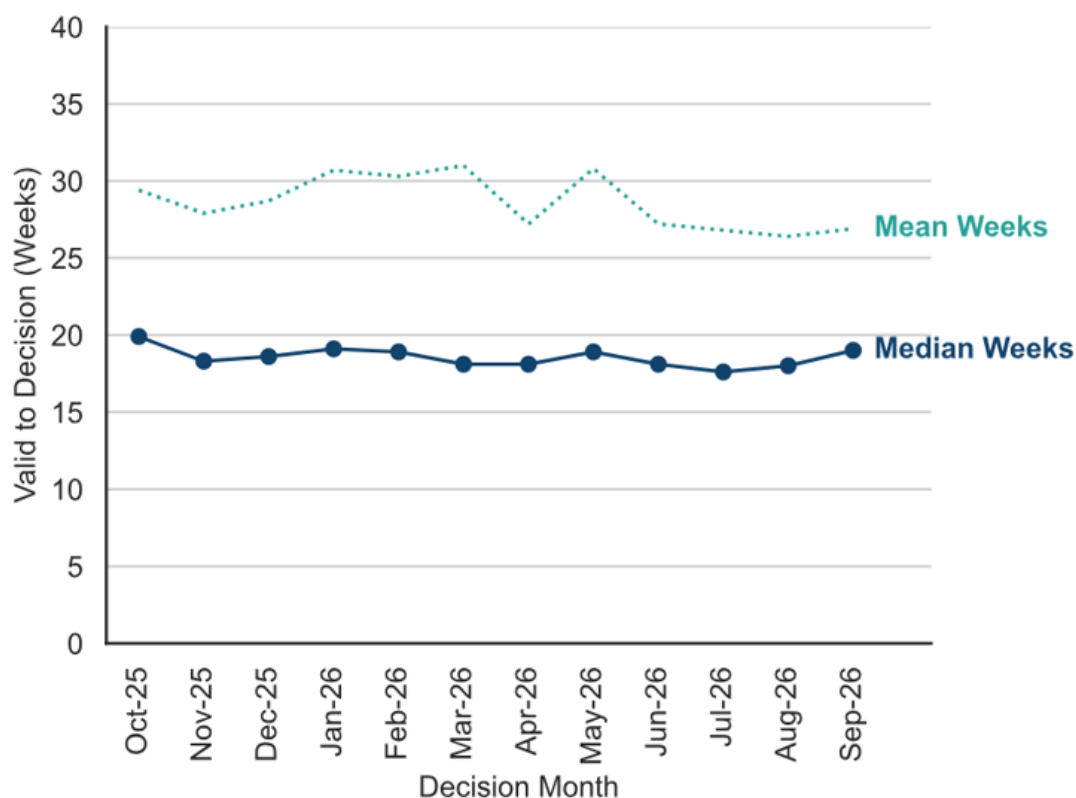
Note 1: This table includes revisions to previously published data. Please see Annex E for further information.

Month	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	Jun-26	Jul-26	Aug-26	Sep-26	Total
Valid to Decision (median weeks)	19.9	18.3	18.6	19.1	18.9	18.1	18.1	18.9	18.1	17.6	18.0	19.0	18.4
Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	29.4	27.9	28.7	30.7	30.3	31.0	27.2	30.8	27.2	26.8	26.4	26.9	28.7
Standard Deviation (weeks)	25.8	26.5	25.5	27.8	27.9	31.0	25.9	29.3	25.8	27.7	25.4	23.3	27.0

Source: Horizon, Manage Appeals & MPESC

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.

Figure 1: Median and Mean Time to Decision; October 2025 to September 2026.



Source: Horizon, Manage Appeals & MPESC

Decisions, Events & Open Cases

The Planning Inspectorate has made 18,478 decisions in the last 12 months. There were 1,365 cases decided in September 2026, with a monthly average of 1,540 over the past 12 months. Some of these outcomes are not final decisions but recommendations. These occur in cases that have been 'called in' or in Section 78 appeals that have been 'recovered' for the Secretary of State to decide. In those situations, inspectors provide a recommendation rather than making the decision themselves.

Table 2 below shows the monthly breakdown with the highest number of decisions in March 2026 and lowest in August 2026.

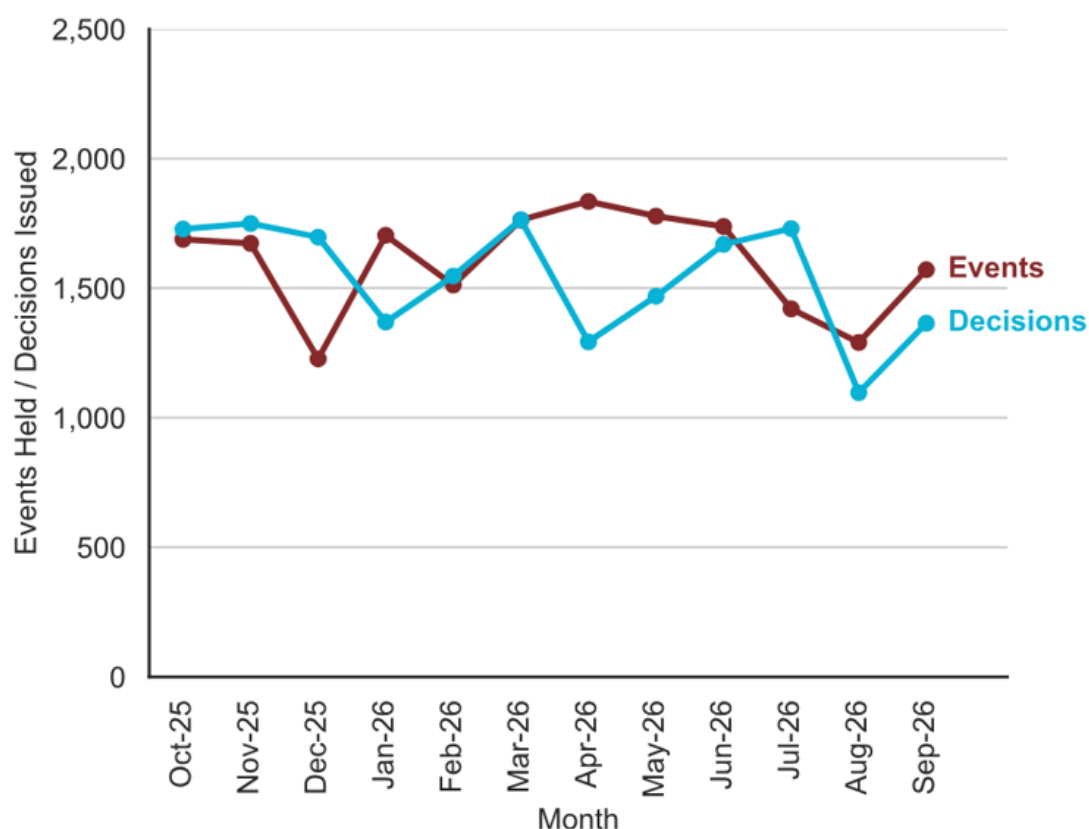
The number of events recorded for September 2026 was 1,571, with a monthly average of 1,600 over the past 12 months.

The median valid to decision time was 19 weeks in September 2026, as shown in Table 2 below.

There are no clear long-term trends in the number of events held and decisions issued each month. Lower-volume months, which may reflect the impact of annual leave and public holidays, are often followed by higher-volume months, indicating short-term variation rather than sustained changes in activity.

Figure 2: Number of events held and decisions issued; October 2025 to September 2026.

Note: Annex C has this chart for just decisions (previously Figure 3)



Source: Horizon, Manage Appeals & MPESC

Table 2: Number of events held, decisions issued and median time between valid date & decision date; October 2025 to September 2026.

