

Performance update – September 2021

The latest [official monthly statistics](#) details our performance on appeals casework for the 12 month period to the end of August 2021 for cases in England.

The Planning Inspectorate delivers an appeals, examinations and applications service in England and Wales. We support a fair planning system through deciding planning, enforcement and specialist casework appeals; helping communities shape where they live by examining local plans; and help meet future infrastructure needs by reviewing national infrastructure applications.

Our performance statistics currently only cover our appeals casework. In summary:

- we made 18,075 appeal decisions in the last 12 months, an average of over 1,500 per month
- the mean average time to make an appeal decision across all types of casework in the last 12 months was 27 weeks
- at the end of August 2021, we had 12,526 open cases

See [Appeals: how long they take](#)

Local plan examinations

In August, 2 Final Reports were issued, and 1 new plan was submitted for examination. As of 17 September, we have 64 live examinations.

National Infrastructure examinations

See the register of applications on the National Infrastructure Planning website for a list of pre-application, live and decided applications. As of 22 September 2021, there is currently 1 application at the acceptance stage, 9 applications at the pre-examination stage, 5 are currently being examined, 4 have reached recommendation stage and 11 are at the decision stage.

Autumn and Winter casework arrangements

As a result of the national restrictions during the past 18 months to control the pandemic we have decided fewer cases. We now have more cases waiting for a decision than before the pandemic and recognise that some customers are waiting longer for their decision than we would like. We are working hard to decide more cases and reduce the length of time to make decisions. Our current focus is national infrastructure applications, local plans and cases heard by hearing or inquiry.

This focus will reduce the availability of inspectors to decide other casework over the next few months. This is because national infrastructure,

local plans and hearing and inquiry cases tend to be more complex and take more inspector time.

Last week the Prime Minister and Health Secretary announced a [Plan A and Plan B for managing the virus in England during the autumn and winter to manage the impact on the NHS](#).

Our position on [casework arrangements](#) remains unchanged. In summary:

- hearings and inquiries are again being arranged by local authorities, as they were before the pandemic
- hearings and inquiries are entirely in-person, entirely virtual or a mix of the two
- where in-person elements are planned, the local authority needs to be prepared for the event to be held fully virtually in case pandemic restrictions change

See the [guidance for further details](#).

Looking further beyond to 2022, we are assessing options for longer term, sustained ways of working. This is both on how and where we work as an organisation but also specifically on how we run our events.

Over the summer and into autumn we have been conducting research with our customers, stakeholders and our employees (including inspectors) on the best way to run events in future for the benefit of everyone involved. We expect both blended (which include in-person elements) and virtual events to be part of our future operating model. The events being run by local authorities from 13 September will provide us with valuable evidence to help shape our thinking.

We expect to be able to share more on the future operating model for events in early 2022.

Planning Inspectorate Wales transition to new service in Wales

On 1 October 2021 the staff and functions of Planning Inspectorate Wales will transfer to the Welsh Government and be known as Planning and Environment Decisions Wales – Penderfyniadau Cynllunio ac Amgylchedd Cymru.

In summary:

- planning appeals and other casework handled by the Planning Inspectorate Wales will transfer to the new service
- nationally significant infrastructure projects under the Planning Act 2008 that include locations in Wales will continue under the Planning Inspectorate (England)
- from 16 September, we paused any new submissions of Wales-based cases and evidence online via the Appeals Casework Portal. However, you can still submit cases and evidence by email and post

See [Planning Inspectorate Wales transition to new service news article](#) for further information.