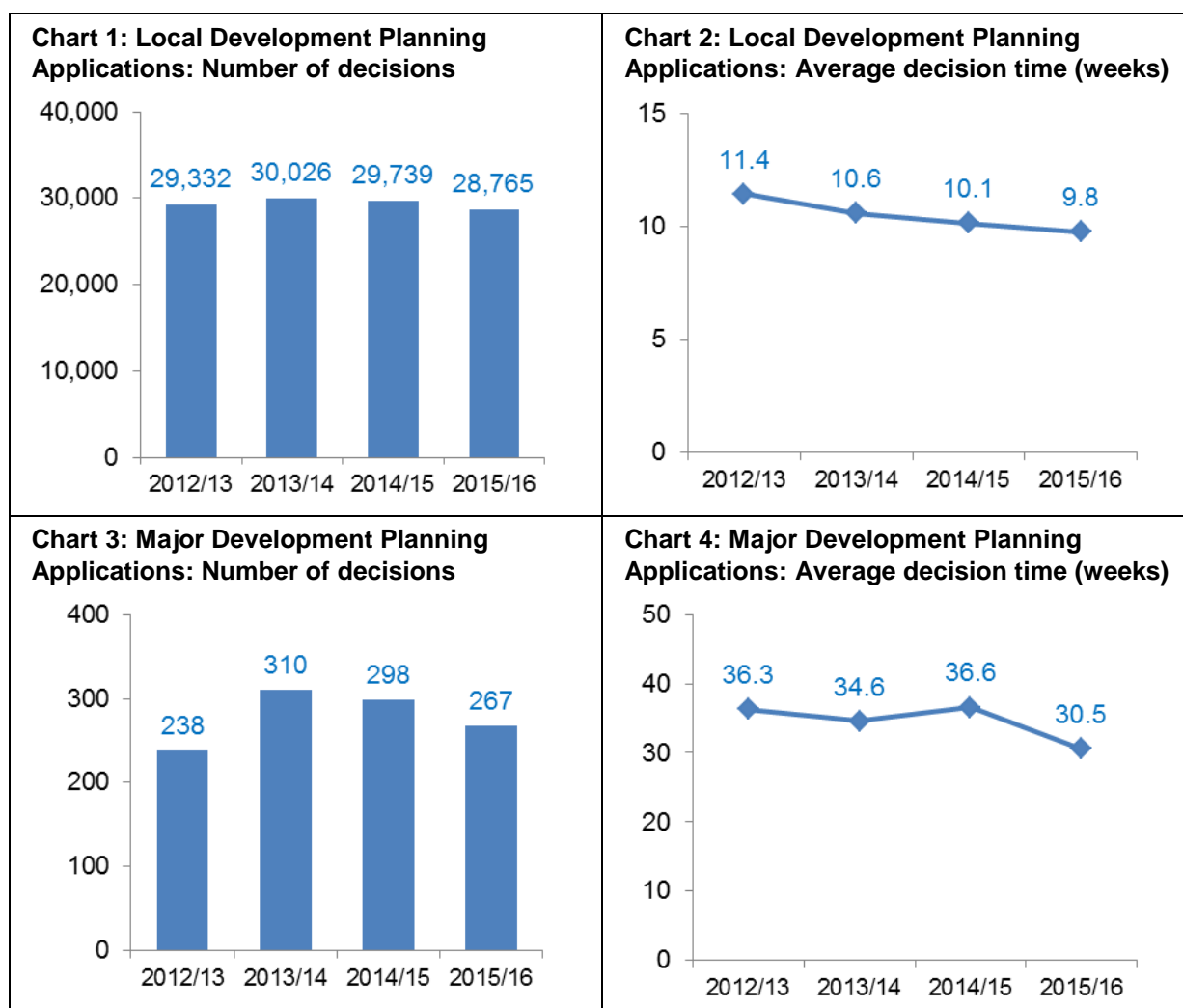


## PEOPLE, COMMUNITIES AND PLACES

# Annual and Quarterly Planning Performance Statistics, 2015/16

This report presents statistics on planning decision-making and timescales across the years 2012/13 to 2015/16. It is based on quarterly data collected by the Scottish Government from Local and Planning Authorities as part of the Planning Performance Framework (introduced in 2012). Longer term trends are also presented where data for earlier years is available in a comparable format.

### Annual Trends (excludes legacy cases and processing agreements)



## **Key Findings for the year 2015/16<sup>1</sup>:**

### **Reduction in planning applications decided in 2015/16 compared with 2014/15.**

- The number of Local Development<sup>2</sup> decisions in 2015/16 totalled 28,765, a decrease of 3% (974 applications) from the previous year. This drop has been largely due to fewer householder, housing, business and industry and electricity generation applications.
- The number of Major Development<sup>3</sup> decisions in 2015/16 totalled 267, a drop of 10% (31 applications) from 2014/15. This decrease has been mostly due to fewer housing, business and industry and electricity generation applications.

### **The overall average decision time for Local Developments has improved compared to 2014/15.**

- Local development decisions have been quicker by an average of almost 3 days per application compared with 2014/15 (9.8 weeks in 2015/16 compared with 10.1 weeks in 2014/15).
- Improvements have been seen in average decision times for all categories of local developments apart from telecommunications and minerals. In particular, the average decision time for local housing developments was 13.7 weeks for 2015/16, more than five days quicker than the previous year (14.5 weeks).
- A total of 19 out of 34 planning authorities have reported year-on-year improvements in their Local Development average decision times.

### **The overall average decision time for Major Developments has improved compared to 2014/15.**

- Major development decisions have been quicker by an average of over 6 weeks per application compared with 2014/15 (30.5 weeks in 2015/16 compared with 36.6 weeks in 2014/15).
- Improvements have been seen in average decision times for all categories of major developments apart from waste management. In particular, the average decision time for major housing developments was 40.0 weeks for 2015/16, almost nine days quicker than the previous year (41.3 weeks).
- Average figures based on a relatively small number of Major Development applications can be skewed by a few lengthy decisions. More than 70% of Major applications in 2015/16 were decided in a time quicker than the average of 30.5 weeks.

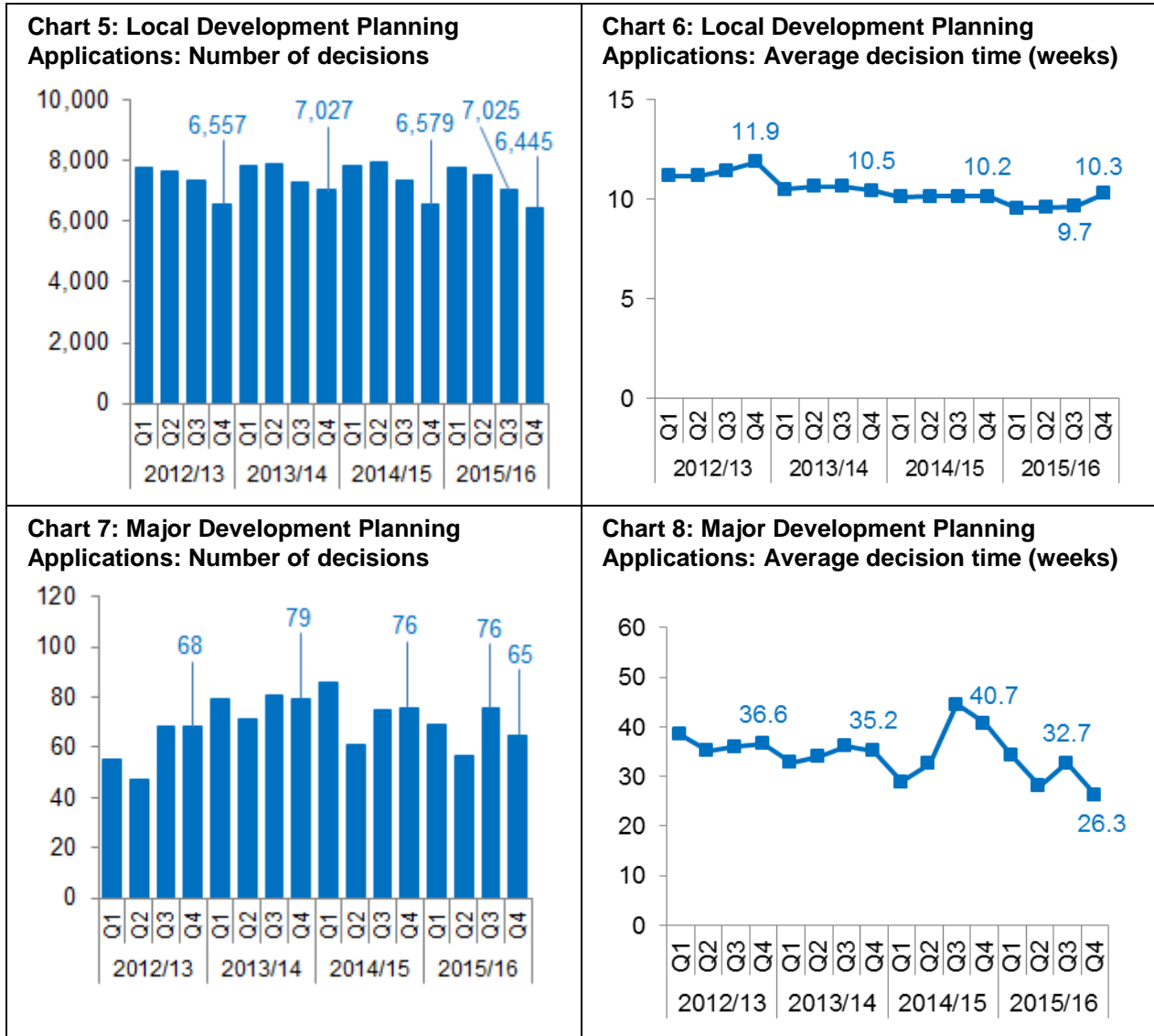
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<sup>1</sup> Figures exclude pre 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2009 legacy cases and processing agreements.

<sup>2</sup> Local developments include applications for household extensions and loft conversions etc, smaller housing and retail developments, as well as various other types of local developments.

<sup>3</sup> Major developments include applications for developments of 50 or more homes, as well as certain waste, water, transport and energy-related developments, larger retail developments, and other types of major developments.

## Quarterly Trends (excludes legacy cases and processing agreements)



### Key Findings for Quarter 4 of 2015/16<sup>4</sup>:

The overall average decision time for Local Developments was slower in quarter 4 of 2015/16 when compared with the previous quarter, but was similar to the equivalent quarter in the previous year.

- For quarter 4 of 2015/16, the average decision time for Local Developments was 10.3 weeks. This is four days slower than the previous quarter (9.7 weeks), but similar to the equivalent quarter in 2014/15 (10.2 weeks).
- Local housing applications were decided in an average of 14.7 weeks, over one week slower than in the previous quarter (13.6 weeks), but similar to the equivalent quarter in the previous year (14.5 weeks).

<sup>4</sup> Figures exclude pre 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2009 legacy cases and processing agreements.

**The overall average decision time for Major Developments in quarter 4 of 2015/16 is the quickest quarterly figure since 2012/13.**

- For quarter 4 of 2015/16, the average decision time for Major Developments was 26.3 weeks, the quickest quarterly figure since the start of this data collection in quarter 1 of 2012/13, over 6 weeks quicker than the previous quarter (32.7 weeks), and over 14 weeks quicker than the equivalent quarter in 2014/15 (40.7 weeks).
- Major housing applications were decided in an average of 30.5 weeks, almost five weeks quicker than in the previous quarter (35.3 weeks), and over 13 weeks faster than in the equivalent quarter in the previous year (43.8 weeks).

These figures exclude pre 3rd August 2009 legacy cases; please see sections 3 to 7 for data on applications that include legacy cases. They also exclude applications subject to processing agreements; please see section 2 for further information on these.

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## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Background to data collection**

Planning authority performance data is a statistical collection undertaken to establish the number of planning applications determined by Scottish planning authorities, and their performance in processing them. The Scottish Government Communities Analysis Division collects quarterly data from all 32 Local Authorities and the two Planning Authorities (Cairngorms National Park and Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park) on the detail of planning decisions and timescales.

### **1.2 Legacy cases**

On 3rd August 2009 substantial changes to the statutory development management system, relating to the handling of planning applications, came into effect across the whole of Scotland. A few legacy cases that were validated pre 3rd August 2009 can badly skew results and therefore, where possible, analysis is provided separately for the current planning system post 3rd August 2009 as well as for all applications where decisions have been made.

### **1.3 Detailed tables of results**

Additional detailed excel tables of results as well as a copy of this summary are available on the Planning Statistics page of the Scottish Government's website at: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning>

Annual results for 2015/16 as well as previous year's results are available at: [Planning Authority Performance Statistics 2015/16 Annual](#) (These tables are referred to throughout this bulletin as "Annual, 2015/16")

Quarter 4 results for 2015/16 as well as previous quarter's results are available at: [Planning Authority Performance Statistics 2015/16 Quarter 4](#) (These tables are referred to throughout this bulletin as "Quarter 4, 2015/16")

### **1.4 Categories of planning applications**

For the purpose of planning applications, developments are put into one of three categories: local, major or national. The different types allow councils to treat developments in a way which is suited to their size, complexity and the issues they are likely to raise.

Local developments include changes to individual houses and, for example, smaller developments for new housing and retail. Most applications for planning permission will be for local developments.

Major developments include developments of 50 or more homes, certain waste, water, transport and energy-related developments, and larger retail developments. Classification between local and major developments depends on the particular development type. For example, housing developments are classed as major when the application is for 50 or more dwellings or for a site that exceeds two hectares,

whereas electricity generation is classed as major when the capacity of the generating station is or exceeds 20 megawatts.

Details for the classification of all development types can be found here:

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/278390/0083657.pdf>

National developments are mainly large public works (for example, the regeneration of the former Ravenscraig steelworks) and are identified in the National Planning Framework (<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/National-Planning-Framework>).

National Developments are not included in the planning performance statistics analysed in this publication.

## **1.5 Calculation of decision times**

The average decision time in weeks is calculated in days from the date of validation<sup>5</sup> to the date the decision is issued. The average weeks are then calculated by dividing the number of days by 7. Data that allows calculation of average decision times has been collected for the past four years and quarterly trends over this time period are shown in sections [4](#), [5](#) and [6](#). However data for the percentages of local applications that were decided within two months are available over a longer time period. These results are reported separately in [section 7](#).

## **1.6 Stopping the clock**

For the year 2015/16, all planning authorities provided information on particular delays that were outwith their control and on which it was agreed it was appropriate to stop the clock for periods of time. There were 1,402 applications decided during 2015/16 (3.8% of all applications) where the clock had been stopped at some point in the application process, compared to 955 for 32 planning authorities (2.6% of all applications) in the previous year. This improvement in reporting is likely to lower some overall decision times between years.

In 2015/16 there were 8.5% of applications for local housing developments that had the clock stopped, with 41.6 weeks on average removed from decision times for these applications. For major housing developments there were 37.1% of applications that had the clock stopped, with 128.8 weeks on average removed from decision times for these applications. This has a marked effect on overall average decision times for both local and major housing applications.

Further details for applications that have had the clock stopped can be found in [Annex 14.1](#).

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<sup>5</sup> The validation date, from which the time period for determination runs, is the date when the final piece of information for an application is received from the applicant.



## 1.7 Revisions

Additional quality assurance of data was carried out when analysing annual data and some alterations were made to previously published quarterly data. Over Quarters 1, 2 and 3 of 2015/16 there were a total of 21 revisions made to figures for 11 local authorities. The only change to headline figures (post 3rd August 2009) is the average decision time for all local developments in quarter 1 of 2015/16 has increased from 9.5 weeks to 9.6 weeks.

In addition, figures for Appeals to Scottish Ministers for some local authorities in quarters 1, 2 and 3 previously included enforcement and other categories of appeals that should not have been included. These revisions have resulted in the following changes to Scotland figures:

2015/16 Quarter 1: Number of Cases Decided from 101 to 79. Percentage of Original Decisions Upheld from 49.5% to 44.3%.

2015/16 Quarter 2: Number of Cases Decided from 101 to 87. Percentage of Original Decisions Upheld from 51.5% to 50.6%.

2015/16 Quarter 3: Number of Cases Decided from 109 to 75. Percentage of Original Decisions Upheld from 59.6% to 50.7%.