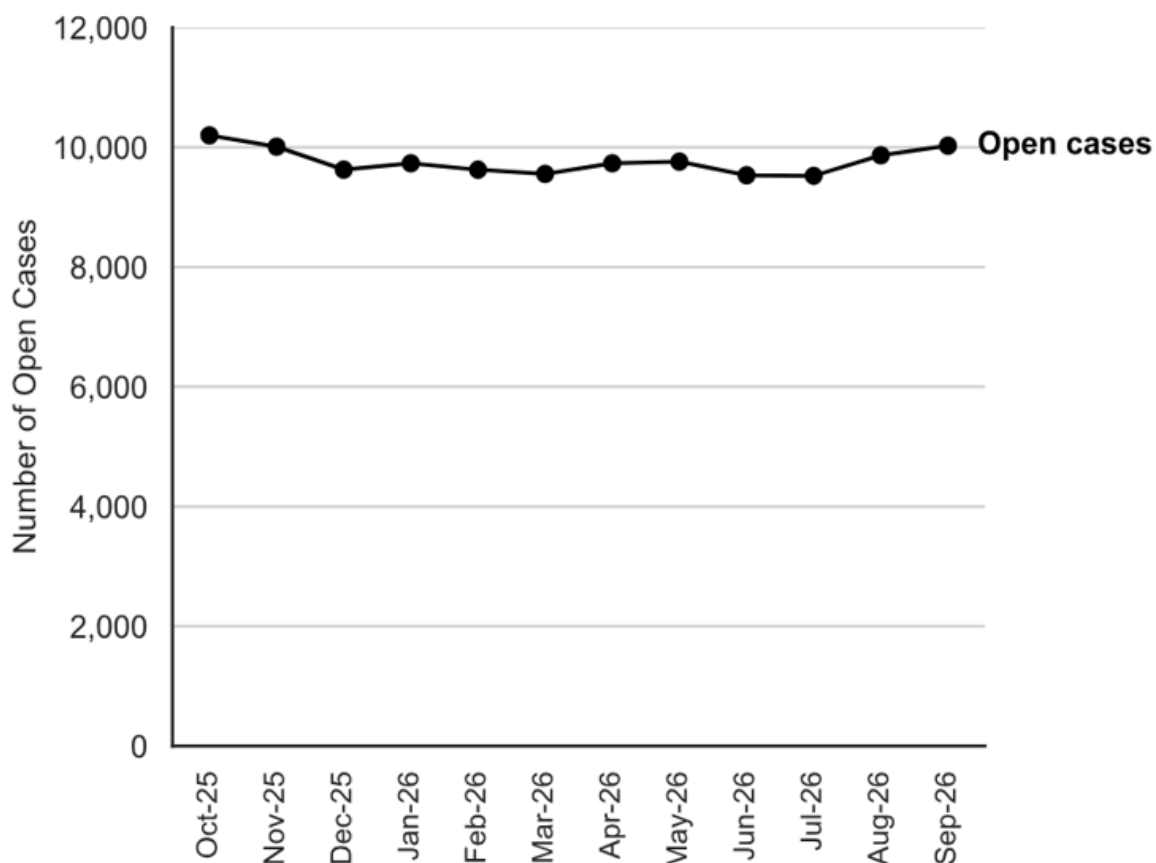
Note: This table includes revisions to previously published data. Please see Annex E for further information

Month	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	Jun-26	Jul-26	Aug-26	Sep-26	Total
Events held	1,688	1,673	1,227	1,704	1,512	1,763	1,835	1,778	1,738	1,420	1,290	1,571	19,199
Decisions	1,728	1,750	1,697	1,369	1,547	1,764	1,293	1,469	1,669	1,730	1,097	1,365	18,478
Median	19.9	18.3	18.6	19.1	18.9	18.1	18.1	18.9	18.1	17.6	18.0	19.0	18.4

Source: Horizon, Manage Appeals & MPESC

Figure 3 shows the number of open cases decreased between October 2025 and December 2025, before remaining broadly stable at around 10,000 cases since January 2026 and slightly increasing over recent months.

Figure 3: Number of cases open; October 2025 to September 2026.

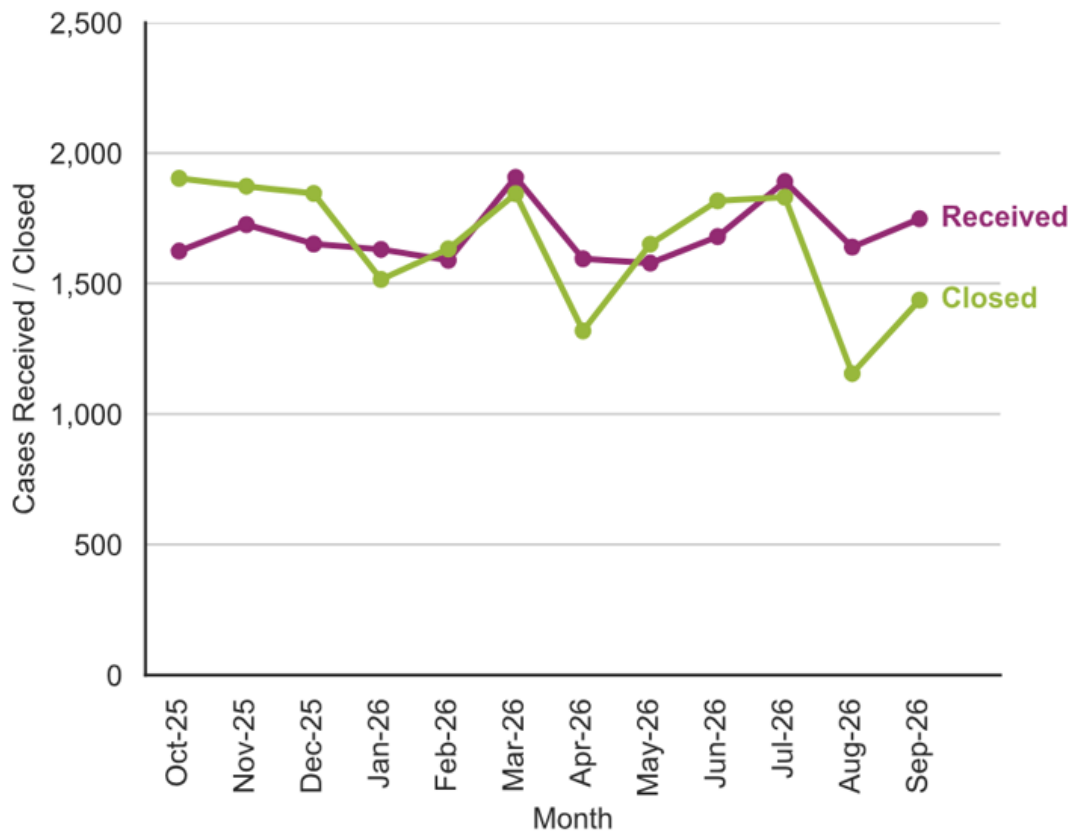


Source: Horizon and Manage Appeals

Figure 4 shows that since January 2026, monthly volumes closed have been more variable. March 2026 saw the highest number of cases received in one month since May 2022, which can be found at [Planning Inspectorate statistical release 18 May 2023 - GOV.UK](#)

Figure 4: Number of cases received and closed; October 2025 to September 2026.

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.



Source: Horizon, Manage Appeals & MPESC

Table 3: Number of cases received, closed and open; October 2025 to September 2026.

Note 1: This table includes revisions to previously published data. Please see Annex E for further information. There was an error found with the number of received cases, for more information see the background quality report.

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.

Note 3: We have removed 247 duplicated cases due to an issue affecting Manage Appeals. For more detail see the BQR.

Month	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	Jun-26	Jul-26	Aug-26	Sep-26	Total
Received	1,624	1,726	1,652	1,631	1,589	1,907	1,595	1,578	1,680	1,891	1,640	1,748	20,261
Closed	1,903	1,873	1,845	1,516	1,633	1,844	1,319	1,651	1,817	1,831	1,155	1,437	19,824
Open Cases	10,198	10,008	9,625	9,732	9,623	9,553	9,731	9,759	9,530	9,522	9,864	10,025	

Source: Horizon, Manage Appeals & MPESC

At the end of September 2026, the Planning Inspectorate had 10,025 cases open. More information on how the number of open cases has changed over the past 12 months, is in Table 3 and Figure 3 above.

For wider context on planning activity, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government publishes national statistics on planning applications in England. These can be found in the [‘Live tables on planning application statistics - GOV.UK’](#).

The open cases comprised of 8,177 cases being handled through written representations; 307 through hearings; and 265 through inquiries, as well as 1,276 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.

Table 4: Open cases by procedure and stage, as of end of September 2026.

Note 1: There are 1,276 cases that have no procedure type recorded (see Background Quality Report for more detail) These are excluded from the row and column totals in the table below. They have been added to the overall total.

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.

Stage	Written Representations	Hearings	Inquiries	Total
Case received but yet to be deemed valid	352	0	0	352
Case deemed valid but yet to “start”	689	18	48	755
Case started but event not yet happened	5,597	182	127	5,906
Event happened but decision not yet issued	1,539	107	90	1,736
Total	8,177	307	265	10,025

Source: Horizon, Manage Appeals & MPESC

Decisions by Procedure

The large majority of decisions over the past 12 months, 16,966 were made on written representations. This is 95% of all appeal decisions made with a procedure allocated. Table 5 shows that written representation decisions have varied from 1,002 to 1,614 per month over the past 12 months.