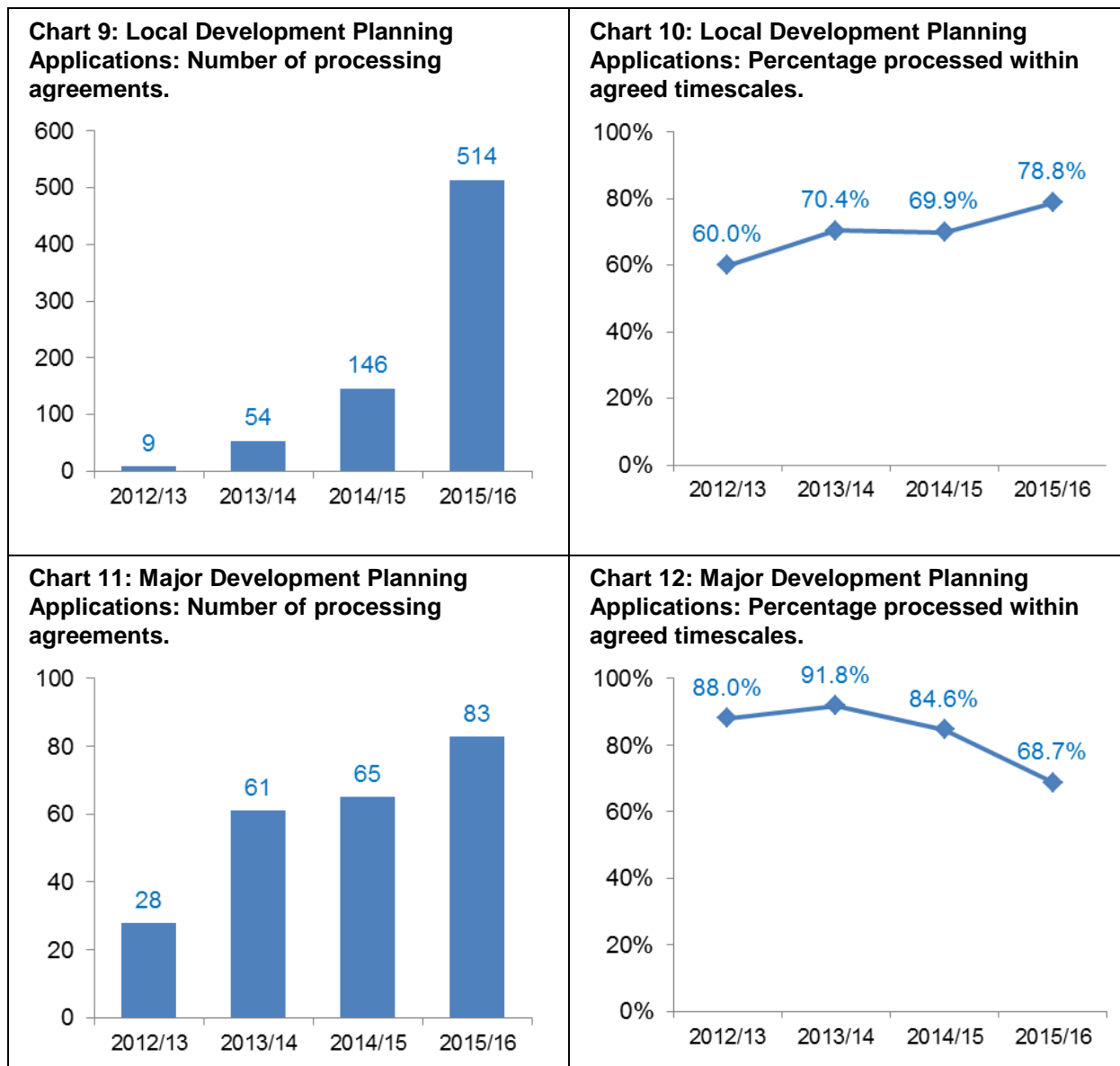
The revisions have been listed on a separate revisions sheet in the latest quarterly publication: [Planning Authority Performance Statistics 2015/16 Quarter 4](#)

The revisions policy for planning performance statistics has been developed in accordance with the UK Statistics Authority Code of practice for Official Statistics and further details are available at:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning/Revisions>

## 2. Processing Agreements

Some local authorities use processing agreements ([Annual, 2015/16: Table 1](#)), where the developer and the local authority agree on timescales for decisions. When an application is subject to a processing agreement it is removed from average decision time calculations and reported separately.



For the year 2015/16 there were 680 applications that were subject to a processing agreement and 76.6% of these were processed within agreed timescales. Of these 514 were for local developments with 78.8% processed within agreed timescales, the highest percentage since the start of the data collection in 2012/13. A further 83 were for major developments with 68.7% processed within agreed timescales, the lowest percentage since the start of the data collection in 2012/13. The 83 major applications concluded by the use of a processing agreement represents 24% of all major development applications concluded in 2015/16.

In the previous year a total of 234 applications were subject to a processing agreement, with 73.9% within agreed timescales.

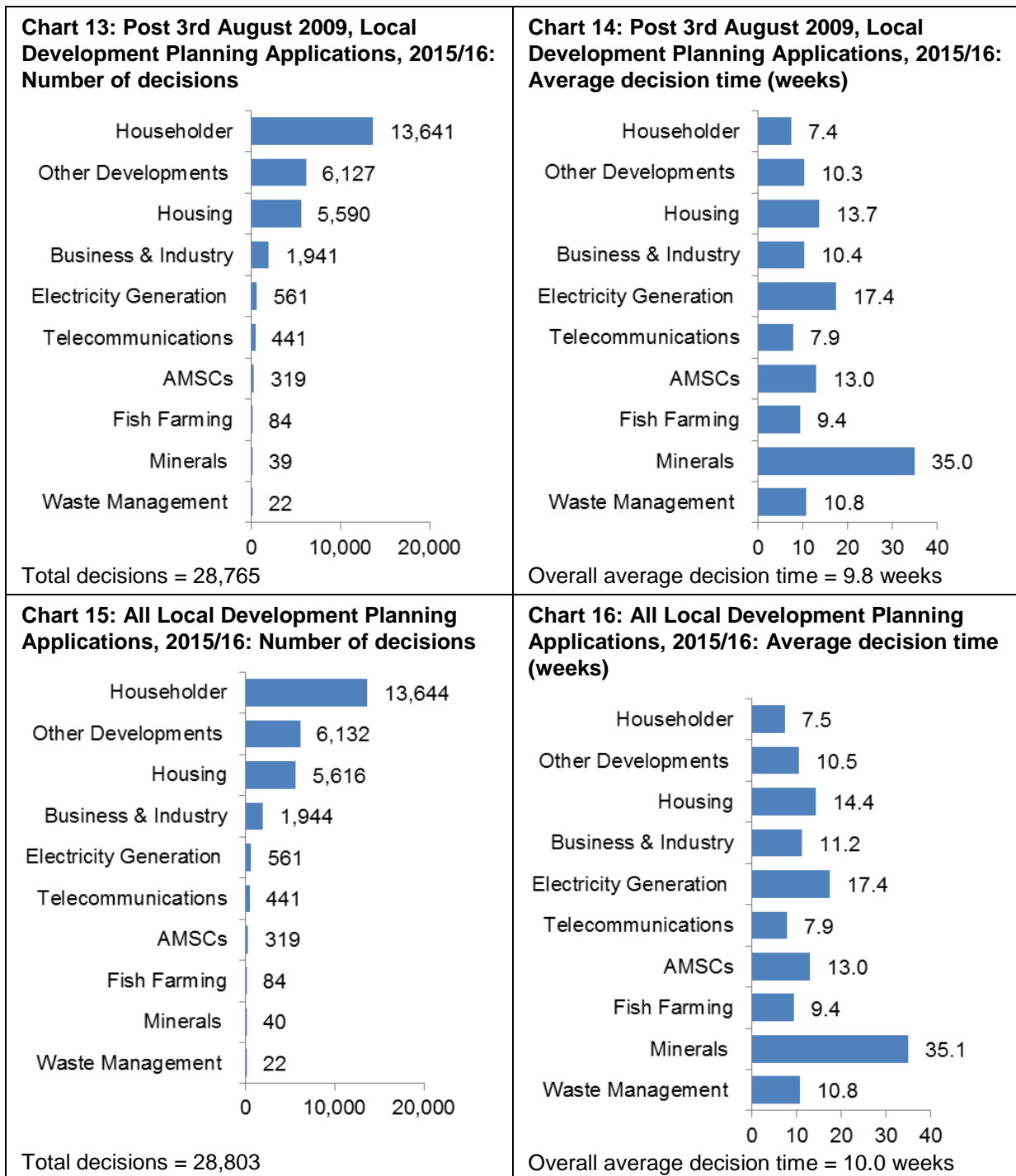
26 out of 34 planning authorities used processing agreements in 2015/16 and Scottish Borders, with 213 processing agreements, had a share of almost one third of these agreements.

Some processing agreements are made at the outset of an application whereas others have been activated at a later stage.

### 3. Annual average decision times by Development Type

#### 3.1 Local Developments

Local developments include applications for changes to individual houses and smaller developments for new housing as well as other applications covering areas of development such as, minerals, business & industry, waste management, electricity generation, freshwater fish farming, marine finfish farming, marine shellfish farming, telecommunications, approval of matters specified in conditions (AMSCs) and other developments. Applications for approval of matters specified in conditions (AMSCs) relate to conditions attached to planning permission in principle requiring the further approval, consent or agreement of the planning authority for any detailed aspect of the development ([Annual, 2015/16: Scotland table](#)).



The category “other developments” includes applications for retail developments, food and drink outlets, hotels, hospitals, schools and leisure & tourism developments.

The average decision time for the 28,765 post 3rd August 2009 local applications in 2015/16 was 9.8 weeks, quicker by an average of almost 3 days per application compared with 2014/15 (10.1 weeks) and the quickest annual average since the start of this data collection in 2012/13. When the 38 legacy cases are included the average decision time increases from 9.8 weeks to 10.0 weeks.

Charts 13 and 14 show that the average decision time varies between types of development. The largest share of local developments is for householder developments (over 47%) that have the shortest decision time of on average 7.4 weeks. Minerals applications (0.1% of all local decisions) have the longest average decision time equal to 35.0 weeks. Legacy cases can skew average decision times. For example, when the 26 legacy cases are included in the average decision time for housing developments the average increases from 13.7 to 14.4 weeks.

During the year 2015/16 there were 479 local housing application decisions where the clock had been stopped at some point within the application process (8.5% of all local housing application decisions). On average almost 42 weeks has been removed for these applications, and this will have had an effect on the overall average decision times. For the previous year, there were 349 local housing application decisions where the clock had been stopped at some point (6.0% of all local housing application decisions). This improvement in reporting is likely to lower some overall decision times between years. See [Annex 14.1](#) for further details.

Some local developments are subject to Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs). Results for these developments are not included here and instead are reported separately in the detailed tables ([Annual, 2015/16: Tables 23 & 28](#)).

In addition, there were 514 local developments decided in 2015/16 that had processing agreements in place, with almost 79% of these meeting agreed timescales. Developments with processing agreements are not included in average time calculations.

Tables 1 & 2 give comparable figures for the previous three years. In 2015/16 there were improvements in average decision times (post 3rd August) for 8 out of the 10 local development types compared to 2014/15. Waste Management developments had the biggest improvement in average decision time from 17.8 weeks to 10.8 weeks. For telecommunications and minerals developments there were increases in average decision times compared to 2014/15. The increase in the average decision time for minerals developments can partly be explained by six applications with decision times longer than one year, one in Falkirk, two in Aberdeenshire and three in Shetland.

When legacy cases are included there are improvements in average decision times for 6 out of the 10 local development types compared to 2014/15.

**Table 1: Post 3rd August 2009 local applications, Annual average decision times by Development Type**

Post-3rd August Local Developments	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		2015/16	
	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)
Householder	13,446	8.0	13,904	7.7	14,115	7.5	13,641	7.4
Other Developments	5,822	11.3	6,258	10.5	6,099	10.4	6,127	10.3
Housing	5,563	17.2	5,762	15.2	5,807	14.5	5,590	13.7
Business & Industry	2,531	11.8	2,370	11.1	2,257	10.7	1,941	10.4
Electricity Generation	1,247	21.2	861	23.1	626	22.4	561	17.4
Telecommunications	301	8.5	404	8.5	416	7.6	441	7.9
AMSCs	255	16.3	302	17.4	318	14.8	319	13.0
Fish Farming	43	10.6	63	12.5	53	13.3	84	9.4
Minerals	35	26.9	47	15.8	25	17.7	39	35.0
Waste Management	89	16.3	55	19.4	23	17.8	22	10.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29,332</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>30,026</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>29,739</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>28,765</b>	<b>9.8</b>

**Table 2: All local applications, Annual average decision times by Development Type**

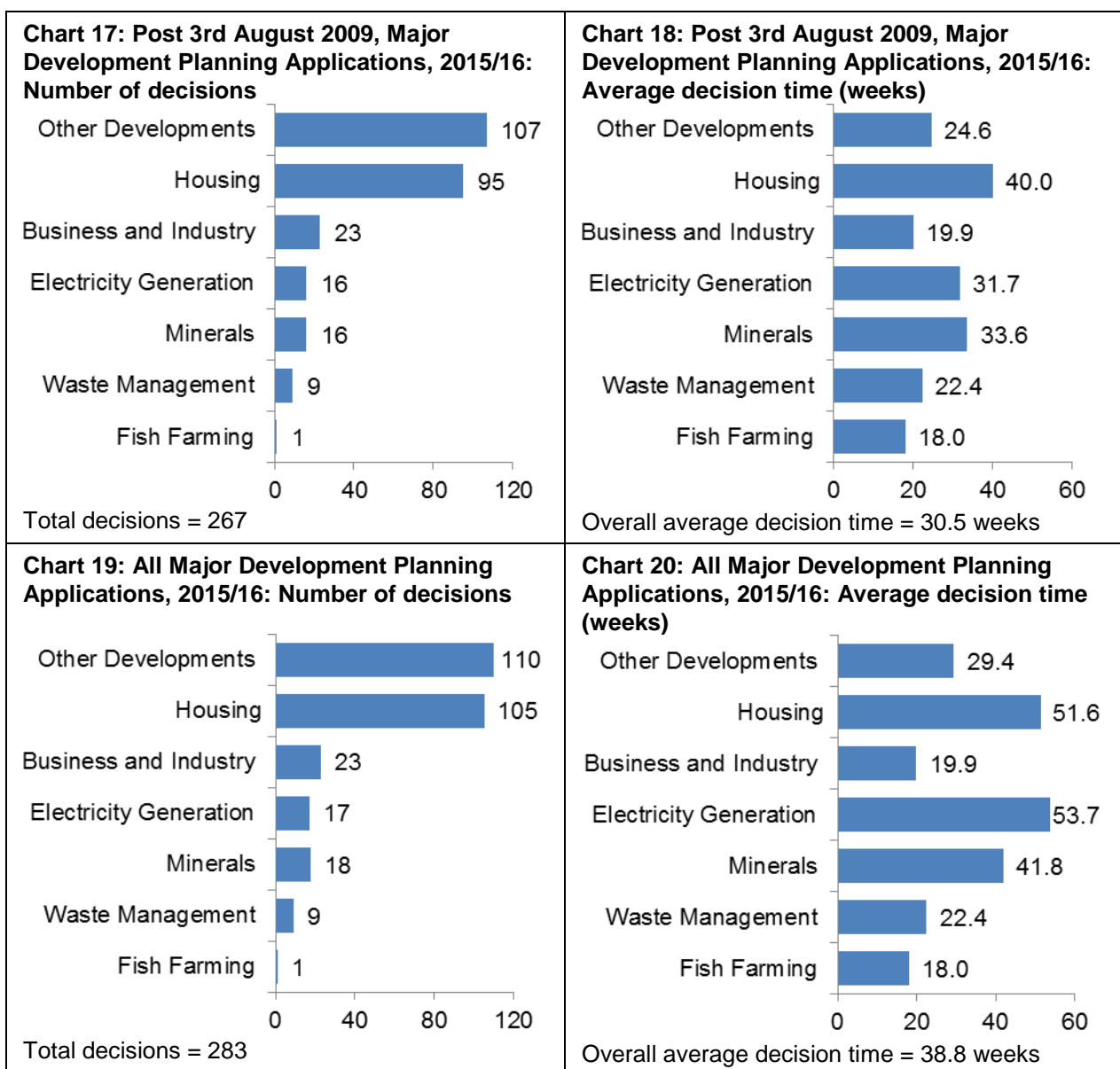
All Applications Local Developments	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		2015/16	
	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)
Householder	13,450	8.1	13,904	7.7	14,116	7.5	13,644	7.5
Other Developments	5,833	11.7	6,264	10.8	6,102	10.5	6,132	10.5
Housing	5,671	20.9	5,831	17.5	5,836	15.3	5,616	14.4
Business & Industry	2,548	13.0	2,385	12.9	2,259	10.9	1,944	11.2
Electricity Generation	1,251	21.7	863	23.5	626	22.4	561	17.4
Telecommunications	301	8.5	404	8.5	416	7.6	441	7.9
AMSCs	255	16.3	303	18.0	319	15.1	319	13.0
Fish Farming	43	10.6	63	12.5	53	13.3	84	9.4
Minerals	36	31.6	49	22.3	25	17.7	40	35.1
Waste Management	95	28.7	57	26.8	23	17.8	22	10.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>29,483</b>	<b>12.4</b>	<b>30,123</b>	<b>11.3</b>	<b>29,775</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>28,803</b>	<b>10.0</b>

### 3.2 Major Developments

Major developments include applications for developments of 50 or more homes, as well as other applications covering areas of development such as minerals, housing, business & industry, waste management, electricity generation, freshwater fish farming, marine fish farming, marine shellfish farming and other developments. Classification between local and major developments depends on the particular development type. For example, housing developments are classed as major when the application is for 50 or more dwellings or for a site that exceeds two hectares, whereas electricity generation is classed as major when the capacity of the generating station is or exceeds 20 megawatts ([Annual, 2015/16: Scotland table](#)).

Details for the classification of all development types can be found here:

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/278390/0083657.pdf>



Due to the small number of applications for some types of major developments, average decision times may be volatile between types and years and can be skewed by a few lengthy decisions. See [Annex 14.2](#) for further details.

The average decision time for the 267 post 3rd August 2009 major applications in 2015/16 was 30.5 weeks, quicker by more than 6 weeks per application compared with 2014/15 (36.6 weeks) and the quickest annual average since the start of this data collection in 2012/13. When the 16 legacy cases are included the average decision time increases from 30.5 weeks to 38.8 weeks.

Charts 17 and 18 show that a large share (almost 36%) of major developments is for housing developments that have an average decision time of 40.0 weeks. However, when the 10 additional legacy housing cases are included this average decision time increases by 11.6 weeks to 51.6 weeks. Legacy cases can skew average decision times. For example, when one legacy case is included in the average decision time for electricity generation, the average increases by 22.0 weeks from 31.7 to 53.7 weeks.

During the year 2015/16 over 37% of all major housing application decisions had involved a clock stop at some point within the application process. The average time stopped was 128.8 weeks for these applications, and this will have had an effect on overall average decision times. See [Annex 14.1](#) for further details.

In addition there were a further 83 major development applications concluded in 2015/16 that were subject to separate processing agreements. Almost 69% of these applications met agreed timescales that had been set between developers and local authorities. Applications subject to processing agreements are not included in average time calculations.



Tables 3 and 4 give comparable figures for the previous three years. Between the years 2014/15 and 2015/16 (post 3rd August) electricity generation developments had the biggest improvement in average decision time from 53.6 to 31.7 weeks, whilst waste management developments had the only increase in average decision time from 18.4 to 22.4 weeks.

In Table 4 (all major applications) minerals developments had the biggest improvement in average decision time between 2014/15 and 2015/16, from 70.0 to 41.8 weeks.

**Table 3: Post 3rd August 2009 major applications, Annual average decision times by Development Type**

Post-3rd August Major Developments	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		2015/16	
	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)
Other Developments	66	34.3	105	25.9	101	28.7	107	24.6
Housing	76	40.1	117	41.9	113	41.3	95	40.0
Business & Industry	45	22.8	41	26.6	39	33.1	23	19.9
Electricity Generation	24	50.7	27	58.4	19	53.6	16	31.7
Minerals	21	46.6	13	20.6	16	52.1	16	33.6
Waste Management	5	22.3	7	23.7	9	18.4	9	22.4
Fish Farming	1	4.4	0	-	1	31.6	1	18.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>36.3</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>34.6</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>36.6</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>30.5</b>

**Table 4: All major applications, Annual average decision times by Development Type**

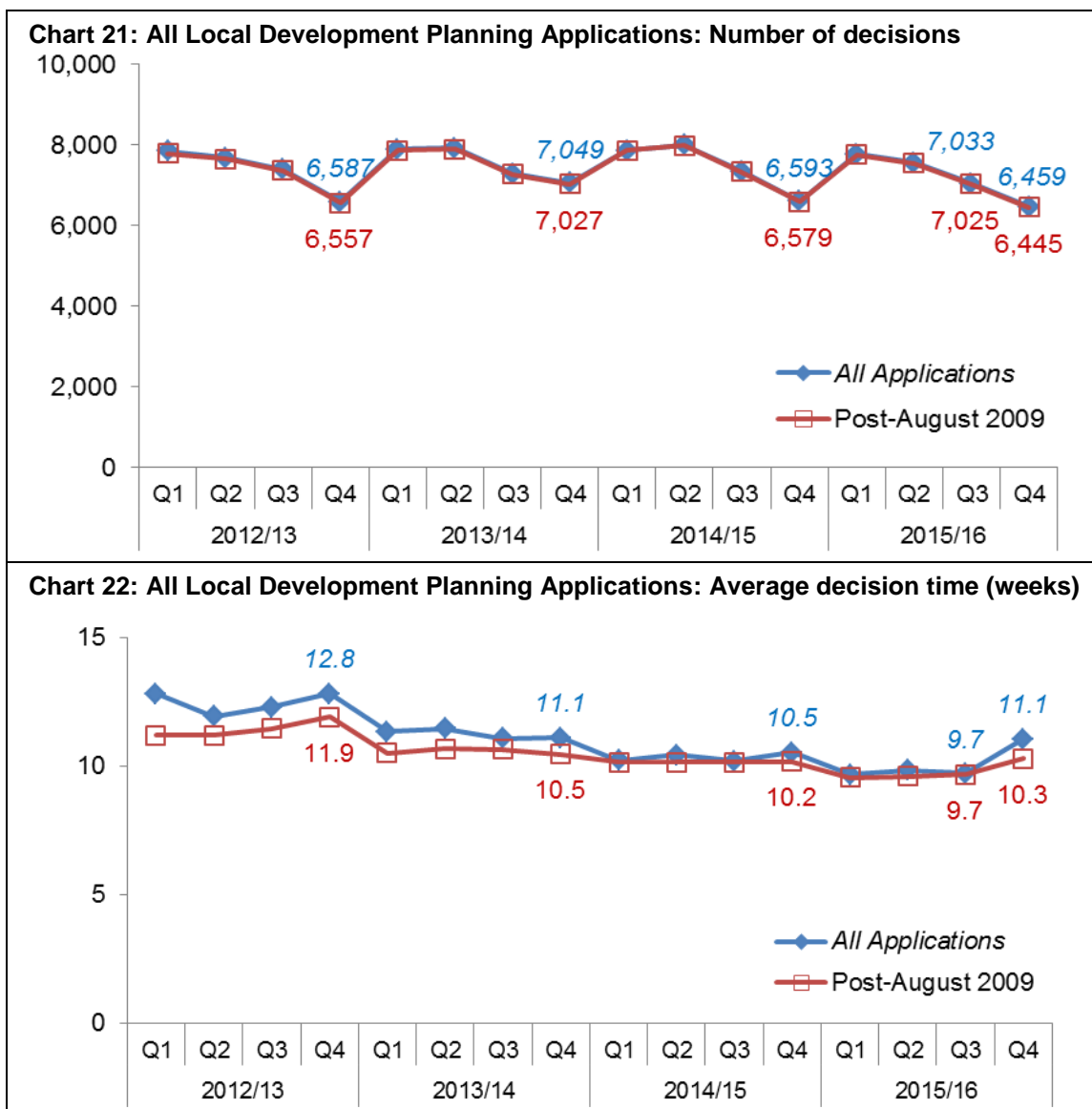
All Applications Major Developments	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		2015/16	
	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)
Other Developments	73	46.2	115	38.7	103	32.9	110	29.4
Housing	104	74.8	147	69.9	125	54.1	105	51.6
Business & Industry	51	56.2	45	39.8	41	41.3	23	19.9
Minerals	23	47.4	15	59.0	17	70.0	18	41.8
Electricity Generation	28	64.4	27	58.4	21	69.1	17	53.7
Waste Management	7	87.4	7	23.7	10	24.8	9	22.4
Fish Farming	1	4.4	0	-	1	31.6	1	18.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>61.1</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>53.8</b>	<b>318</b>	<b>46.4</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>38.8</b>

## 4. Average decision times - Quarterly trends for Local Developments

### 4.1 All Local Developments

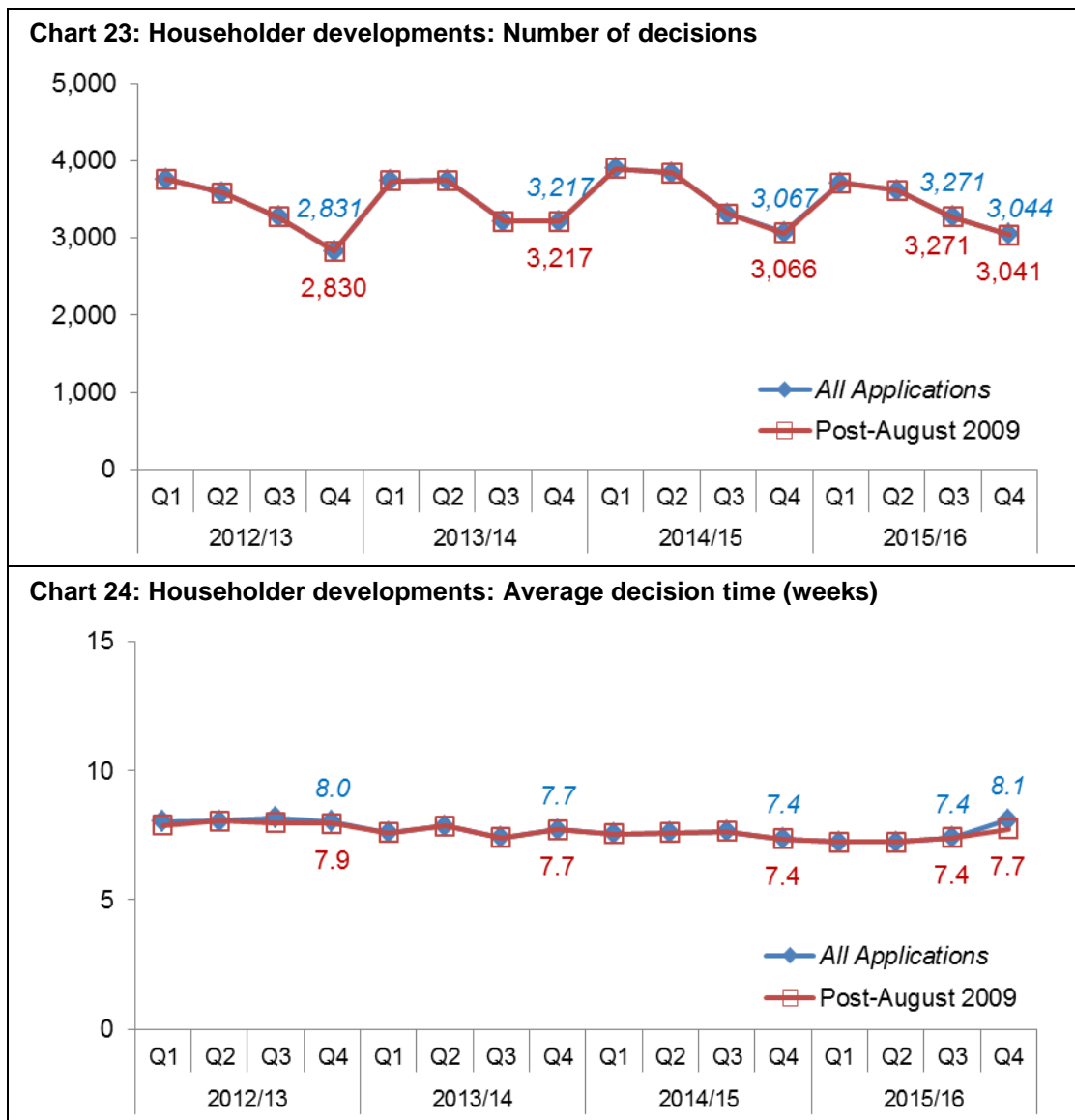
There were 6,445 local applications (post 3rd August 2009) decided during the fourth quarter of 2015/16, with an overall average decision time of 10.3 weeks, an increase of four days compared to the previous quarter (9.7 weeks) but similar to the equivalent quarters in 2014/15 (10.2 weeks) and 2013/14 (10.5 weeks). When the additional 14 legacy cases are included the average decision time increases to 11.1 weeks ([Quarter 4, 2015/16: Tables 3 & 4](#)).

In addition, there were 227 local developments decided during the fourth quarter of 2015/16 that had processing agreements in place, with more than 84% of these meeting agreed timescales. Developments with processing agreements are not included in average time calculations.



## 4.2 Householder Developments

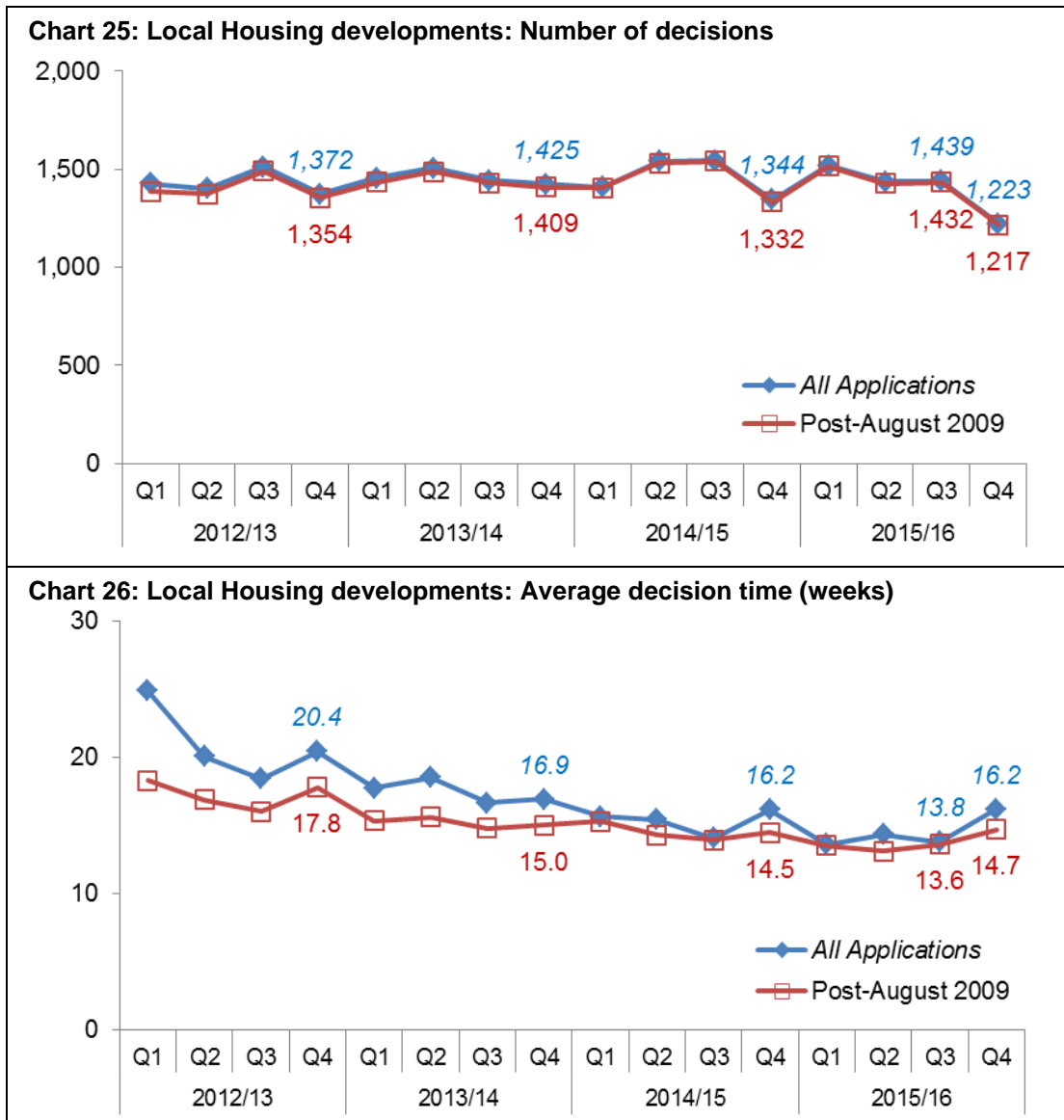
These include all applications for development in the curtilage of a residential property which are not change of use, for example: extensions, alterations to garages, swimming pools, walls, fences, driveways or porches.



There were 3,041 householder applications decided during the fourth quarter of 2015/16, with an overall average decision time of 7.7 weeks, slower by two days compared to the previous quarter (7.4 weeks) and the equivalent quarter in 2014/15 (7.4 weeks). When the additional 3 legacy cases are included the average decision time increases to 8.1 weeks ([Quarter 4, 2015/16: Table 6](#)).

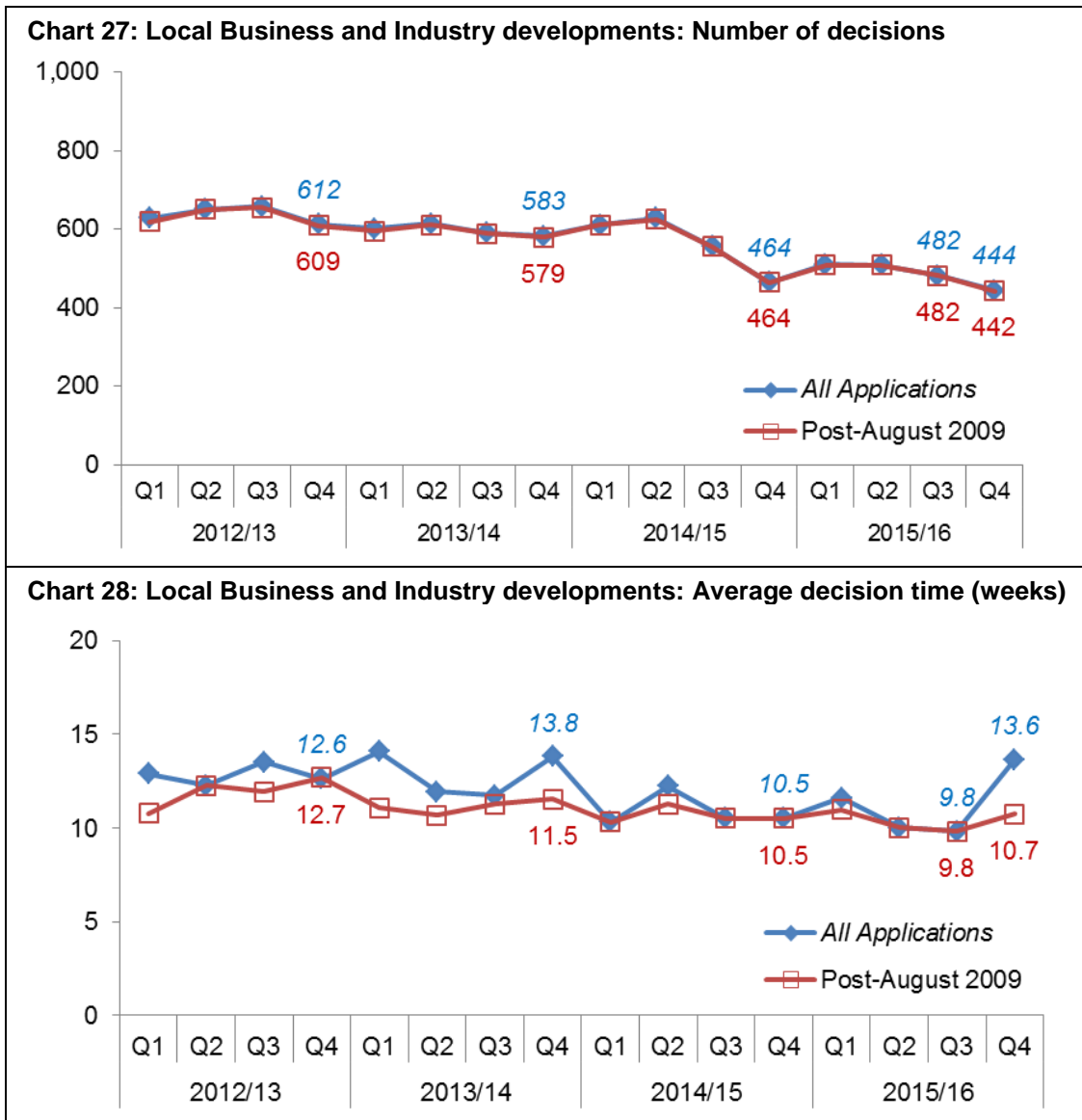
### 4.3 Local Housing

There were 1,217 local housing applications decided during the fourth quarter of 2015/16, with an overall average decision time of 14.7 weeks, slower by over one week compared to the previous quarter (13.6 weeks), but similar to the equivalent quarters in 2014/15 (14.5 weeks) and 2013/14 (15.0 weeks). When the additional 6 legacy cases are included the average decision time increases by 1.5 weeks to 16.2 weeks ([Quarter 4, 2015/16: Table 8](#)).