There were 593 decisions made on hearings during the last 12 months, the monthly average being 49. During September 2026, 41 decisions were made for hearings. In September 2026, 20 decisions were made for inquiries. Decisions for inquiries per month over the last 12 months have ranged between 19 and 36.

Table 5 below gives the numbers of appeal decisions made broken down by whether the case was dealt with by written representations, hearings, or inquiries.

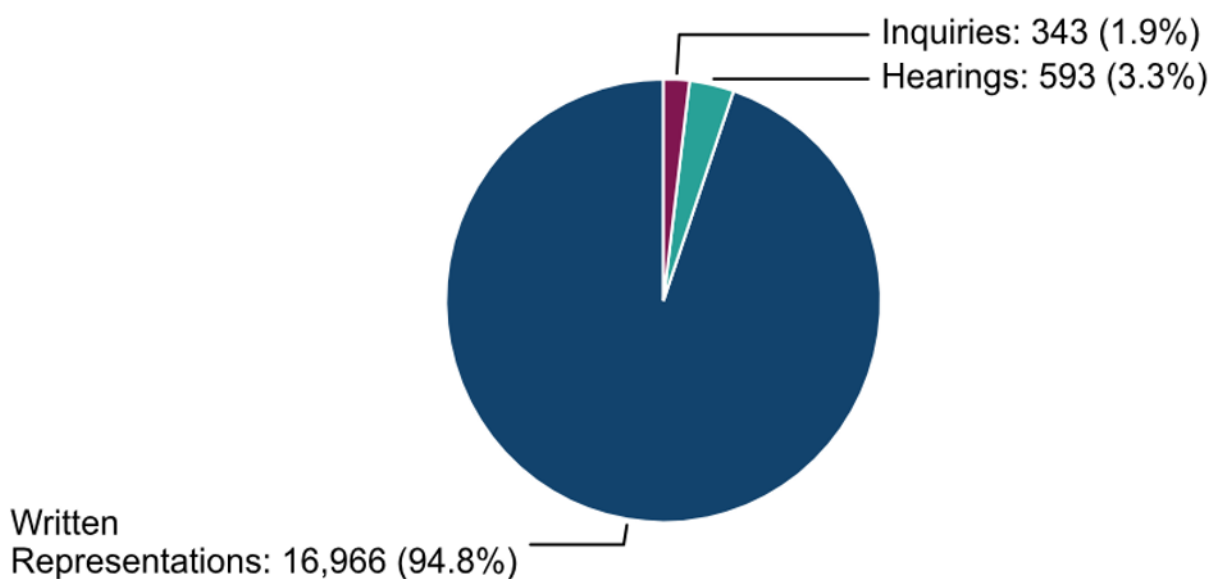
Table 5: Appeal Decisions by Procedure; October 2025 to September 2026.

Note 1: There are 576 appeal decisions that have no procedure type recorded (see Background Quality Report for more detail) These are excluded from the procedure totals in the table below. They have been added to the overall total.

Month	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	Jun-26	Jul-26	Aug-26	Sep-26	Total
Written Representations	1,604	1,614	1,545	1,259	1,426	1,614	1,192	1,336	1,526	1,574	1,002	1,274	16,966
Hearings	49	59	52	39	41	53	39	49	73	61	37	41	593
Inquiries	19	31	34	33	31	29	26	36	27	35	22	20	343
Total	1,728	1,750	1,697	1,369	1,547	1,764	1,293	1,469	1,669	1,730	1,097	1,365	18,478

Source: Horizon, Manage Appeals & MPESC

Figure 5 – Appeal Decisions by Procedure; October 2025 to September 2026.



Source: Horizon, Manage Appeals & MPESC

Procedure Type

Table 6 below shows decision timeliness broken down by the procedure type. Hearings and inquiries have typically been more variable than written representations. Because 95% of cases with a procedure code allocated 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.

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 to decision for written representations over the 12 months to September 2026 is 18 weeks. The median time for hearings over the 12 months to September 2026 is 24 weeks. The median time to decide for inquiries over the 12 months to September 2026 was 27 weeks.

Table 6: Mean and Median Time to Decision, with Standard Deviation, by Procedure; October 2025 to September 2026.

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

Note 2: There are 576 appeal decisions that have no procedure type recorded (see Background Quality Report for more detail) These are excluded from the procedure totals in the table below. They have been added to the overall total.

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

Measure	Procedure	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	Jun-26	Jul-26	Aug-26	Sep-26	Total
Valid to decision (median weeks)	WR	19.1	17.7	17.6	18.4	17.7	17.4	17.6	18.0	17.7	17.1	17.4	18.7	17.9
	HRG	22.1	24.7	24.1	24.0	24.6	24.9	21.7	24.0	20.6	24.3	23.7	22.1	23.6
	INQ	26.0	26.0	30.6	26.0	26.0	40.4	25.1	27.1	29.0	27.1	25.1	26.7	26.9
	All	19.9	18.3	18.6	19.1	18.9	18.1	18.1	18.9	18.1	17.6	18.0	19.0	18.4
Valid to decision (mean weeks)	WR	28.1	26.5	27.5	30.0	29.6	29.9	26.6	30.3	26.3	26.0	25.5	26.8	27.8
	HRG	37.2	30.1	30.4	31.7	28.6	30.6	24.8	28.0	29.2	30.1	35.5	32.0	30.6
	INQ	31.8	41.8	41.6	41.5	33.6	48.2	33.1	34.6	37.5	37.9	44.8	30.4	38.4
	All	29.4	27.9	28.7	30.7	30.3	31.0	27.2	30.8	27.2	26.8	26.4	26.9	28.7
Standard Deviation (weeks)	WR	24.7	25.4	25.2	27.6	27.9	31.1	26.1	29.8	25.0	27.2	24.4	23.2	26.7
	HRG	34.2	25.0	16.9	21.3	18.0	24.8	12.9	16.3	29.7	22.0	36.5	27.1	25.0
	INQ	15.1	35.2	27.0	37.7	26.0	29.5	28.9	15.5	31.8	29.6	32.3	9.3	28.7
	All	25.8	26.5	25.5	27.8	27.9	31.0	25.9	29.3	25.8	27.7	25.4	23.3	27.0
Decisions	WR	1,604	1,614	1,545	1,259	1,426	1,614	1,192	1,336	1,526	1,574	1,002	1,274	16,966
	HRG	49	59	52	39	41	53	39	49	73	61	37	41	593
	INQ	19	31	34	33	31	29	26	36	27	35	22	20	343
	Total	1,728	1,750	1,697	1,369	1,547	1,764	1,293	1,469	1,669	1,730	1,097	1,365	18,478

Source: Horizon, Manage Appeals & MPESC

The standard deviation information indicates that for all three procedures, there is considerable variation, meaning times are widely spread about the mean.

Planning Inquiry Decisions

Table 7 presents the number and timeliness of planning appeal inquiry decisions. Previous releases separated these according to whether cases followed the Rosewell process. For this release, we have not been able to accurately distinguish between Rosewell and non-Rosewell cases. We have therefore withheld the breakdown because it would not accurately represent activity. The figures below combine all planning appeal inquiry decisions. Further information is provided in the Background Quality Report.

Table 7: Decisions, Median and Mean Time to Decision, Planning Inquiry Cases; October 2025 to September 2026.