## 4.4 Local Business and Industry

There were 442 local business and industry applications decided during the fourth quarter of 2015/16, with an overall average decision time of 10.7 weeks, slower than the previous quarter (9.8 weeks) but similar to the equivalent quarter in 2014/15 (10.5 weeks). When the additional 2 legacy cases are included the average decision time increases by almost 3 weeks to 13.6 weeks ([Quarter 4, 2015/16: Table 10](#)).



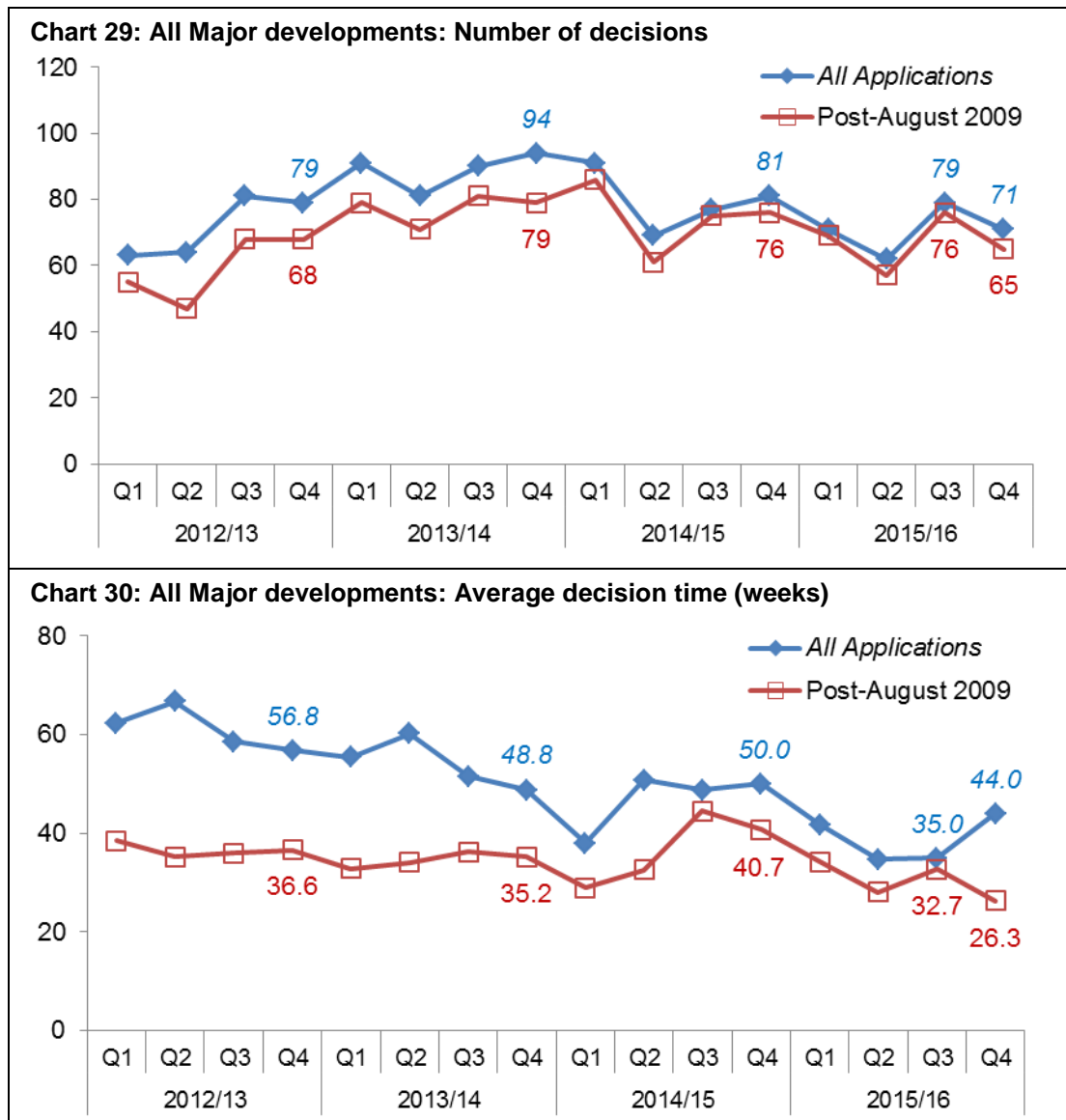
Information on decisions for other specific categories of local developments is available within the detailed excel tables at: [Planning Authority Performance Statistics 2015/16 Quarter 4](#)

## 5. Average decision times – Quarterly trends for Major Developments

### 5.1 All Major Developments

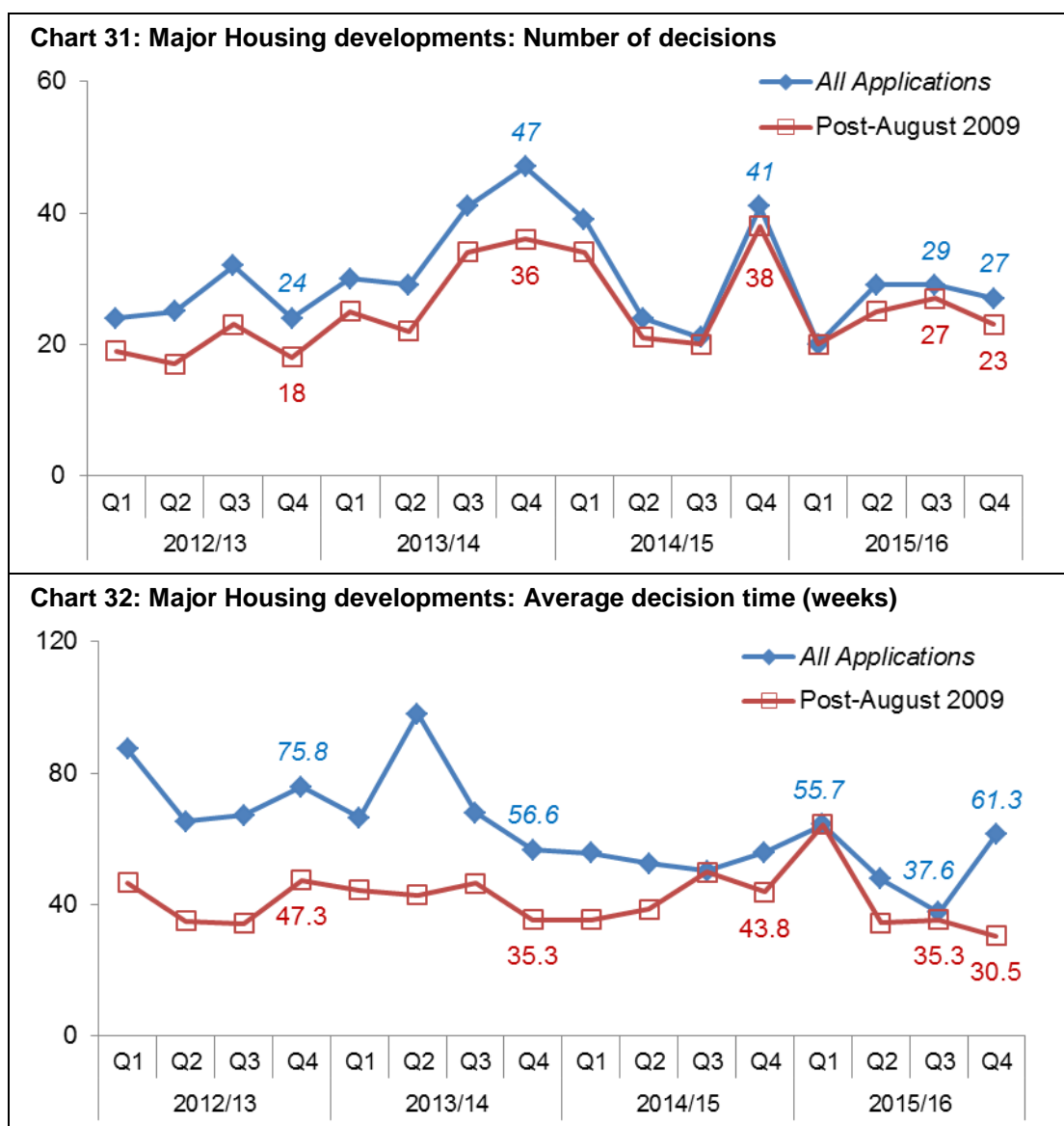
During the fourth quarter of 2015/16 there were 65 major applications decided, with an overall average decision time of 26.3 weeks, the quickest quarterly figure since the start of this data collection in quarter 1 of 2012/13, over six weeks quicker than the previous quarter (32.7 weeks), and over 14 weeks quicker than the equivalent quarter in 2014/15 (40.7 weeks). When the 6 legacy cases are included the average decision time increases by 17.7 weeks to 44.0 weeks ([Quarter 4, 2015/16: Table 2](#)).

In addition, there were 18 major developments decided in quarter four of 2015/16 that had processing agreements in place, with two thirds of these meeting agreed timescales. Developments with processing agreements are not included in average time calculations.



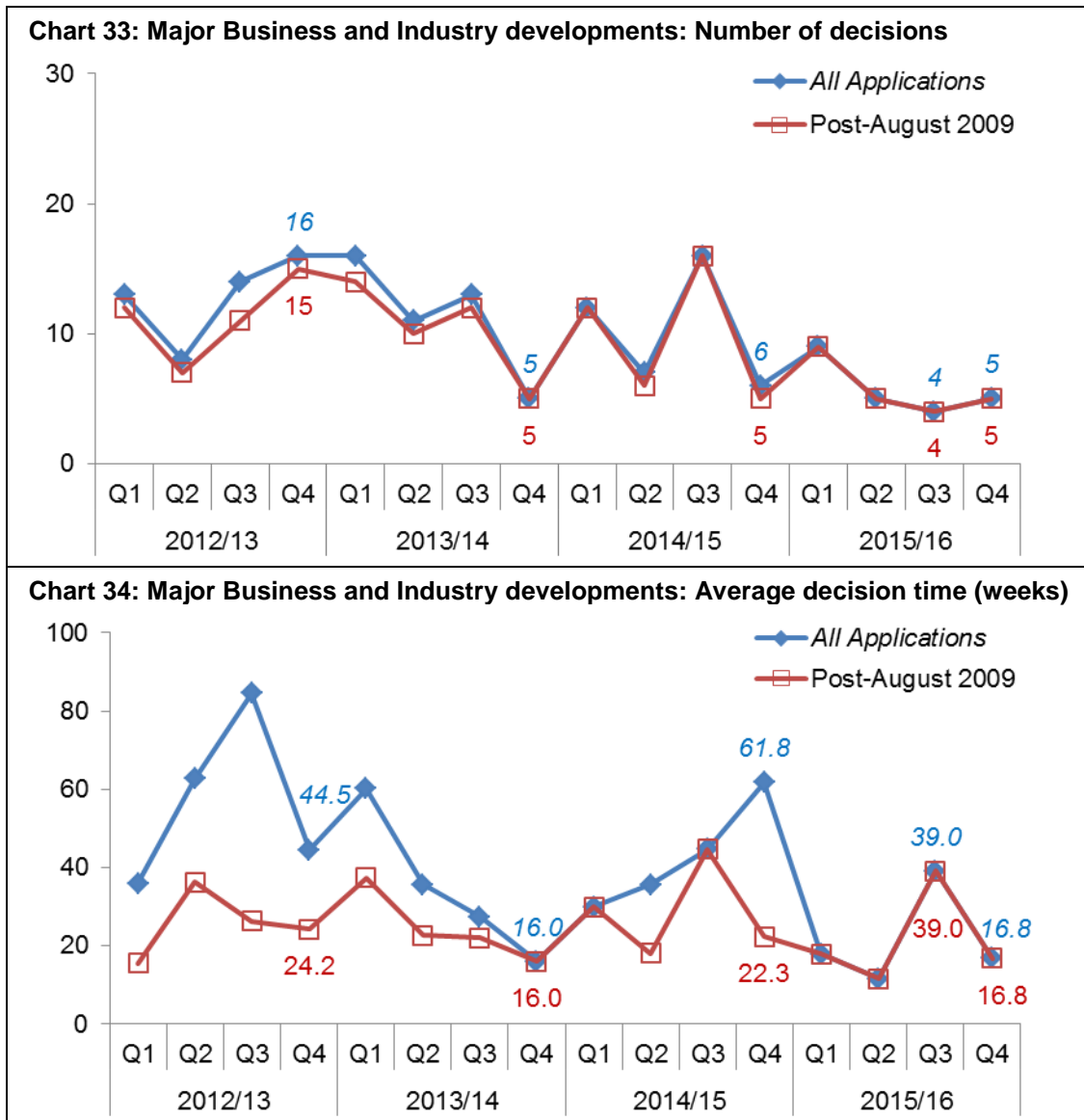
## 5.2 Major Housing

There were 23 major housing applications decided during the fourth quarter of 2015/16, with an overall average decision time of 30.5 weeks, quicker than the previous quarter (35.3 weeks) and the quickest quarterly figure since the start of this data collection in quarter 1 of 2012/13. When the additional 4 legacy cases are included the average decision time increases by 30.8 weeks to 61.3 weeks. The legacy cases include the erection of 55 dwellinghouses and garages at a former poultry farm in Aberdeenshire, a 13.89 hectare residential development with associated link road in West Lothian, the erection of 95 dwellinghouses and flatted dwellings, associated landscaping and road and drainage infrastructure in Falkirk and the restoration of Dunmore Park House to form 15 dwellings, conversion of stables to form 10 dwellings, erection of 45 dwellinghouses, associated landscaping works, amendments to A905 and site access road also in Falkirk ([Quarter 4, 2015/16: Table 7](#)).



### 5.3 Major Business and Industry

Due to the small numbers of applications for major business and industry developments, average decision times are very variable. For the most recent quarter there were 5 applications with an overall average decision time of 16.8 weeks, this compares with 4 applications with an average decision time of 39.0 weeks for the previous quarter. There were no legacy cases in quarter 4 of 2015/16 ([Quarter 4, 2015/16: Table 9](#)).



Information on decisions for other specific categories of major developments is available within the detailed excel tables at: [Planning Authority Performance Statistics 2015/16 Quarter 4](#)

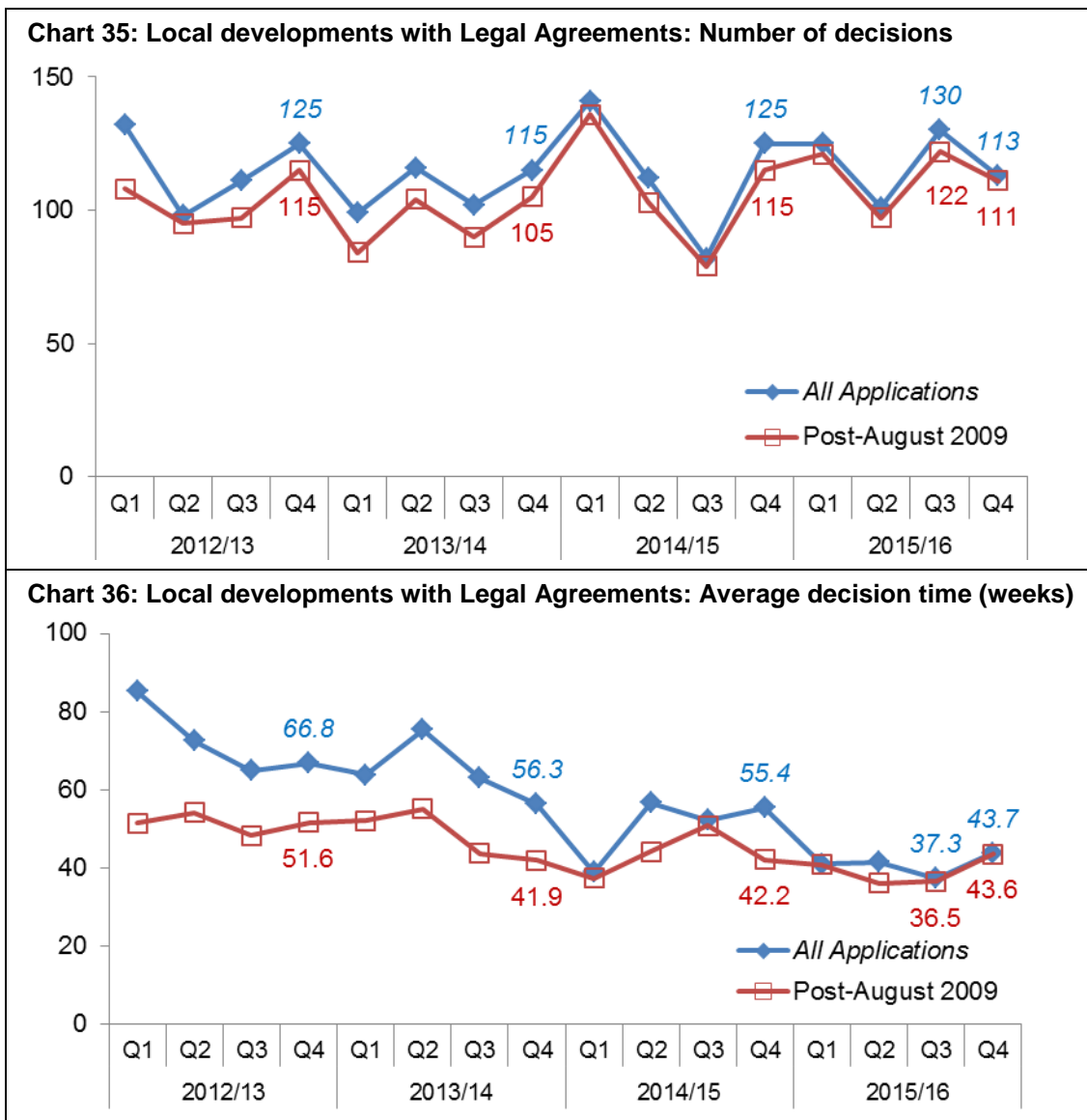


## 6. Average decision times - Quarterly trends for Legal Agreements

The timescales for applications with legal agreements ([Quarter 4, 2015/16: Tables 2 & 3](#)) are dependent on the nature of the application, the particular complexities involved and the willingness of both the applicant and the planning authority to progress the matter at pace. Delays in concluding legal agreements are one of the more frequent reasons for the clock to be stopped on the decision time for an application. Better reporting of these delays is likely to contribute to some improvement in average decision times.

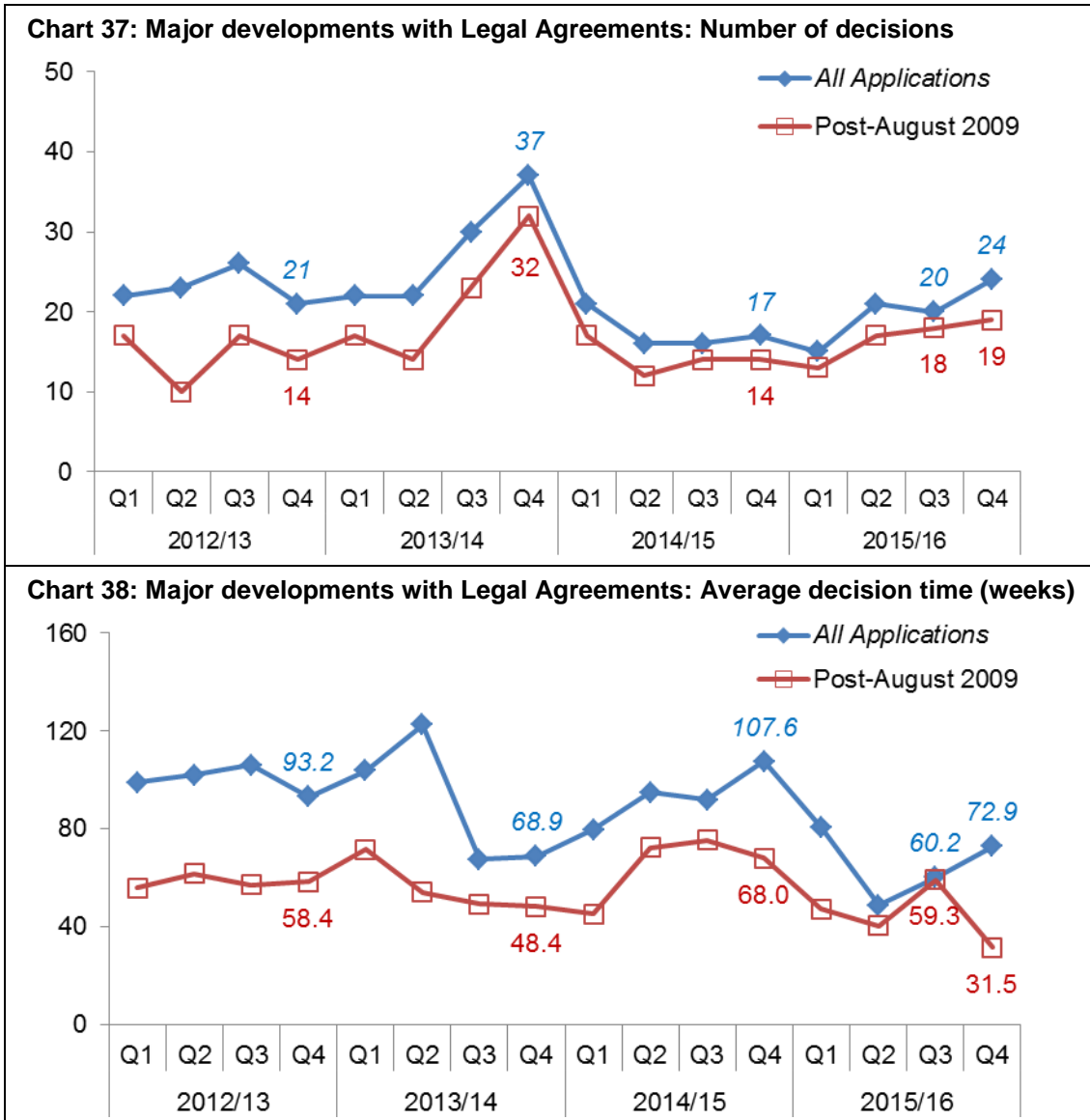
### 6.1 Local Developments with Legal Agreements

In the latest quarter there were 111 applications (validated post 3rd August 2009) where planning authorities have had planning/legal agreements in place for local developments. The average time taken to make decisions on these applications was 43.6 weeks, slower than both the previous quarter (36.5 weeks) and the corresponding quarters in 2014/15 (42.2 weeks) and 2013/14 (41.9 weeks).



## 6.2 Major Developments with Legal Agreements

There were 19 applications (validated post 3rd August 2009) where planning authorities have had planning/legal agreements in place for major developments. The average time taken to make decisions on these applications was 31.5 weeks in quarter 4 of 2015/16, quicker than the previous quarter (59.3 weeks) and the quickest quarterly figure since the start of this data collection in quarter 1 of 2012/13.



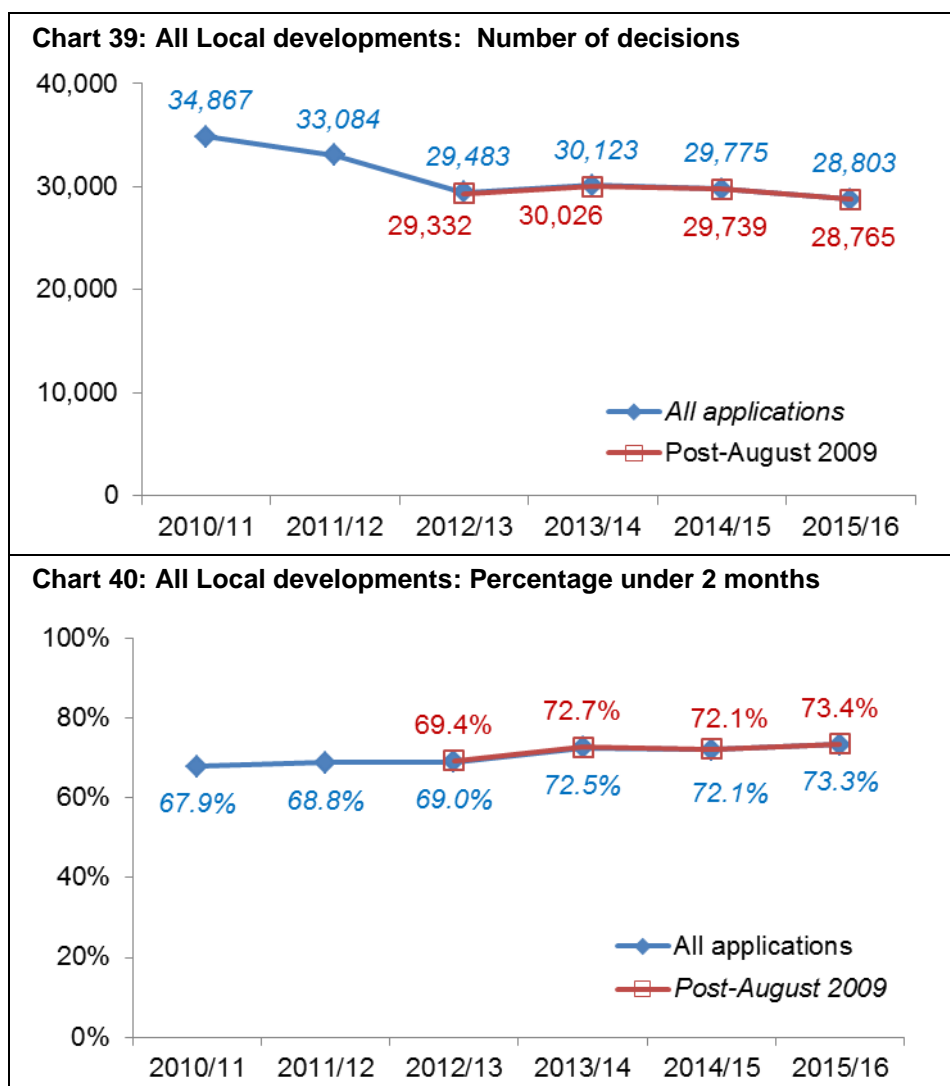
The timescales involved in concluding legal agreements prior to issue of planning permission will have had a significant influence on the overall average decision times for major applications.

## 7. Percentages under two months – Longer term annual trends for Local Developments

Annual trends for the percentages of local developments decided within 2 months are available over several years and these are shown in this section. Legacy cases have only been analysed separately for the past four years and therefore results for 2010/11 and 2011/12 are for all applications only.

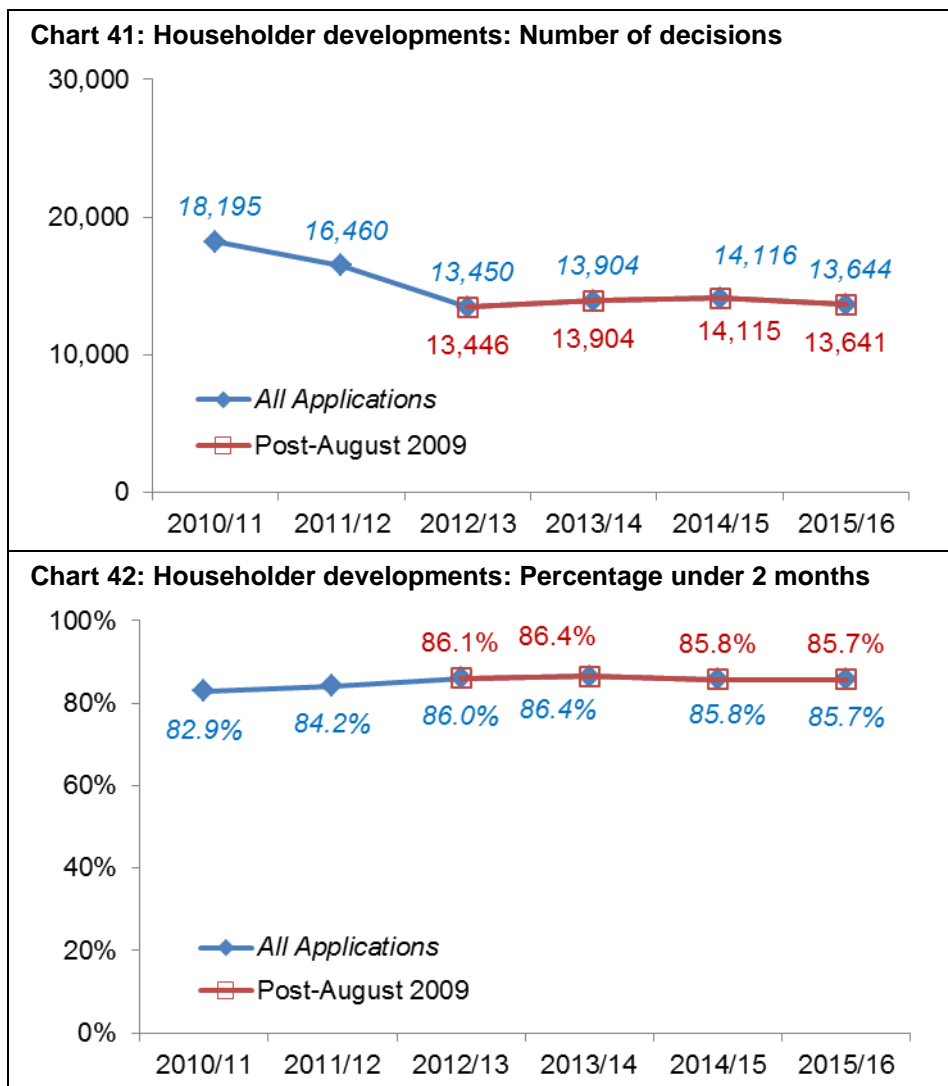
### 7.1 All Local Developments

Numbers of decisions on local applications decreased between the years 2010/11 to 2012/13 but then increased in 2013/14. For the latest year there has again been a drop in the number of decisions (not included are the 514 local developments in 2015/16 that were subject to a processing agreement). There were 28,765 local applications (validated post 3rd August 2009) decided during the year 2015/16, and the percentage of these decisions made in less than two months was 73.4%, an increase from 72.1% in the previous year and the highest percentage over the past six years. When the 38 legacy cases in 2015/16 are included the percentage of decisions made in less than two months decreases slightly to 73.3% ([Annual, 2015/16: Table 4](#)).



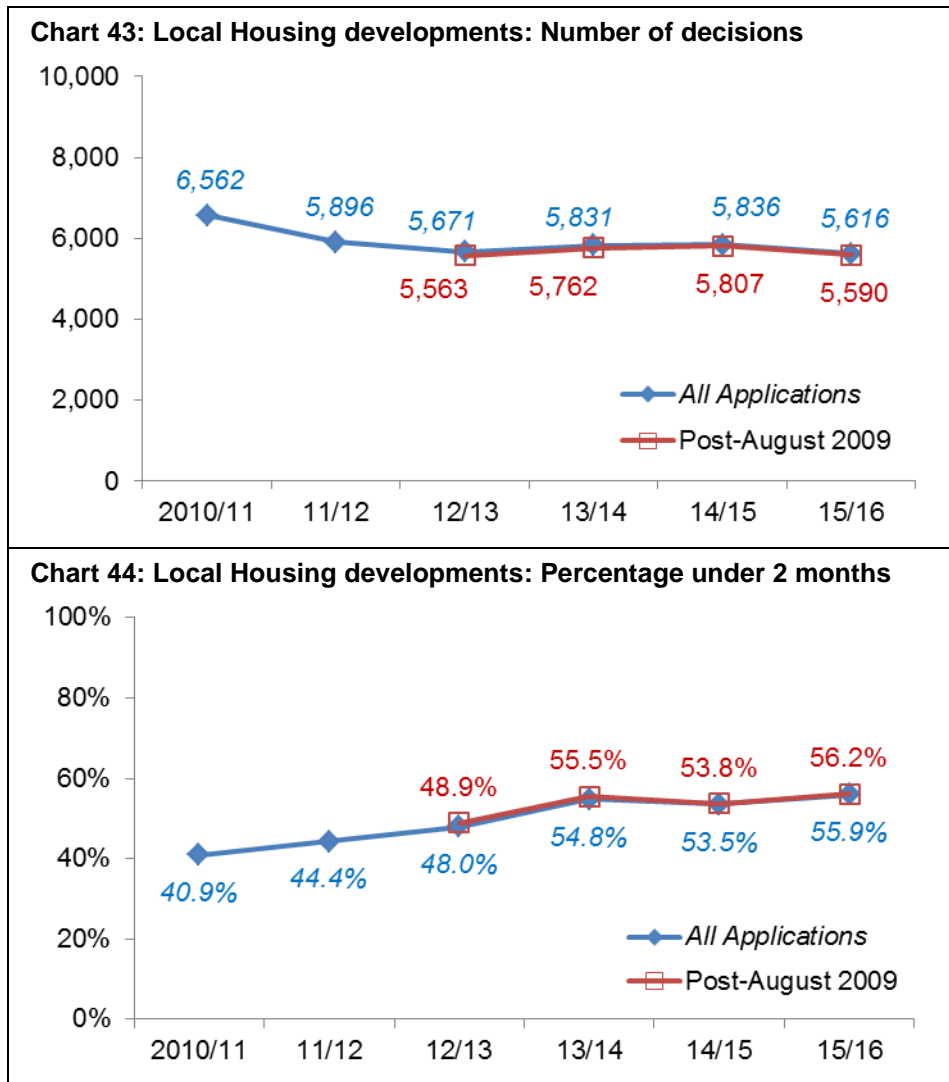
## 7.2 Householder Developments

The number of decisions for householder applications fell to a low in 2012/13. The fall in figures between 2011/12 and 2012/13 can be partly explained by changes to permitted development rights. Permitted development rights are granted so that many instances of small alterations and extensions can be carried out without the need to submit an application for planning permission. In February 2012 these rights were extended to a wider range of categories and so led to a reduction in the number of householder developments that required planning permission. There were 13,641 applications (validated post 3rd August 2009) decided during the year 2015/16 and the percentage of decisions made in under two months was 85.7%, similar to 85.8% in the previous year but lower than the high of 86.4% for 2013/14 ([Annual, 2015/16: Table 6](#)).