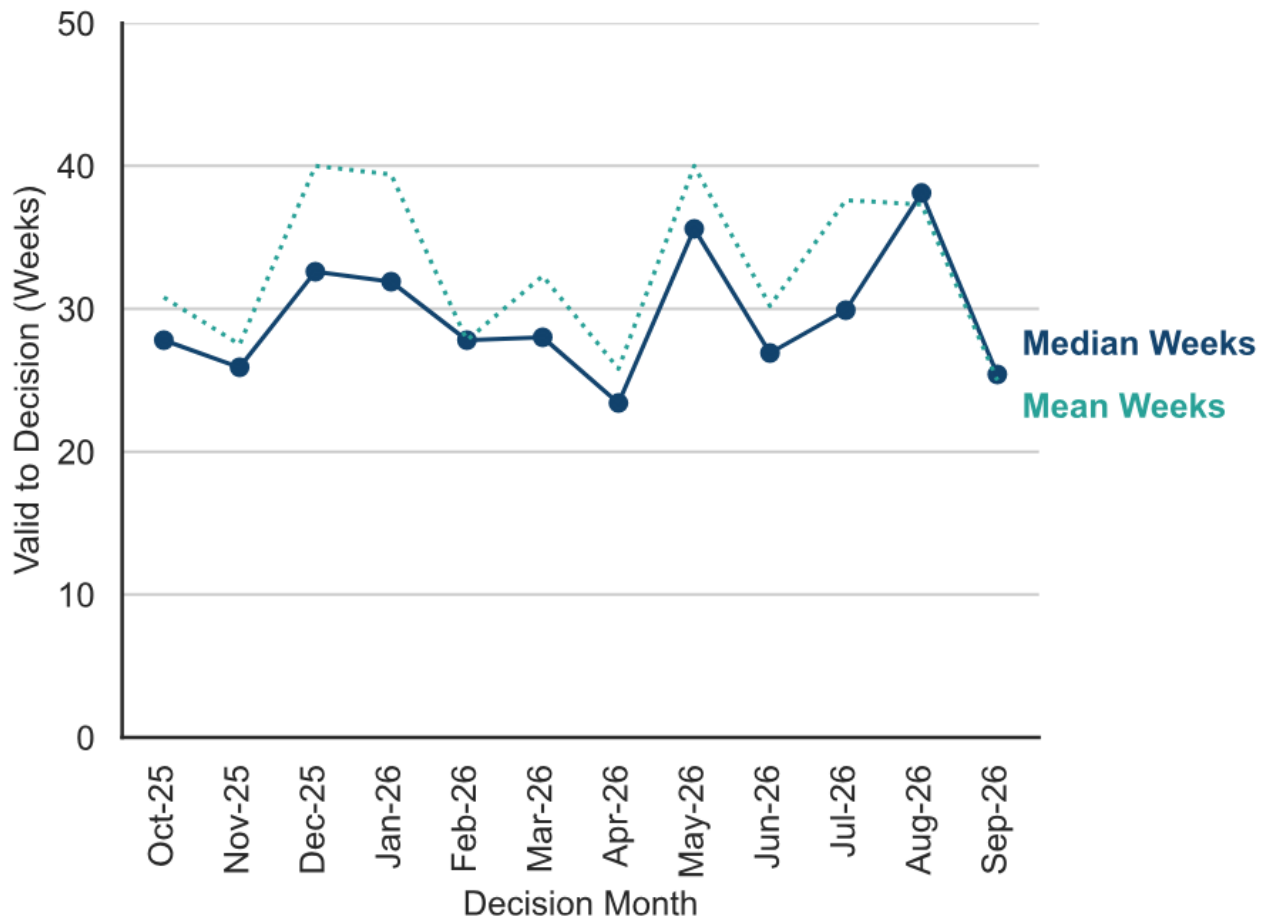
Note: where there are fewer than 20 decisions, the measures mean, median and standard deviation are less meaningful

Measure	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	Jun-26	Jul-26	Aug-26	Sep-26	Total
Decisions	6	11	20	13	10	13	10	22	16	20	7	7	155
Median (weeks)	27.8	25.9	32.6	31.9	27.8	28.0	23.4	35.6	26.9	29.9	38.1	25.4	28.7
Mean (weeks)	30.8	27.5	40.0	39.4	27.8	32.3	25.8	40.0	30.2	37.6	37.3	25.0	34.2
St. Dev. (weeks)	7.8	8.6	17.4	19.3	4.0	10.4	8.3	16.2	8.3	20.0	12.3	4.0	15.0

Source: Horizon, Manage Appeals & MPESC

Figure 6 below shows the mean and median time to decision for planning inquiry cases.

Figure 6: Median and Mean Time to Decision, Planning Inquiry Cases; October 2025 to September 2026.



Source: Horizon, Manage Appeals & MPESC

Decisions by Casework Category

The majority of cases decided over the past 12 months were planning (14,368). This is about 78% of all appeal decisions made. There were 2,978 enforcement decisions and 1,132 specialist decisions. These totals are also shown in Table 8 below and Figure 7 below.

Trends for planning decisions show similar patterns to written representations. The average number of enforcement decisions over the past 12 months was 248. Specialist casework figures continue to vary each month, from a high of 139 in March 2025 to a low of 57 in August 2026.

Table 8: Appeal Decisions by Casework Category; October 2025 to September 2026.

Month	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	Jun-26	Jul-26	Aug-26	Sep-26	Total
Planning	1,327	1,406	1,312	1,038	1,166	1,327	1,015	1,120	1,325	1,377	863	1,092	14,368
Enforcement	295	243	259	256	275	298	212	269	251	251	153	216	2,978
Specialist	106	101	126	75	106	139	66	80	93	102	81	57	1,132
Total	1,728	1,750	1,697	1,369	1,547	1,764	1,293	1,469	1,669	1,730	1,097	1,365	18,478

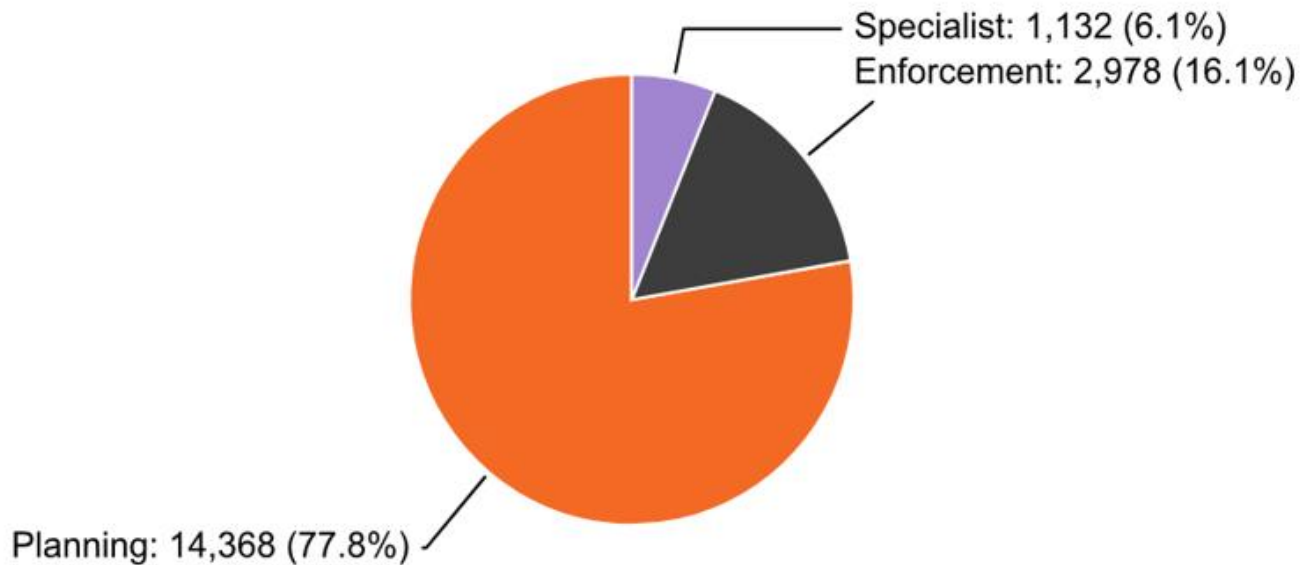
Source: Horizon, Manage Appeals & MPESC

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

Figure 7 – Appeal Decisions by Casework Category; October 2025 to September 2026.



Source: Horizon, Manage Appeals & MPESC

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 9 below shows the time taken to decide, in planning cases, in enforcement cases, and in specialist cases, as does Figure 8.

Planning cases, which account for the majority of decisions, have a lower median time to decision than enforcement cases and more consistent decision times than specialist cases.

Table 9: Median, Mean and Standard Deviation of Time to Decision – Planning, Enforcement, Specialist Cases; October 2025 to September 2026.