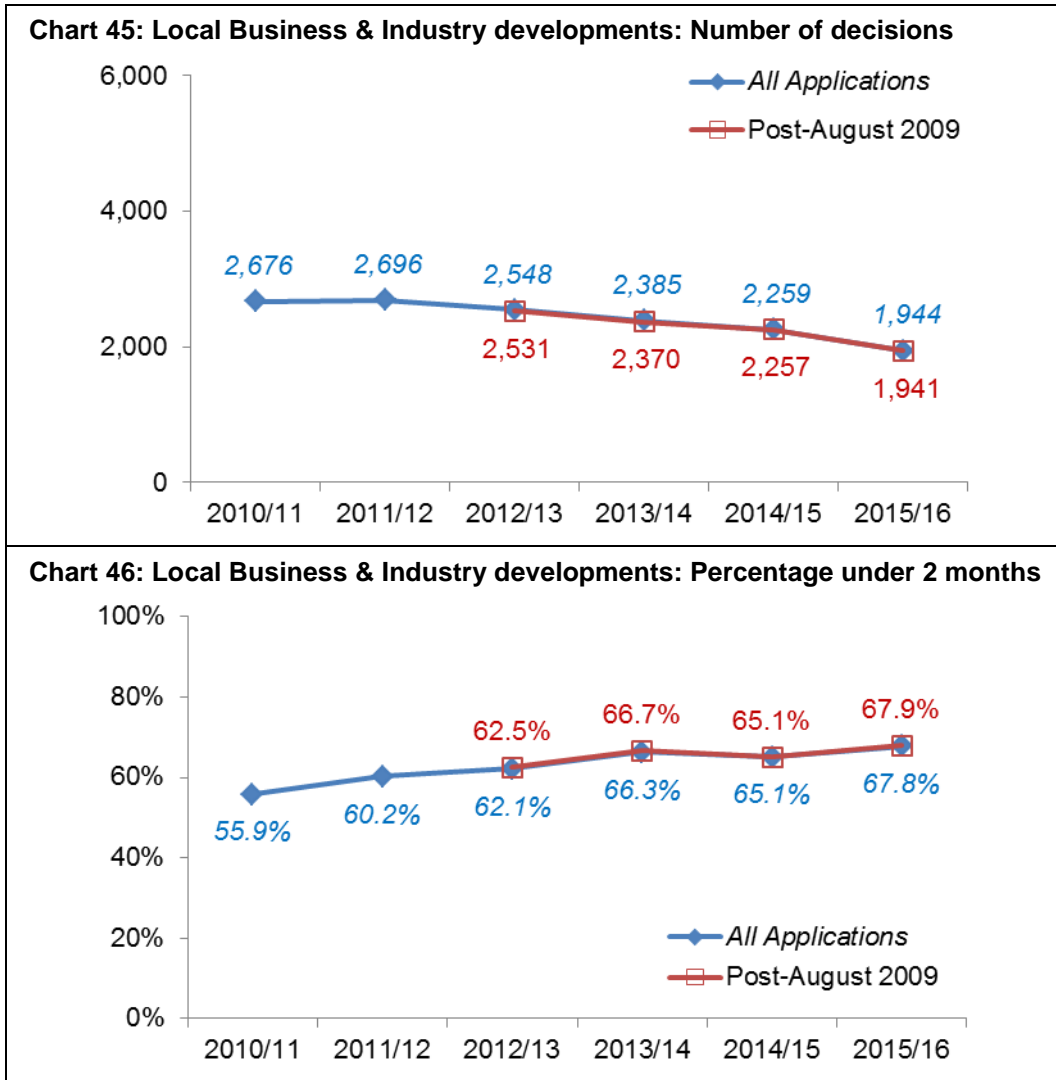
### 7.3 Local Housing

The number of decisions for local housing applications fell to a low in 2012/13, followed by small increases in the following two years. For the most recent year there has again been a drop in the number decisions for local housing applications to 5,590. In 2015/16 the percentage of decisions made in under two months (for applications validated post 3rd August 2009) was 56.2%, the highest percentage over the past six years ([Annual, 2015/16: Table 10](#)).



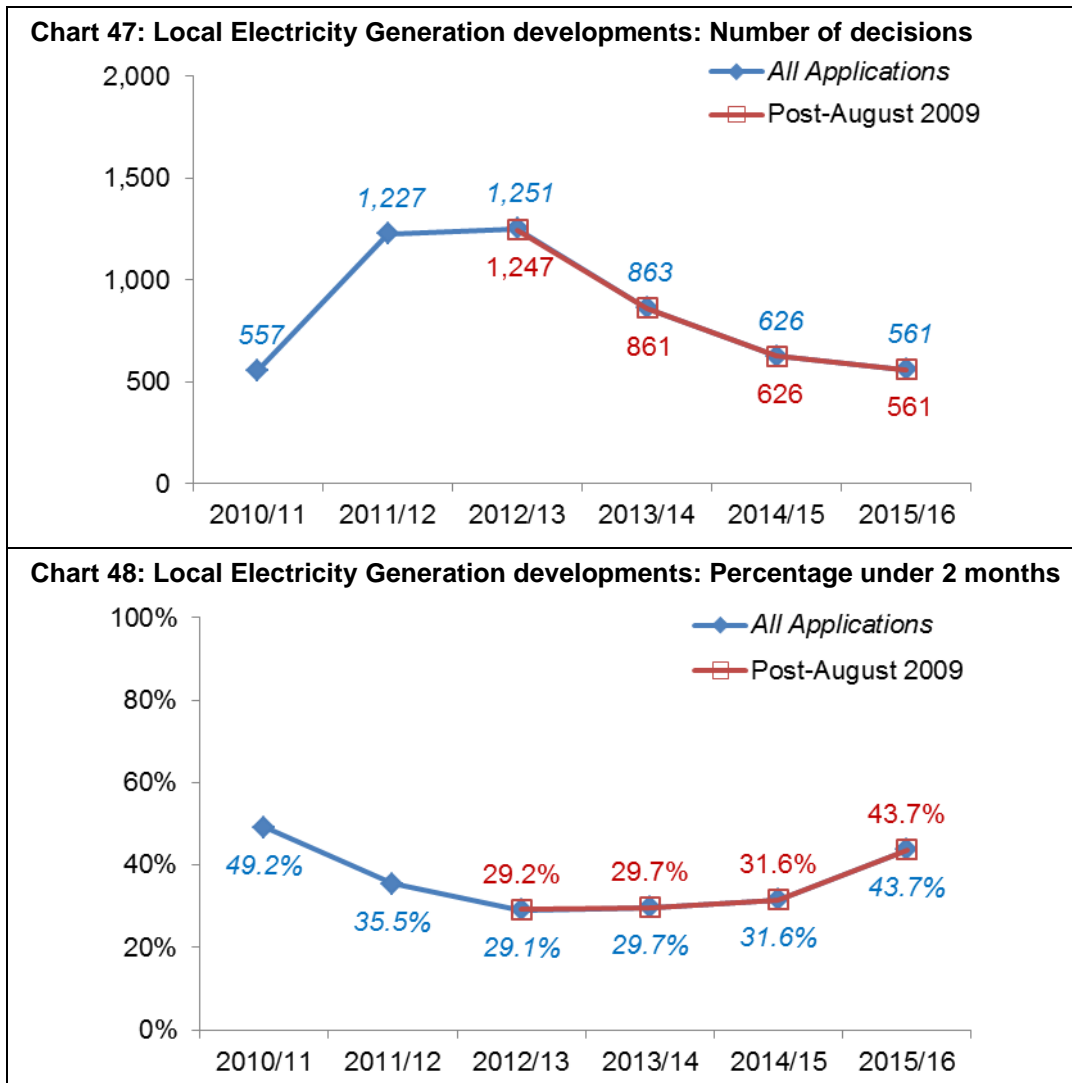
## 7.4 Local Business & Industry

The number of decisions made for local business and industry applications fell to a low of 1,941 in the year 2015/16 (for applications validated post 3rd August 2009). The percentage of decisions made in under two months was 67.9%, the highest percentage over the past six years ([Annual, 2015/16: Table 12](#)).



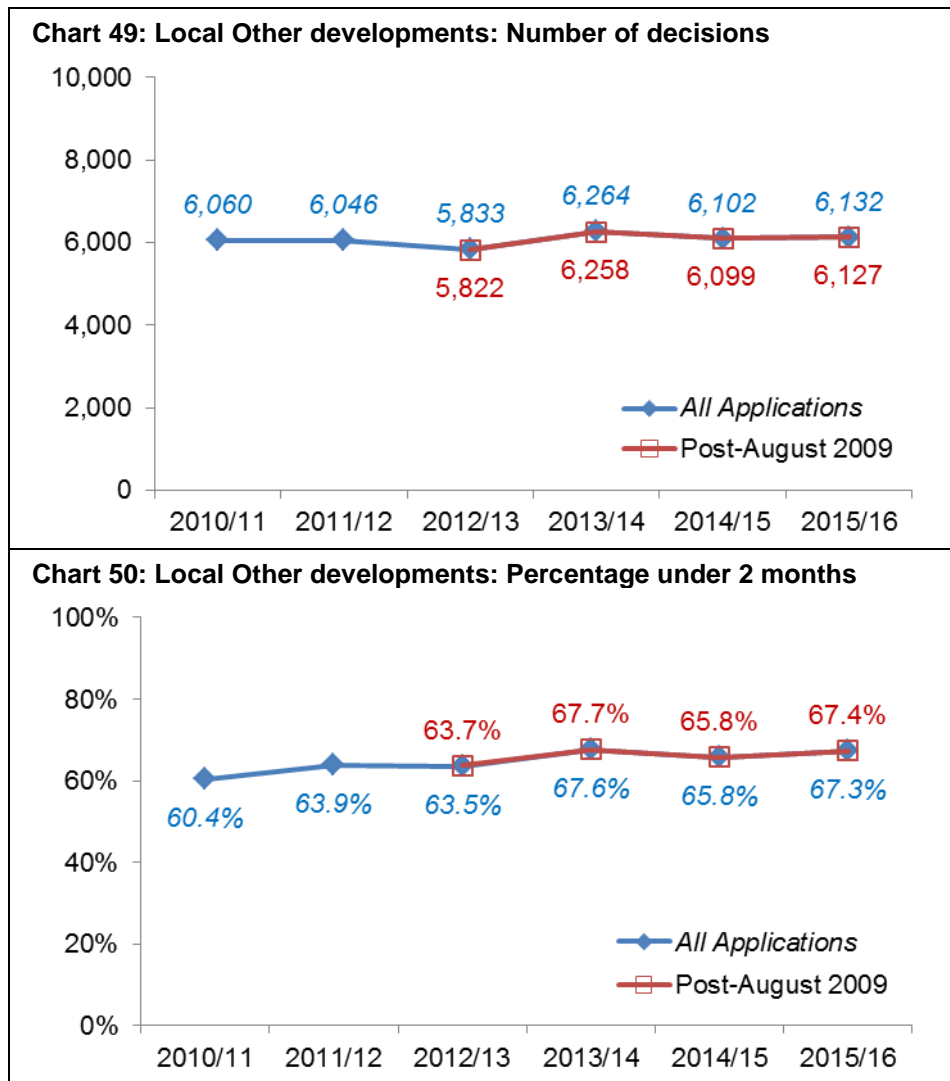
## 7.5 Local Electricity Generation

There was a sharp increase in the number of decisions made on applications for local electricity generation (from 557 to 1,227) between 2010/11 and 2011/12. This has tailed off to 561 applications in 2015/16. At the same time the percentage of decisions made in less than two months dropped from 49.2% in 2010/11 to a low of 29.2% in 2012/13 (for applications validated post 3rd August 2009). This has improved to 43.7% for the most recent year ([Annual, 2015/16: Table 16](#)).



## 7.6 Local Other Developments

After householder developments applications for other developments are the most frequent type of local application. This is the category for developments that do not fall into one of the other specific categories of application and includes, for example, applications for retail developments, food and drink outlets, hotels, hospitals, schools and leisure & tourism developments. From 2010/11 to 2013/14 there was an improvement in the percentage of decisions made in under two months to a high of 67.7% (for applications validated post 3rd August 2009), the percentage dropped to 65.8% for 2014/15 but has improved to 67.4% for the latest year ([Annual, 2015/16: Table 20](#)).



Information on decisions for other specific categories of local developments is available within the detailed excel tables at: [Planning Authority Performance Statistics 2015/16 Annual](#)



## 8. Delegation Rates

Schemes of Delegation identify who will make the planning authority's decision on different types of planning application, whether it be an appointed officer or elected members. This also influences the route for any subsequent appeal. These schemes are required by legislation and are available on the websites of each planning authority.

The delegation rates shown below measure the proportion of planning decisions that are made by appointed officers. ([Annual, 2015/16: Table 34](#)) The delegation rate for 2015/16 was 94.9%. This is the highest delegation rate over the past six years.

**Table 5: Percentage of all applications delegated in period**

2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
91.2%	90.4%	91.2%	92.6%	94.5%	94.9%

## 9. Approval Rates

The overall rate of approvals for all types of application was 93.8% for the year 2015/16. This is similar to the previous year (93.9%). The highest approval rate was for 2013/14 when the rate was 94.1%. ([Annual, 2015/16: Table 33](#))

**Table 6: Percentage of all applications approved in period**

2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
92.9%	92.2%	92.8%	94.1%	93.9%	93.8%

## 10. Appeals and Local Reviews

If an applicant does not agree with the decision of a planning authority then they can ask for a review or appeal of the decision. They can also ask for a review or appeal if the authority doesn't make a decision within the time period set by law.

If the application was decided by a planning officer on behalf of the authority, then the decision is reviewed by the Local Review Body, which is a group of councillors. If the application was decided by councillors, then the appeal is made to Scottish Ministers.

Local Review Bodies dealt with 545 cases in 2015/16, of which 60.2% had the original decision upheld. In the previous year 64.3% (554 cases) had the original decision upheld. ([Annual, 2015/16: Table 30](#))

In addition, 47.1% (344 cases) of delegated appeals to Scottish Ministers in 2015/16 had the original decision upheld. This compares with 47.2% (324 cases) for 2014/15. ([Annual, 2015/16: Table 31](#))

## 11. Enforcement Activity

Enforcement covers the actions that can be taken when developments happen without permission or when conditions have not been followed. There can be a variety of actions that are taken. Authorities have powers to serve notices asking for more information about a development. They can stop a development that does not have permission, or where the development does not follow the conditions attached to the permission which was granted. The Authority can also issue a fixed penalty or refer the matter to the Procurator Fiscal.

The total number of enforcement cases taken up in 2015/16 was 5,475. Of these cases there were 495 notices served, with 2 being reported to the Procurator Fiscal and 2 cases resulting in prosecution. In 2014/15 there were 5,599 cases taken up, 485 notices served, 5 reports to the Procurator Fiscal and 0 cases resulting in prosecution. ([Annual, 2015/16: Table 32](#))

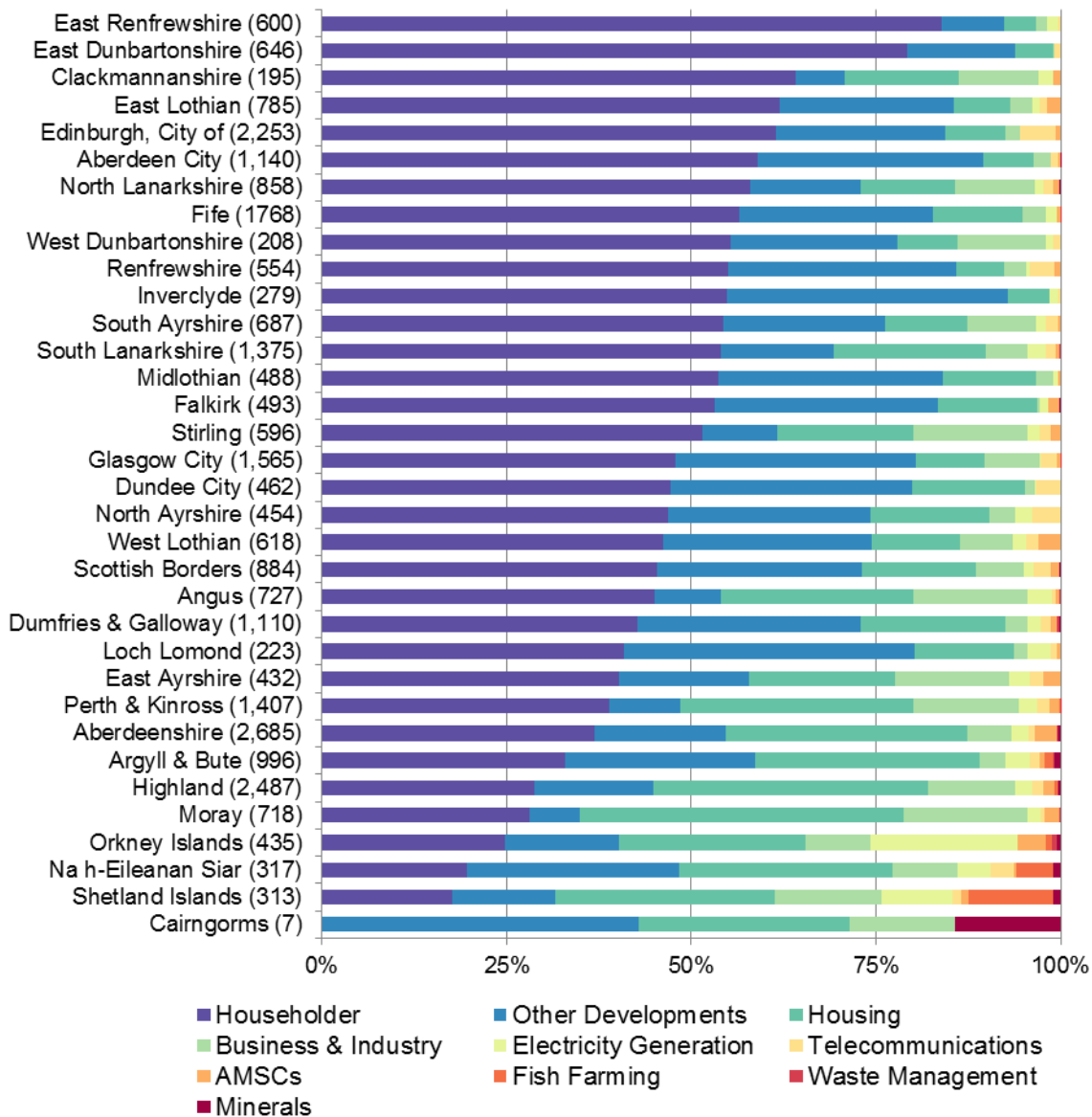
## 12. Local Developments by Planning Authority, 2015/16