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

Casework Category	Measure	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	Jun-26	Jul-26	Aug-26	Sep-26	Total
Planning Cases	Valid to Decision (median weeks)	16.9	16.0	15.9	16.6	15.7	16.0	16.0	16.4	16.4	16.1	16.1	17.3	16.1
	Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	19.5	18.6	19.4	19.7	19.3	18.9	17.7	18.9	18.0	18.0	17.2	18.6	18.7
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	10.2	10.9	12.2	11.7	12.9	12.9	10.0	11.7	10.0	12.5	7.4	10.2	11.3
Enforcement Cases	Valid to Decision (median weeks)	65.1	71.3	61.4	66.7	60.9	75.0	64.0	74.0	62.9	64.3	69.0	65.1	66.4
	Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	65.7	70.0	67.2	68.8	68.1	76.3	67.7	75.0	66.0	68.2	68.0	67.1	69.2
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	32.7	34.9	32.2	32.6	33.0	39.7	35.9	33.8	31.4	37.7	31.8	26.4	34.0

Specialist Cases	Valid to Decision (median weeks)	43.3	52.0	44.0	40.0	44.9	45.0	43.7	42.3	36.9	32.0	37.3	25.6	41.3
	Valid to Decision (mean weeks)	53.3	55.8	47.1	52.9	52.8	49.6	44.2	48.9	54.8	45.8	50.1	34.5	49.8
	St. dev. of decision (weeks)	34.0	36.8	27.9	39.6	34.6	33.1	23.6	34.1	44.4	44.0	42.5	29.7	36.1

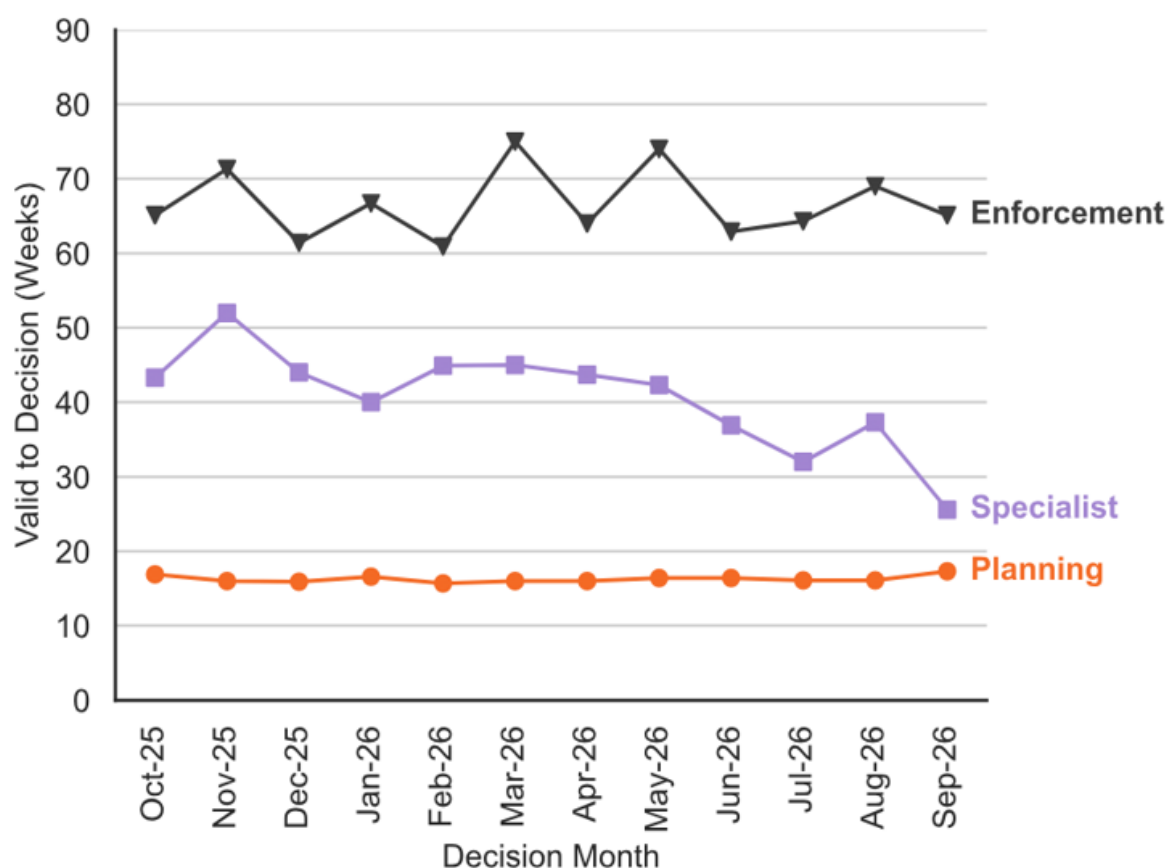
Source: Horizon, Manage Appeals & MPESC

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 66 weeks.

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

Figure 8 – Median Time to Decision by Casework Category: October 2025 to September 2026.



Source: Horizon, Manage Appeals & MPESC

Note that this release includes 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 for further details.

Inspectors

Table 10 below shows the number of Inspectors in the Planning Inspectorate in each month from October 2025 to September 2026. 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 491 Planning Inspectors employed by the Inspectorate in September 2026 – with a full-time equivalent of 450.

Table 10: Planning Inspectors – Headcount and FTE; October 2025 to September 2026 (at end of month).

Month	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	Jun-26	Jul-26	Aug-26	Sep-26
Headcount	455	476	473	481	481	480	476	471	469	465	461	491
FTE	411.2	431.7	429.4	437.3	437.1	435.5	432.0	429.0	427.7	424.2	420.8	450.0

Source: Employee Central

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).

Exploring Section 78 Planning Appeals

The Inspectorate has published a series of tables of quarterly data alongside this bulletin. Some of the data published is on casework types that The Planning Inspectorate deals with that are larger in scale, but smaller in volume, than the appeals decisions that are the subject of the preceding sections of these statistics. Some examples of this are Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects and Local Plans, where volumes never go into the hundreds, and the time between submission to report issue can be over a year. Other data breaks appeals down into more detail than in the monthly totals.

Appeals against refusal of Planning Permission (Section 78 appeals)

The largest volume of casework dealt with by the Planning Inspectorate are appeals against refusal of Planning Permission, which are made under Section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The analysis below deals with just this casework type. Similar data for other casework types can be found in the published tables.

Number of appeals received compared to decisions issued.

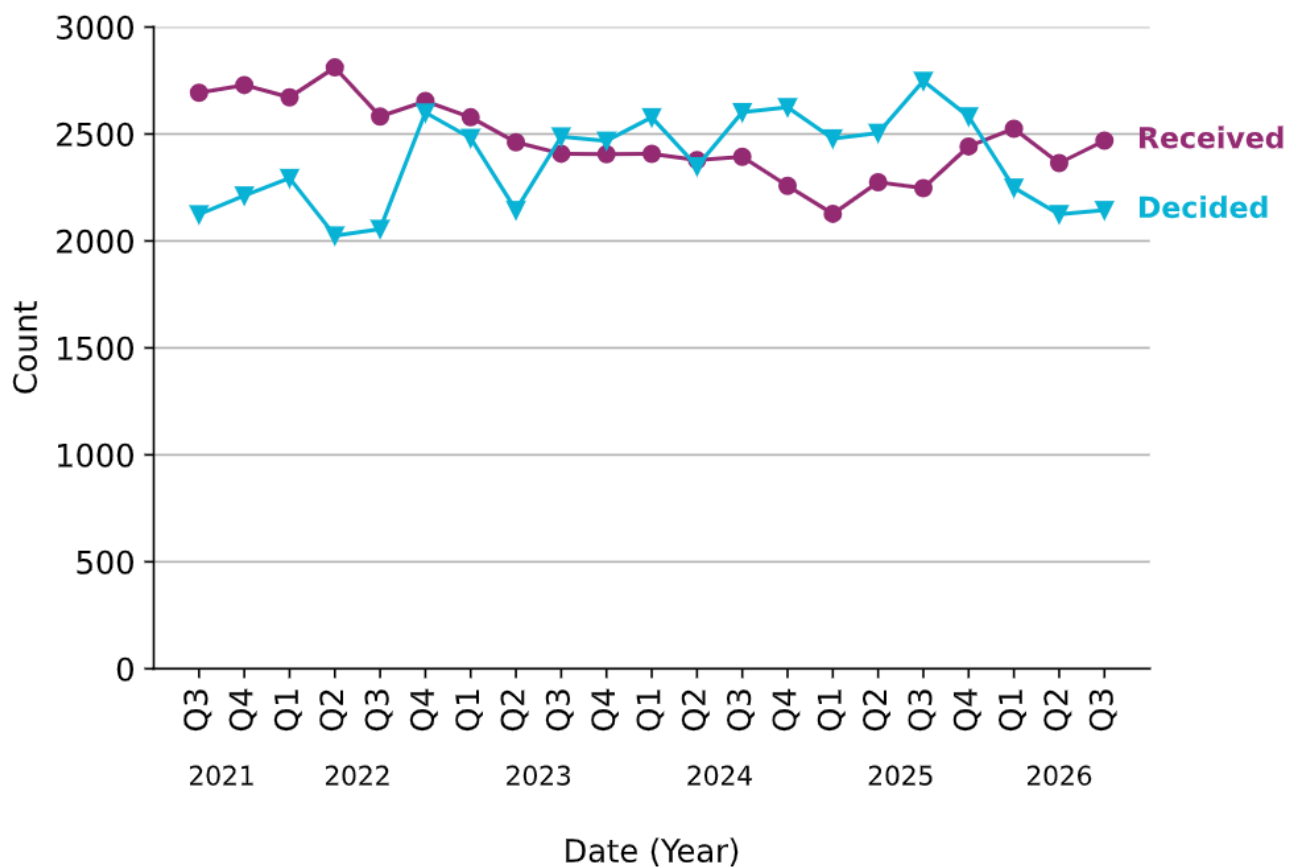
In the last twelve months, October 2025 to September 2026, there have been 9,800 Section 78 planning appeals (s78) received, 10% higher than for the period October 2024 to September 2025.