Since a few legacy cases can skew results, particularly at planning authority level, results in this section are only given for post 3rd August applications. Results for all applications can be found in the detailed excel tables at:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning>

### 12.1 Local Developments – by development type, 2015/16

Chart 51: Local developments by planning authority and development type, 2015/16<sup>1</sup>



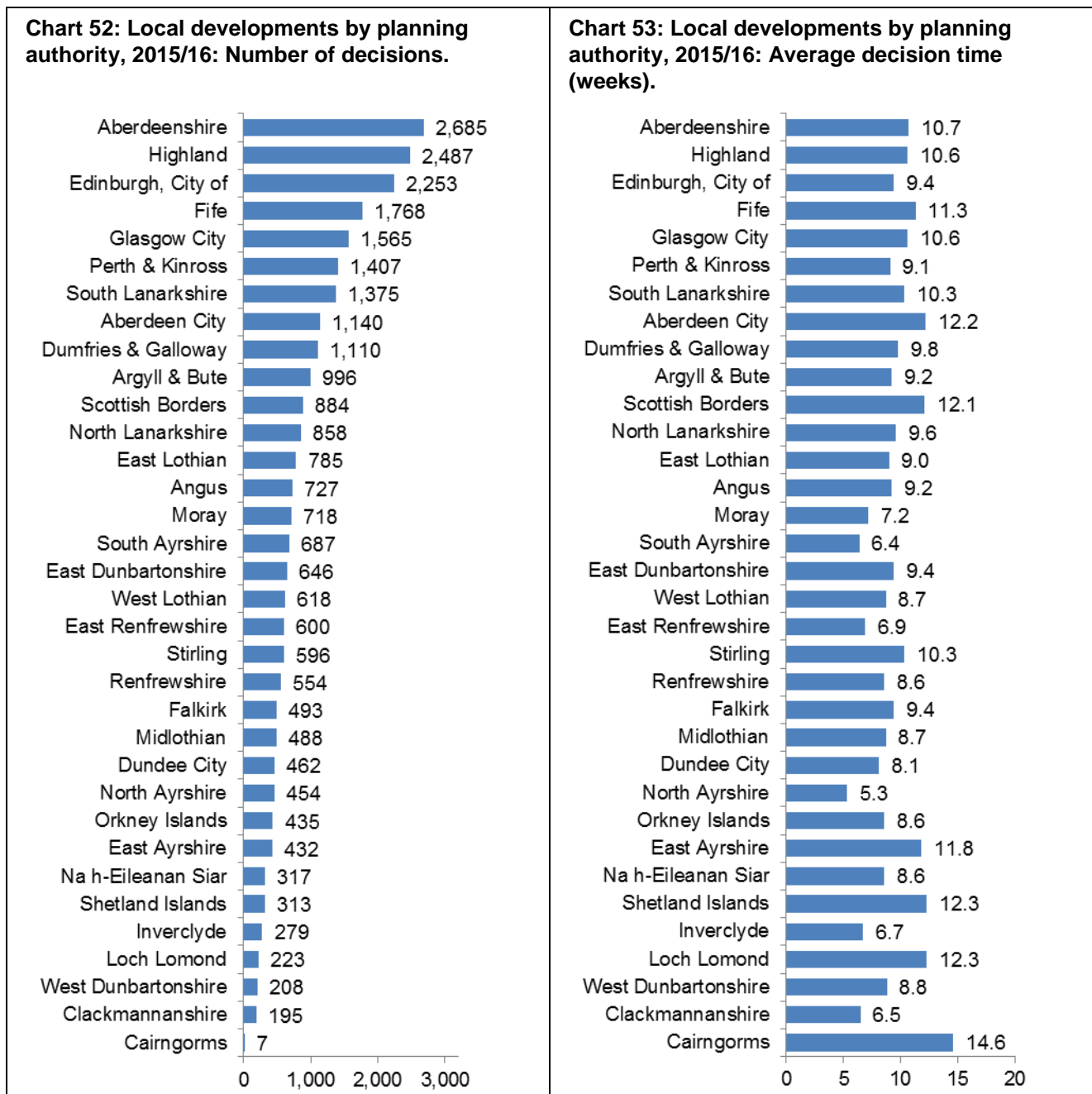
1. The number in brackets gives the total number of local development decisions by planning authority (excluding processing agreements). See [Section 2](#) for further details of processing agreements.

The chart shows information on the case mix for each planning authority, ordered by the most frequent (householder) applications. For the sixteen planning authorities from East Renfrewshire to Stirling over half of decisions made on local developments were for householder applications. At the other end of the scale, in Cairngorms there were no decisions for householder applications. The case mix may have an influence on overall average decision times within a particular authority. For example, given that householder applications are on average decided

more quickly than other types, it might be expected that overall average decision times will be lower for those planning authorities that have a higher proportion of householder applications in their case mix.

## 12.2 Local Developments – average decision times, 2015/16

The chart below shows the average decision times for local developments ordered by the number of decisions made for local developments in each planning authority. In total there were 28,765 decisions made on local developments in 2015/16 with an overall average decision time of 9.8 weeks.



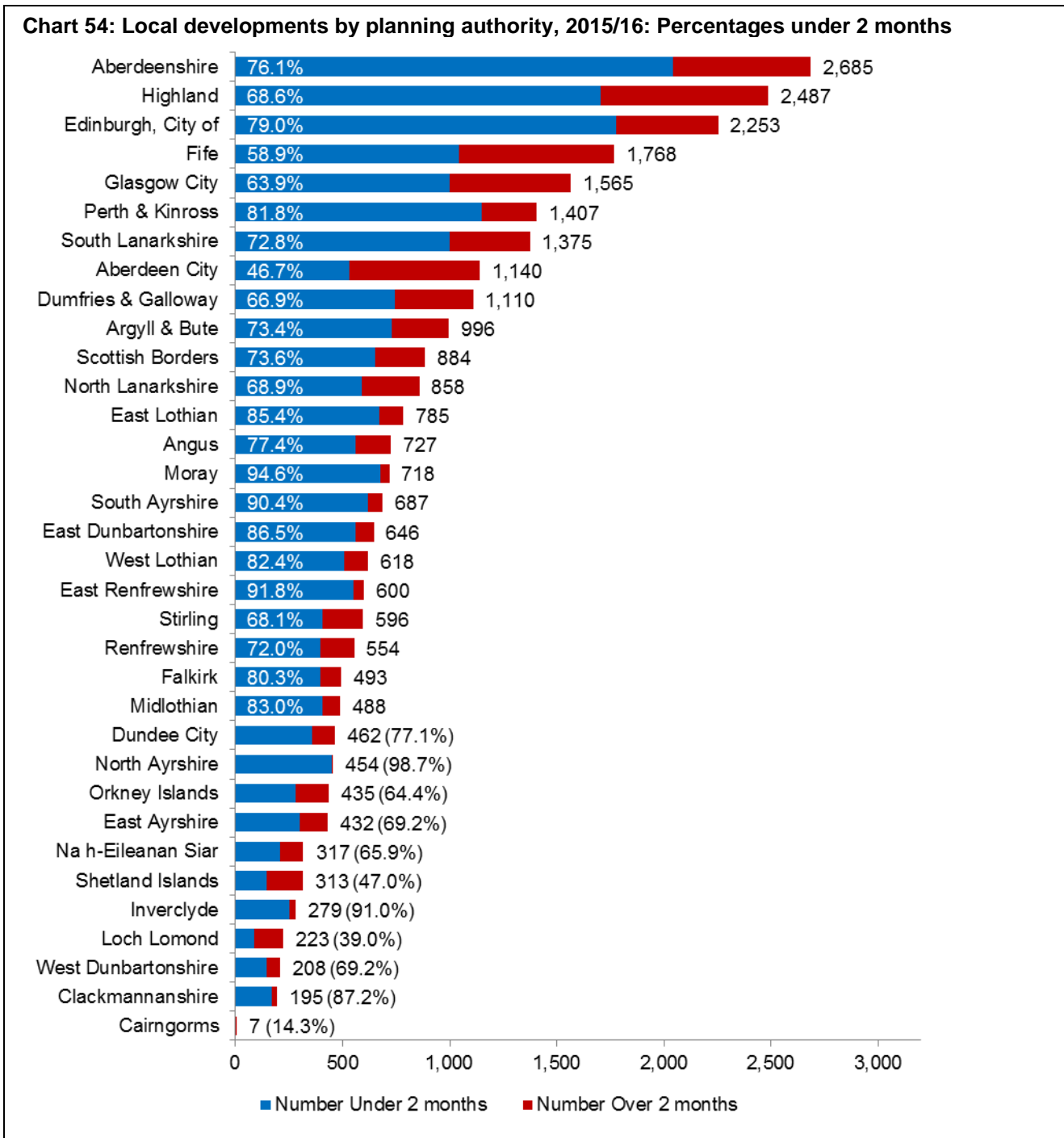
It should be expected that Cairngorms has a longer average decision time as they have no householder applications in their case mix. Also Cairngorms do not receive planning applications directly but are notified of applications which have been made to those planning authorities within the national park boundaries. Cairngorms may then decide to call applications in for their determination. Planning applications are

likely to have already been in the system for a number of weeks before being transferred to Cairngorms. Due to these reasons average times for Cairngorms applications can be expected to be higher than those of the other planning authorities.

Glasgow City Council suffered an IT server failure on 14th December 2015 and normal working practices were suspended over the course of the failure (15th December 2015 to 22nd February 2016). The failure of the IT system had a detrimental effect on Glasgow City planning service's ability to process planning applications in the normal way, which consequently has had a marked effect on their planning performance for quarter 4 of 2015/16. In turn this has also had an effect on overall 2015/16 annual averages for Glasgow City.

### 12.3 Local Developments – percentages under two months, 2015/16

The following chart shows the percentages of decisions made in under two months ordered by the total number of decisions made by each planning authority.



At Scotland level the percentage of decisions made in less than two months was 73.4%. Aberdeenshire made the most decisions on local developments (2,685) and 76.1% of these were made in less than 2 months.

The following table is an extract from [Annual, 2015/16 - Table 4](#) and allows comparison with results from the previous three years.

**Table 7: Local Applications: Average Time & Percentage under 2 months**

Planning Authority	2012/2013			2013/2014			2014/15			2015/16		
	Number of applications	Percent Under 2 Months	Overall Average Time (weeks)	Number of applications	Percent Under 2 Months	Overall Average Time (weeks)	Number of applications	Percent Under 2 Months	Overall Average Time (weeks)	Number of applications	Percent Under 2 Months	Overall Average Time (weeks)
Aberdeen City	1,189	52.6%	11.9	1,227	52.2%	12.5	1,170	36.3%	14.4	1,140	46.7%	12.2
Aberdeenshire	3,075	62.7%	15.4	2,913	69.9%	12.2	2,982	65.5%	11.9	2,685	76.1%	10.7
Angus	763	80.3%	9.2	798	75.3%	8.2	737	80.6%	9.1	727	77.4%	9.2
Argyll & Bute	1,061	69.2%	11.6	1,083	76.3%	10.3	1,097	77.8%	9.5	996	73.4%	9.2
Cairngorms NP	48	8.3%	18.3	46	19.6%	17.7	37	13.5%	21.3	7	14.3%	14.6
Clackmannanshire	192	84.9%	7.8	197	92.4%	6.8	184	94.0%	6.4	195	87.2%	6.5
Dumfries & Galloway	1,264	46.8%	12.9	1,485	50.3%	11.9	1,860	69.4%	9.5	1,110	66.9%	9.8
Dundee City	377	84.1%	7.0	438	81.7%	7.6	401	81.8%	7.8	462	77.1%	8.1
East Ayrshire	492	60.4%	11.7	430	68.6%	13.0	429	62.0%	12.7	432	69.2%	11.8
East Dunbartonshire	662	84.1%	10.1	618	90.3%	8.7	623	92.5%	8.6	646	86.5%	9.4
East Lothian	738	83.3%	11.6	840	86.5%	10.7	749	87.0%	9.7	785	85.4%	9.0
East Renfrewshire	546	84.2%	8.3	581	85.0%	7.3	606	87.5%	7.0	600	91.8%	6.9
Edinburgh, City of	2,069	82.4%	8.3	2,148	80.6%	8.6	2,219	78.2%	9.1	2,253	79.0%	9.4
Falkirk	507	65.9%	11.7	514	79.6%	8.8	512	78.1%	8.9	493	80.3%	9.4
Fife	1,751	64.2%	12.8	1,756	60.3%	12.7	1,899	55.8%	11.9	1,768	58.9%	11.3
Glasgow City	1,403	69.6%	11.3	1,584	67.5%	11.0	1,503	69.3%	10.7	1,565	63.9%	10.6
Highland	2,436	67.3%	11.4	2,597	70.7%	10.6	2,383	70.9%	10.7	2,487	68.6%	10.6
Inverclyde	306	82.4%	7.7	303	86.8%	7.1	270	91.9%	7.0	279	91.0%	6.7
Loch Lomond & The Trossachs NP	237	59.9%	12.3	201	63.7%	12.0	193	56.5%	12.2	223	39.0%	12.3
Midlothian	444	74.8%	10.8	424	85.1%	10.0	423	87.0%	8.4	488	83.0%	8.7
Moray	817	67.2%	14.9	856	83.3%	10.1	789	92.6%	7.2	718	94.6%	7.2
Na h-Eileanan Siar	413	59.1%	10.7	400	60.5%	9.8	353	64.3%	11.1	317	65.9%	8.6
North Ayrshire	457	90.8%	7.7	495	96.0%	6.2	471	97.7%	5.7	454	98.7%	5.3
North Lanarkshire	875	73.7%	11.3	917	87.5%	8.4	838	73.3%	9.2	858	68.9%	9.6
Orkney Islands	609	46.1%	10.7	381	62.7%	10.6	365	67.4%	9.0	435	64.4%	8.6
Perth & Kinross	1,449	69.4%	10.2	1,495	73.5%	10.3	1,412	72.1%	9.5	1,407	81.8%	9.1
Renfrewshire	556	78.8%	9.2	566	80.7%	7.8	532	80.8%	7.7	554	72.0%	8.6
Scottish Borders	947	64.2%	13.9	907	69.7%	16.6	912	68.0%	15.0	884	73.6%	12.1
Shetland Islands	286	68.2%	11.0	356	57.0%	11.0	294	57.1%	9.6	313	47.0%	12.3
South Ayrshire	722	86.7%	7.6	693	90.8%	7.1	736	79.5%	7.9	687	90.4%	6.4
South Lanarkshire	1,274	68.8%	11.9	1,327	67.3%	13.1	1,431	71.1%	10.9	1,375	72.8%	10.3
Stirling	580	78.4%	9.7	630	77.6%	9.5	579	73.7%	9.5	596	68.1%	10.3
West Dunbartonshire	213	83.1%	9.3	208	75.5%	9.8	180	75.0%	8.5	208	69.2%	8.8
West Lothian	574	73.2%	12.0	612	77.8%	9.2	570	83.9%	8.0	618	82.4%	8.7
<b>SCOTLAND</b>	<b>29,332</b>	<b>69.4%</b>	<b>11.4</b>	<b>30,026</b>	<b>72.7%</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>29,739</b>	<b>72.1%</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>28,765</b>	<b>73.4%</b>	<b>9.8</b>

South Ayrshire, Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City have seen the biggest improvements in the percentage of decisions made in less than two months between 2014/15 to 2015/16.