In the last five years (October 2021 to September 2026) the highest level of quarterly receipts (2,811) occurred in April to June 2022 and the highest number of decisions (2,748) was in July to September 2025. Over the past year the average number of receipts per quarter was 2,450 and the average number of decisions per quarter was 2,275.

The number of appeals received in July to September 2026 (2,469) was 9.9% higher than the same period in 2025.

Figure 9: Number of s78 Planning appeal, receipts and decisions, July 2021 to September 2026.

Note: quarters are in calendar year e.g. January to March is Q1



Source: Horizon & Picaso and Manage Appeals. Full published data in Tables 2.1 and Table 2.4. See Annex C, Table A, for full data table.

The number of decisions issued in July to September 2026, was 0.9% higher than the previous quarter and 22.0% lower than the corresponding quarter last year.

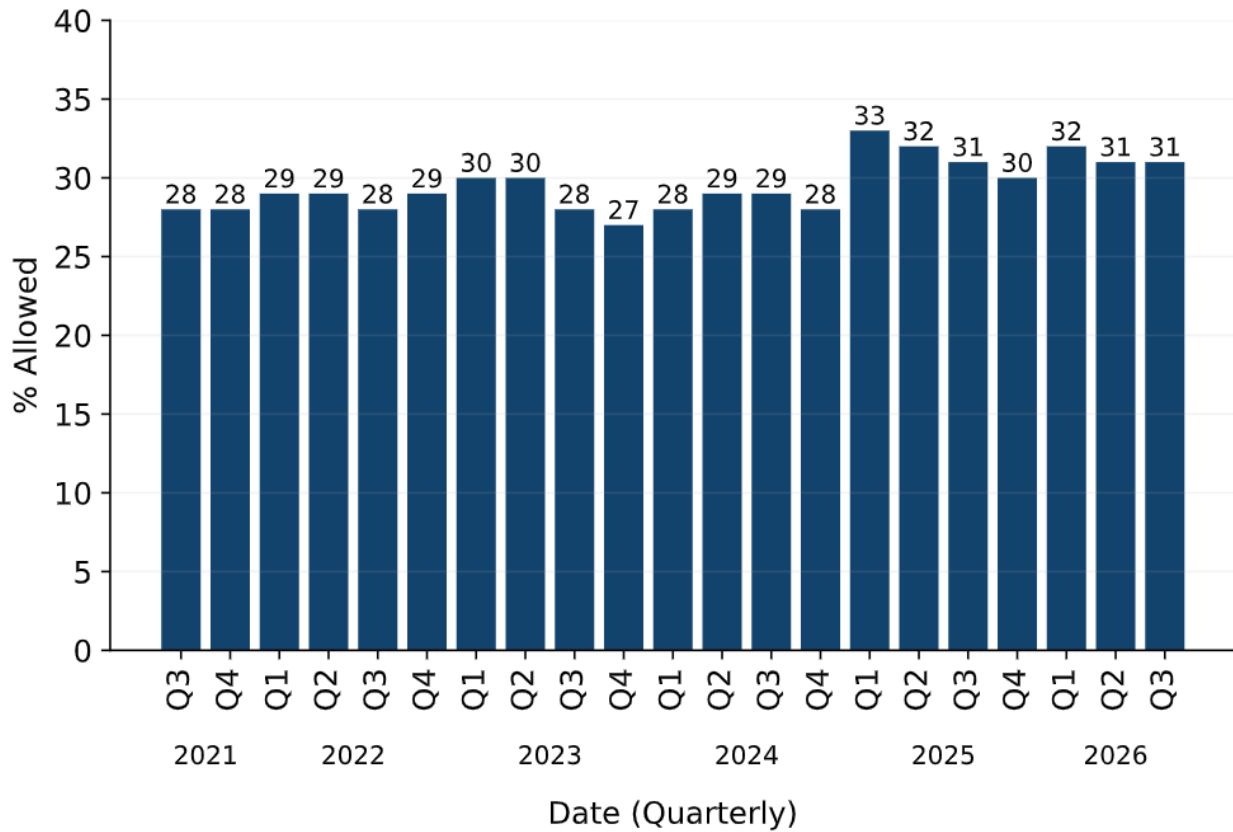
Appeals Allowed

The percentage of Section 78 planning appeals that were allowed in the latest quarter was 31%, the same as the previous quarter (see figure 9). There were 670 appeals allowed between July and September 2026, 1 more than in the previous quarter.

The consistency in the overall percentage allowed is heavily influenced by the number of written representations appeals allowed, as this procedure type contributes by far the greatest number of decisions each year. There has been slightly more variation in the percentage allowed for hearings and inquiries. See Figure 10 below for further details.

Figure 10: S78 planning appeals, percentage allowed, by quarter, July 2021 to September 2026.

Note: quarters are in calendar year e.g. January to March is Q1

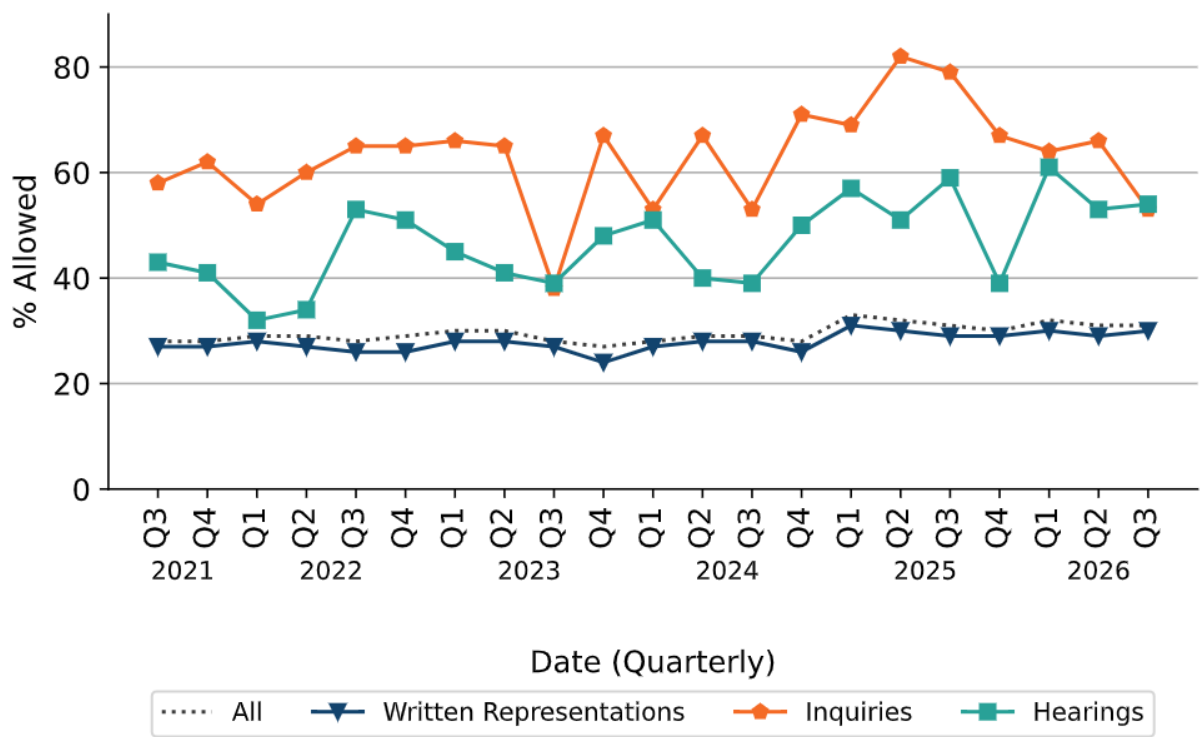


Source: Horizon & Picaso and Manage Appeals. Full published data in Table 2.4 s78 planning appeals decided.

See Annex C Table B, for full data table

Figure 11: S78 planning appeals, percentage allowed by procedure type, by quarter, July 2021 to September 2026.

Note: quarters are in calendar year e.g. January to March is Q1



Source: Horizon and Picaso and Manage Appeals. Full published data in Table 2.4 s78 planning appeals decided.
See Annex C Table B, for full data table

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.

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

Procedure	Measure	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	Jun-26	Jul-26	Aug-26	Sep-26	Total
Written Representations	Decisions	1,290	1,356	1,262	994	1,125	1,274	979	1,059	1,257	1,306	834	1,058	13,794
	Median Average Weeks	16.7	15.7	15.4	16.3	15.4	15.6	15.3	16.1	16.1	15.9	15.9	17.1	16.0
	Mean Average Weeks	19.2	18.2	19.0	19.3	19.1	18.5	17.4	18.2	17.7	17.4	16.9	18.3	18.3
	Standard Deviation	9.8	10.6	11.8	11.4	13.0	12.6	9.7	11.0	10.0	12.1	7.1	9.7	11.0
Hearings	Decisions	31	39	30	31	31	40	26	39	52	51	22	27	419
	Median Average Weeks	23.3	24.7	22.2	22.0	21.6	23.6	22.2	22.9	18.9	21.7	22.6	24.0	22.1
	Mean Average Weeks	28.3	29.6	24.6	25.2	24.9	27.0	25.9	25.9	20.6	24.7	23.1	29.8	25.6
	Standard Deviation	17.9	15.1	11.5	11.0	8.8	16.3	15.5	14.6	6.5	9.7	5.6	18.1	13.2
Inquiries	Decisions	6	11	20	13	10	13	10	22	16	20	7	7	155
	Median Average Weeks	27.8	25.9	32.6	31.9	27.8	28.0	23.4	35.6	26.9	29.9	38.1	25.4	28.7
	Mean Average Weeks	30.8	27.5	40.0	39.4	27.8	32.3	25.8	40.0	30.2	37.6	37.3	25.0	34.2
	Standard Deviation	7.8	8.6	17.4	19.3	4.0	10.4	8.3	16.2	8.3	20.0	12.3	4.0	15.0
All Planning Cases	Decisions	1,327	1,406	1,312	1,038	1,166	1,327	1,015	1,120	1,325	1,377	863	1,092	14,368
	Median Average Weeks	16.9	16.0	15.9	16.6	15.7	16.0	16.0	16.4	16.4	16.1	16.1	17.3	16.1
	Mean Average Weeks	19.5	18.6	19.4	19.7	19.3	18.9	17.7	18.9	18.0	18.0	17.2	18.6	18.7
	Standard Deviation	10.2	10.9	12.2	11.7	12.9	12.9	10.0	11.7	10.0	12.5	7.4	10.2	11.3

Enforcement

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

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

Procedure	Measure	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	Jun-26	Jul-26	Aug-26	Sep-26	Total
Written Representations	Decisions	271	219	232	233	249	281	187	252	230	235	136	199	2,724
	Median Average Weeks	68.4	74.0	63.7	69.0	64.0	75.9	75.6	79.4	66.6	66.9	74.1	68.4	70.9
	Mean Average Weeks	69.0	74.1	71.0	72.1	72.5	78.6	72.9	78.5	69.4	70.7	73.6	70.8	72.9
	Standard Deviation	31.4	32.9	30.6	31.5	31.5	39.1	33.9	32.0	30.5	37.3	29.2	24.1	32.7
Hearings	Decisions	12	14	18	7	7	11	13	5	17	7	10	11	132
	Median Average Weeks	17.8	20.2	24.4	33.4	24.7	24.9	21.4	28.0	30.4	25.1	24.4	19.3	24.4
	Mean Average Weeks	29.4	30.1	31.5	53.7	23.7	29.2	22.6	24.8	27.8	38.8	23.8	20.0	29.0
	Standard Deviation	31.9	17.0	14.7	32.0	2.2	12.6	3.1	4.1	7.9	26.1	5.5	5.5	18.0
Inquiries	Decisions	12	10	9	16	19	6	12	12	4	9	7	6	122
	Median Average Weeks	25.9	21.6	24.1	24.3	26.0	33.4	23.5	22.4	34.7	24.7	22.7	25.6	24.8
	Mean Average Weeks	27.7	35.7	39.5	26.5	26.8	53.2	35.5	23.0	31.4	24.2	22.2	31.8	30.2
	Standard Deviation	7.3	41.8	40.7	5.4	2.8	38.4	33.6	1.5	5.8	2.3	2.2	9.7	22.8
All Enforcement Cases	Decisions	295	243	259	256	275	298	212	269	251	251	153	216	2,978
	Median Average Weeks	65.1	71.3	61.4	66.7	60.9	75.0	64.0	74.0	62.9	64.3	69.0	65.1	66.4
	Mean Average Weeks	65.7	70.0	67.2	68.8	68.1	76.3	67.7	75.0	66.0	68.2	68.0	67.1	69.2
	Standard Deviation	32.7	34.9	32.2	32.6	33.0	39.7	35.9	33.8	31.4	37.7	31.8	26.4	34.0

Specialist

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

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

Procedure	Measure	Oct-25	Nov-25	Dec-25	Jan-26	Feb-26	Mar-26	Apr-26	May-26	Jun-26	Jul-26	Aug-26	Sep-26	Total
Written Representations	Decisions	43	39	51	32	52	59	26	25	39	33	32	17	448
	Median Average Weeks	31.3	41.3	32.1	41.8	34.4	33.0	37.0	44.4	31.0	34.4	35.1	37.6	34.6
	Mean Average Weeks	38.7	48.5	40.7	55.3	51.5	45.8	40.9	57.0	49.4	48.7	48.5	39.2	46.9
	Standard Deviation	27.0	33.9	29.1	39.3	35.5	36.1	22.3	41.3	44.4	44.9	39.1	22.2	35.9
Hearings	Decisions	6	6	4	1	3	2	0	5	4	3	5	3	42
	Median Average Weeks	92.1	31.9	65.4	77.4	95.6	111.9	-	47.7	147.1	92.6	153.9	126.6	80.7
	Mean Average Weeks	98.9	33.8	68.6	77.4	77.6	111.9	-	48.1	147.5	101.6	113.4	126.6	86.8
	Standard Deviation	39.2	62.9	6.2	0.0	32.3	57.1	-	21.6	19.0	30.4	51.2	17.1	52.6
Inquiries	Decisions	1	10	5	4	2	10	4	2	7	6	8	7	66
	Median Average Weeks	87.6	46.6	35.9	104.0	128.0	49.4	28.4	44.3	30.4	32.7	77.0	29.9	46.6
	Mean Average Weeks	87.6	63.7	51.8	108.1	128.0	65.8	48.0	44.3	57.6	63.8	74.9	34.6	64.3
	Standard Deviation	0.0	35.8	25.3	71.3	28.1	29.0	42.5	13.4	56.3	57.6	38.7	10.2	45.1
All Enforcement Cases	Decisions	106	101	126	75	106	139	66	80	93	102	81	57	1132
	Median Average Weeks	43.3	52.0	44.0	40.0	44.9	45.0	43.7	42.3	36.9	32.0	37.3	25.6	41.3
	Mean Average Weeks	53.3	55.8	47.1	52.9	52.8	49.6	44.2	48.9	54.8	45.8	50.1	34.5	49.8
	Standard Deviation	34.0	36.8	27.9	39.6	34.6	33.1	23.6	34.1	44.4	44.0	42.5	29.7	36.1

Annex B – Detailed Information on timeliness (September 2026)

The information below shows the number and length of decisions made in September 2026:

Note: 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	18.4	19.8	669
	Hearings	24.0	29.8	27
	Inquiries	25.4	25.0	7
Householder appeals	Written Representations	11.9	13.7	278
Enforcement appeals	Written Representations	68.4	70.8	199
	Hearings	19.3	20.0	11
	Inquiries	25.6	31.8	6

The information published below shows the time taken for different stages of the appeals process:

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.

	s78 planning appeals			Householder appeals
	Written Representations	Hearings	Inquiries	
Weeks between valid date & start date				
Median (average)	0.9	2.7	2.4	0.9
Mean (average)	1.4	3.5	4.5	1.1
Cases that started in September 2026	703	35	19	350
Weeks between start date & event date				
Median (average)	12.9	13.9	18.7	7.4
Mean (average)	13.4	16.1	20.0	8.6
Cases where an event occurred during September 2026	718	32	21	282
Weeks between event date & decision date				
Median (average)	4.3	6.0	6.4	3.0
Mean (average)	5.3	8.5	6.7	4.2
Cases that have been decided in September 2026	667	26	7	278

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 – Volume Tables

Table A: s78 Planning Appeals received and decided, by quarter, October 2021 to September 2026.

Quarter	Received	Decided
Oct – Dec 21	2,729	2,212
Jan – Mar 22	2,671	2,294
Apr – Jun 22	2,811	2,025
Jul – Sep 22	2,582	2,056
Oct – Dec 22	2,654	2,600
Jan – Mar 23	2,578	2,481
Apr – Jun 23	2,461	2,144
Jul – Sep 23	2,408	2,488
Oct – Dec 23	2,406	2,468
Jan – Mar 24	2,407	2,578
Apr – Jun 24	2,378	2,349
Jul – Sep 24	2,393	2,602
Oct – Dec 24	2,258	2,625
Jan – Mar 25	2,127	2,479
Apr – Jun 25	2,275	2,505
Jul – Sep 25	2,247	2,748
Oct – Dec 25	2,442	2,582
Jan – Mar 26	2,525	2,249
Apr – Jun 26	2,364	2,125
Jul – Sep 26	2,469	2,144

Table B: s78 Planning Appeals, percentage allowed by procedure type, October 2021 to September 2026

Quarter	Written Representations	Hearings	Inquiries	All
Oct – Dec 21	27%	41%	62%	28%
Jan – Mar 22	28%	32%	54%	29%
Apr – Jun 22	27%	34%	60%	29%
Jul – Sep 22	26%	53%	65%	28%
Oct – Dec 22	26%	51%	65%	29%
Jan – Mar 23	28%	45%	66%	30%
Apr – Jun 23	28%	41%	65%	30%
Jul – Sep 23	27%	39%	38%	28%
Oct – Dec 23	24%	48%	67%	27%
Jan – Mar 24	27%	51%	53%	28%
Apr – Jun 24	28%	40%	67%	29%
Jul – Sep 24	28%	39%	53%	29%
Oct – Dec 24	26%	50%	71%	28%
Jan – Mar 25	31%	57%	69%	33%
Apr – Jun 25	30%	51%	82%	32%
Jul – Sep 25	29%	59%	79%	31%
Oct – Dec 25	29%	39%	67%	30%
Jan – Mar 26	30%	61%	64%	32%
Apr – Jun 26	29%	53%	66%	31%
Jul – Sep 26	30%	54%	53%	31%

Table C: s78 Planning Appeals, number allowed by procedure type, October 2021 to September 2026

Quarter	Written Representations	Hearings	Inquiries	All
Oct – Dec 21	553	41	24	618
Jan – Mar 22	595	31	36	662
Apr – Jun 22	509	37	34	580
Jul – Sep 22	484	60	31	575
Oct – Dec 22	602	89	51	742
Jan – Mar 23	639	66	42	747
Apr – Jun 23	555	61	30	646
Jul – Sep 23	618	54	26	698
Oct – Dec 23	558	63	40	661
Jan – Mar 24	644	63	27	734
Apr – Jun 24	607	46	29	682
Jul – Sep 24	672	59	26	757
Oct – Dec 24	642	63	36	741
Jan – Mar 25	694	90	37	821
Apr – Jun 25	701	59	40	800

Jul – Sep 25	762	63	31	856
Oct – Dec 25	718	39	24	781
Jan – Mar 26	635	57	21	713
Apr – Jun 26	580	60	29	669
Jul – Sep 26	602	51	17	670

Annex D – 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 2	Events Held: October, November and December 2025, February, March, April, May and June 2026
Table 2	Decisions: October, November and December 2025, January, February, March, April, May and June 2026
Table 3	Received: October, November and December 2025, January, February, March, April, May and June 2026
Table 3	Closed: October, November and December 2025, February, March, May and June 2026
Table 3	Open: October, November and December 2025, January, February, March, April, May and June 2026
Table 5	Written Representations: October, November and December 2025, January, February and March 2026
Table 5	Total: October, November and December 2025, January, February and March 2026
Table 6	Hearings Valid to decision (Median weeks): December 2025
Table 6	Inquiries Valid to decision (Median weeks): November 2025 and March 2026
Table 6	Hearings Valid to decision (Mean weeks): October, November and December 2025
Table 6	Inquiries Valid to decision (Mean weeks): October, November and December 2025, January, February and March 2026
Table 6	Hearings Standard Deviation (weeks): October, November and December 2025
Table 6	Inquiries Standard Deviation (weeks): October, November and December 2025, January, February and March 2026
Table 8	Specialist: October, November and December 2025, January, February, March, April and May 2026
Table 8	Total: October, November and December 2025, January, February, March, April, May and June 2026
Table 9	Planning: Standard deviation of decision (weeks): April 2026
Table 9	Specialist: Valid to decision (Median weeks): October, November and December 2025, January, February, March and June 2026
Table 9	Specialist: Valid to decision (Mean weeks): October, November and December 2025, January, February, March, May and June 2026

Table 9	Specialist: Standard deviation of decision (weeks): October and November 2025, January, February and March 2026
Annex A: Planning	Hearings (Decisions): October 2025, March and June 2026
Annex A: Planning	Inquiries (Decisions): October and November 2025, February 2026
Annex A: Planning	Inquiries (Median): October and November 2025, February 2026
Annex A: Planning	Inquiries (Mean): February 2026
Annex A: Planning	Inquiries (Standard Deviation): October 2025
Annex A: Enforcement	Written Representations (Decisions): October and December 2025, May 2026
Annex A: Enforcement	Inquiries (Decisions): February 2026
Annex A: Enforcement	Inquiries (Mean): February 2026
Annex A: Enforcement	Inquiries (Standard Deviation): February 2026
Annex A: Specialist	Written Representations (Decisions): October, November and December 2025, January, February, March and June 2026
Annex A: Specialist	Written Representations (Median weeks): November and December 2025, January, February, March and June 2026
Annex A: Specialist	Written Representations (Mean weeks): October, November and December 2025, January, February, March and June 2026
Annex A: Specialist	Written Representations (Standard Deviation): October, November and December 2025, February, March and June 2026
Annex A: Specialist	Hearings (Decisions): October, November and December 2025
Annex A: Specialist	Hearings (Median weeks): October, November and December 2025
Annex A: Specialist	Hearings (Mean weeks): October, November and December 2025
Annex A: Specialist	Hearings (Standard Deviation): October, November and December 2025
Annex A: Specialist	Inquiries (Decisions): October, November and December 2025, January, February and March 2026
Annex A: Specialist	Inquiries (Median weeks): October, November and December 2025, February and March 2026
Annex A: Specialist	Inquiries (Mean weeks): October, November and December 2025, January, February and March 2026
Annex A: Specialist	Inquiries (Standard Deviation): November 2025, January, February and March 2026

Background notes

Data sources

Horizon / Picaso / Manage Appeals / MPESC – The main casework management systems used for processing appeals casework (note that Picaso is no longer a live system).
Employee central – 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	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. 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.
Measuring weeks	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. 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.

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.

Term	Explanation
Closed	The total number of appeals decided, withdrawn, or turned away.
Decision	The outcome of the case e.g. appeal allowed or rejected. The date of the decision is taken as the date a decision letter is sent to the appellant.
Event	A site visit, hearing, or inquiry (may be virtual)
Event Type	The different options of how an Inspector visits a site for a written representations appeal.
Examinations	The process of examining local plans is dealt with by the Planning Inspectorate. Every Local Planning Authority is required to have a local plan. This includes a vision for the future and plan to address housing needs in the area. 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.

Term	Explanation
Procedure Type	The method by which The Planning Inspectorate processes and decides appeals.
Standard deviation	This is a measure of variability or spread. It is calculated by examining how much each value differs from the mean. A higher standard deviation means the individual decision times vary more widely around the mean.
Written Representations (includes Rights of Way Schedule 14)	Most planning appeals are decided by the written representations' procedure. With this procedure the Inspector considers written evidence from the appellant, the LPA and anyone else who has an interest in the appeal. The site is also likely to be visited.

Contact Us

The Planning Inspectorate welcome feedback on our statistical products. If you have any comments or questions about this publication or about our statistics in general, you can contact us as follows:

Media enquiries 0303 444 5004
email press.office@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Public enquiries email statistics@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

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

email statistics@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

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