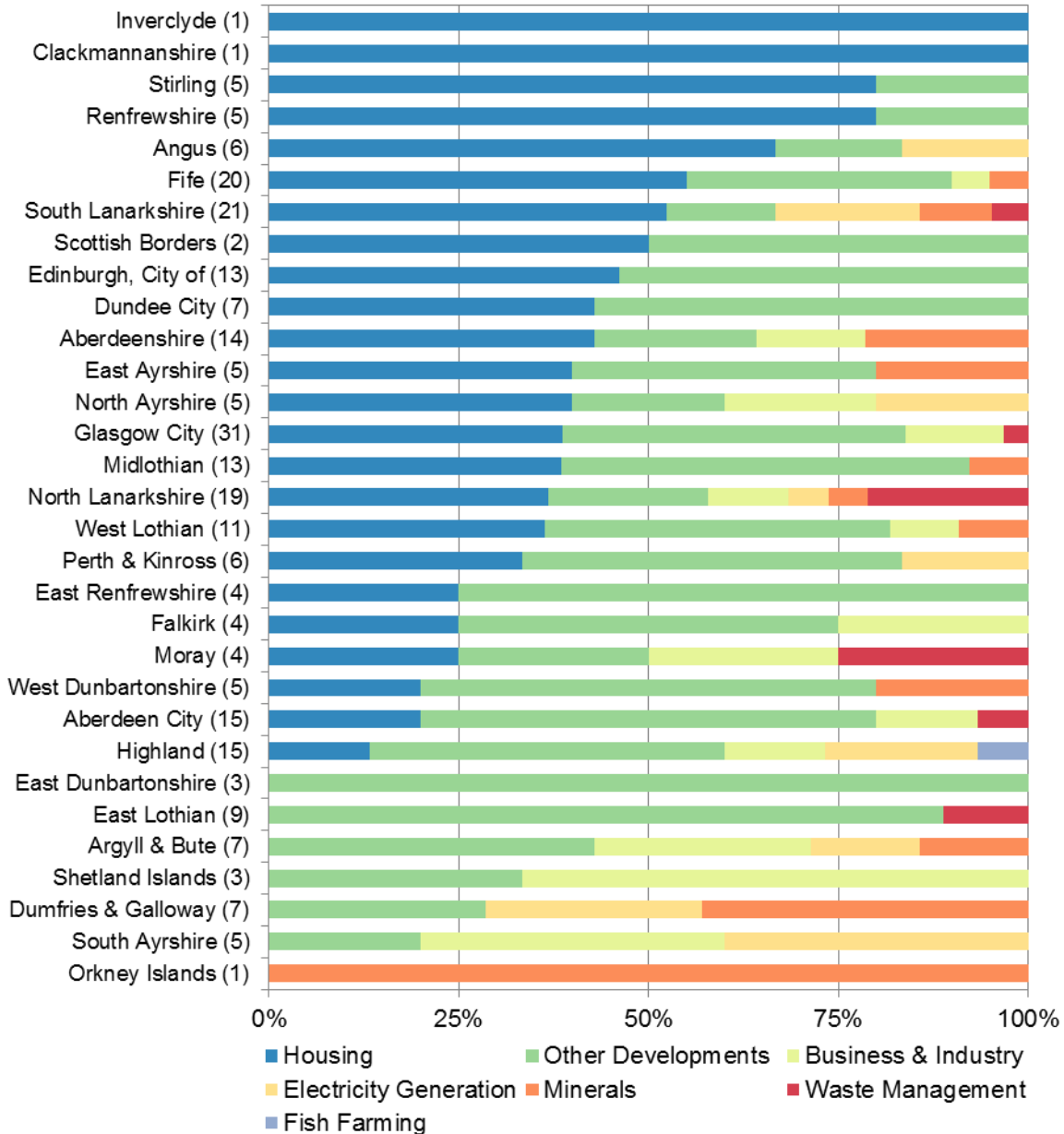
### 13. Major Developments by Planning Authority, 2015/16

As in the previous section results are only given for post 3rd August applications. Results for all applications can be found in the detailed excel tables at:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning>

#### 13.1 Major Developments – by development type, 2015/16

Chart 55: Major developments by planning authority and development type, 2015/16<sup>1</sup>



1. The number in brackets gives the total number of major development decisions by planning authority (excluding processing agreements). See [Section 2](#) for further details of processing agreements.

The chart shows information on the case mix for each planning authority, ordered by housing followed by other developments. Note that numbers of decisions made for major developments are very small at planning authority level. Glasgow made the most decisions (31) for major planning applications with 12 for housing, 14 for other major developments, 4 for business and industry and 1 for waste management developments. In addition Glasgow used processing agreements for

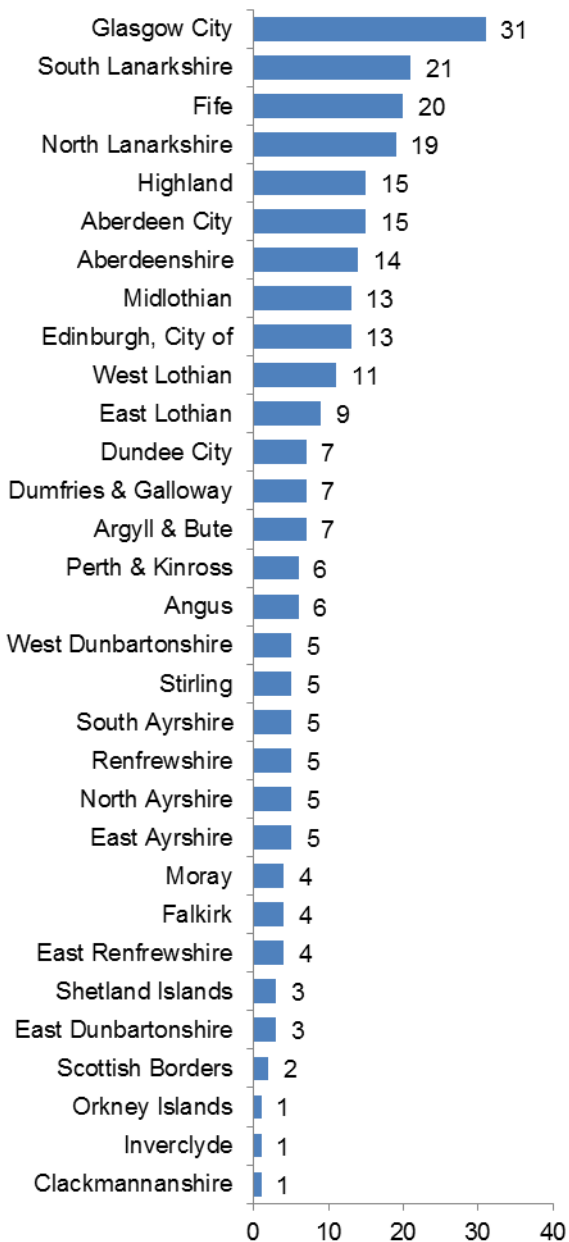


a further two major developments. Edinburgh used processing agreements (18) for the majority of their major development decisions and when these are included Edinburgh made 31 decisions overall on major developments.

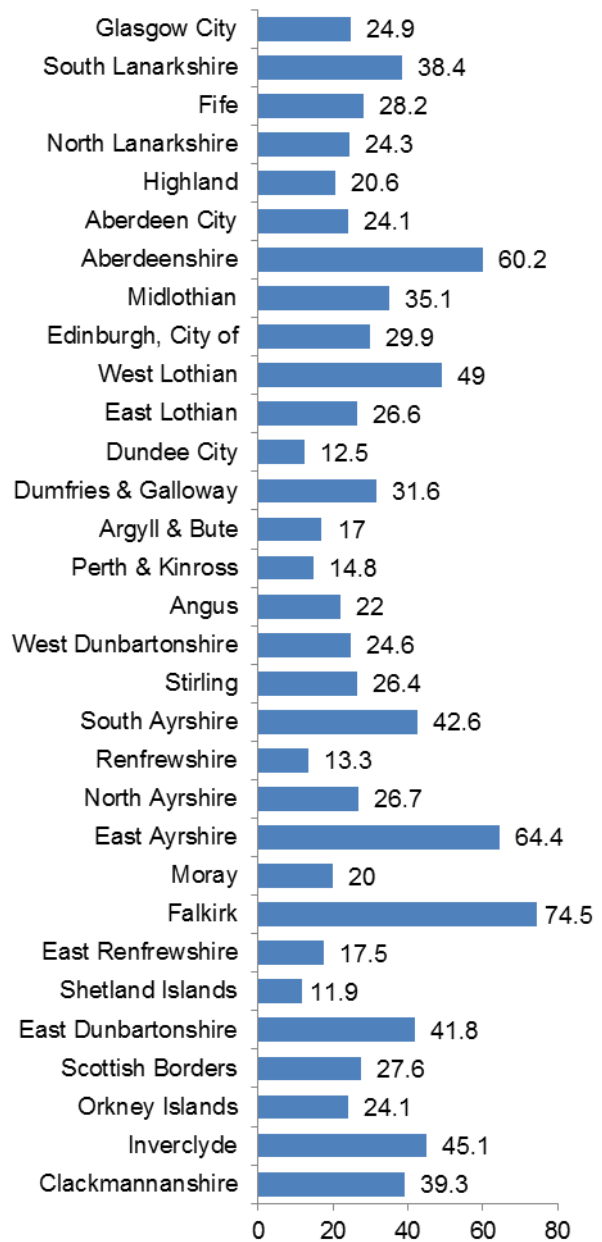
### 13.2 Major Developments – average decision times, 2015/16

The following charts shows the average decision times for major developments ordered by the number of decisions made for major developments in each planning authority. In total there were 267 decisions made on major developments in 2015/16 with an overall average decision time of 30.5 weeks. A further 83 major developments that were subject to a processing agreement are not included in these average decision times.

**Chart 56: Major developments by planning authority, 2015/16: Number of decisions**



**Chart 57: Major developments by planning authority, 2015/16: Average decision time (weeks)**



Numbers of decisions made for major developments are very small compared to those for local developments and the average decision times at local authority level are likely to be volatile. The case mix also has an influence on average decision times. The lengthy average time for major developments in Falkirk was due to one major development for a residential and mixed use phased development, including up to 1,500 residential units, community and enterprise facilities, transport and environmental infrastructure and employment space.

Cairngorms National Park, Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park and Na h-Eileanan Siar did not make any decisions for major developments in 2015/16 and are therefore not included in the charts in this section.

The following table is an extract from [Annual, 2015/16: Table 2](#) and allows comparison of the average decision times for major applications between years.

**Table 8: Major Applications: Average Decision Time**

Planning Authority	2012/13		2013/14		2014/15		2015/16	
	Total number of applications	Overall Average Time (weeks)	Total number of applications	Overall Average Time (weeks)	Total number of applications	Overall Average Time (weeks)	Total number of applications	Overall Average Time (weeks)
Aberdeen City	10	53.7	15	45.9	17	47.6	15	24.1
Aberdeenshire	12	41.5	23	53.9	24	89.7	14	60.2
Angus	4	33.3	5	30.1	8	31.1	6	22.0
Argyll & Bute	3	59.0	4	26.9	3	14.1	7	17.0
Cairngorms	0	-	0	-	4	61.4	0	-
Clackmannanshire	0	-	2	7.9	1	16.0	1	39.3
Dumfries & Galloway	15	34.9	18	53.0	8	20.6	7	31.6
Dundee City	3	23.7	6	12.5	6	13.1	7	12.5
East Ayrshire	5	39.5	4	44.9	5	61.2	5	64.4
East Dunbartonshire	4	13.5	3	19.4	6	32.3	3	41.8
East Lothian	4	20.7	6	43.5	12	28.1	9	26.6
East Renfrewshire	5	39.9	5	16.7	3	19.6	4	17.5
Edinburgh, City of	6	22.7	14	27.9	12	22.8	13	29.9
Falkirk	0	-	5	27.9	2	132.4	4	74.5
Fife	21	45.5	25	49.7	25	45.0	20	28.2
Glasgow City	34	38.2	35	27.5	28	24.1	31	24.9
Highland	15	26.1	13	31.6	8	24.9	15	20.6
Inverclyde	4	26.0	0	-	1	12.1	1	45.1
Loch Lomond	0	-	1	26.3	1	13.1	0	-
Midlothian	10	31.8	4	27.4	6	21.6	13	35.1
Moray	8	55.7	7	49.4	2	13.1	4	20.0
Na h-Eileanan Siar	0	-	1	44.9	2	28.5	0	-
North Ayrshire	6	34.1	6	19.8	5	12.6	5	26.7
North Lanarkshire	12	21.0	31	19.2	26	19.6	19	24.3
Orkney Islands	0	-	1	7.3	1	7.0	1	24.1
Perth & Kinross	9	14.2	11	39.2	12	41.7	6	14.8
Renfrewshire	10	36.6	10	14.0	4	10.1	5	13.3
Scottish Borders	10	60.8	8	53.3	8	30.9	2	27.6
Shetland Islands	0	-	3	14.0	5	23.5	3	11.9
South Ayrshire	3	21.6	6	26.4	8	26.0	5	42.6
South Lanarkshire	10	43.2	17	30.1	23	42.4	21	38.4
Stirling	3	14.9	6	30.5	3	43.3	5	26.4
West Dunbartonshire	2	19.2	4	32.4	7	19.8	5	24.6
West Lothian	10	38.7	11	44.7	12	45.3	11	49.0
<b>SCOTLAND</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>36.3</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>34.6</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>36.6</b>	<b>267</b>	<b>30.5</b>

Due to the small numbers of major applications, especially at local authority level, average times are more variable. However, Aberdeen City, Falkirk, Perth & Kinross and Shetland Islands have all improved their overall average decision time by over 40% compared to 2014/15.

## 14. Annex

### 14.1 Stopping the Clock

In some cases it is appropriate to remove a length of time from the total decision time. We have called this process of removing a specific length of time “stopping the clock”. This should not be used for every application; it is about recording the data in a way that produces more accurate and relevant performance statistics that would otherwise have been skewed by extreme cases of delay outwith the planning authority’s control. For the year 2015/16 there were a total of 1,402 applications where the clock was stopped for an average of 30.8 weeks. This compares with 955 applications stopped for an average of 36.1 weeks in the previous year. This improvement in reporting will have an influence on average decision times. The table below shows the number of applications where the clock has been stopped by planning authority.

**Table 9: Clock stops by planning authority, 2015/16<sup>1</sup>**

Planning Authority	Total applications decided in 2015/16	Number of applications with clock stopped	Percentage of applications with clock stopped	Average length of time clock stopped (weeks)
Aberdeen City	1,466	177	12.1%	24.2
Aberdeenshire	3,126	115	3.7%	5.2
Angus	885	32	3.6%	16.7
Argyll & Bute	1,247	44	3.5%	24.6
Cairngorms NP	7	3	42.9%	18.9
Clackmannanshire	243	6	2.5%	11.3
Dumfries & Galloway	1,307	15	1.1%	58.2
Dundee City	683	50	7.3%	12.0
East Ayrshire	572	35	6.1%	18.1
East Dunbartonshire	715	50	7.0%	9.1
East Lothian	1,001	25	2.5%	36.6
East Renfrewshire	675	13	1.9%	20.3
Edinburgh, City of	3,688	33	0.9%	52.6
Falkirk	583	46	7.9%	55.2
Fife	2,424	9	0.4%	23.3
Glasgow City	2,495	130	5.2%	23.0
Highland	2,778	40	1.4%	87.8
Inverclyde	360	12	3.3%	10.5
Loch Lomond & The Trossachs	318	3	0.9%	46.0
Midlothian	589	5	0.8%	138.8
Moray	808	9	1.1%	8.0
Na h-Eileanan Siar	386	6	1.6%	18.9
North Ayrshire	559	20	3.6%	27.4
North Lanarkshire	1,040	39	3.8%	34.8
Orkney Islands	505	48	9.5%	19.7
Perth & Kinross	1,714	89	5.2%	58.9
Renfrewshire	729	9	1.2%	8.3
Scottish Borders	1,105	57	5.2%	124.5
Shetland Islands	368	41	11.1%	6.7
South Ayrshire	983	7	0.7%	23.1
South Lanarkshire	1,619	57	3.5%	29.7
Stirling	736	12	1.6%	54.6
West Dunbartonshire	270	42	15.6%	22.0
West Lothian	782	123	15.7%	13.9
<b>SCOTLAND</b>	<b>36,766</b>	<b>1,402</b>	<b>3.8%</b>	<b>30.8</b>

1. Processing Agreements are not included in this analysis.

The following table gives an analysis of applications where the clock has been stopped by development type.

**Table 10: Clock stops by development type**

Development Type	Total applications decided in 2015/16	Number of applications with clock stopped	Percentage of applications with clock stopped	Average length of time clock stopped (weeks)
<b>Local developments</b>				
Householder	13,644	218	1.6%	9.4
Other developments	6,132	246	4.0%	25.3
Housing	5,616	479	8.5%	41.6
Business and Industry	1,944	81	4.2%	23.1
Electricity Generation	561	59	10.5%	32.5
Telecommunications	441	11	2.5%	11.7
AMSCs	319	27	8.5%	11.1
Minerals	40	9	22.5%	106.7
Marine Shellfish Farming	41	2	4.9%	7.6
Marine Finfish Farming	34	10	29.4%	14.3
Waste Management	22	0	0.0%	-
Freshwater Fish Farming	9	1	11.1%	202.0
<b>Local developments - TOTAL</b>	<b>28,803</b>	<b>1143</b>	<b>4.0%</b>	<b>29.5</b>
<b>Major developments</b>				
Other Developments	110	23	20.9%	48.8
Housing	105	39	37.1%	128.8
Business and Industry	23	6	26.1%	25.0
Minerals	18	6	33.3%	83.0
Electricity Generation	17	5	29.4%	44.7
Waste Management	9	1	11.1%	60.1
Marine Shellfish Farming	1	0	0.0%	-
Freshwater Fish Farming	0	0	-	-
Marine Finfish Farming	0	0	-	-
<b>Major developments - TOTAL</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>28.3%</b>	<b>88.5</b>
<b>Other Consents</b>				
Listed bldg.+con.area consents	3,683	107	2.9%	13.8
Advertisements	2,190	46	2.1%	11.3
Other consents and certificates	1,742	9	0.5%	9.9
Hazardous substances consents	15	8	53.3%	12.8
<b>Other Consents - TOTAL</b>	<b>7,630</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>12.9</b>
<b>Local with EIA</b>				
Local Developments Subject To EIA	50	9	18.0%	20.2
AMSCs (Subject to EIA)	0	-	-	-
<b>Local with EIA - TOTAL</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>18.0%</b>	<b>20.2</b>

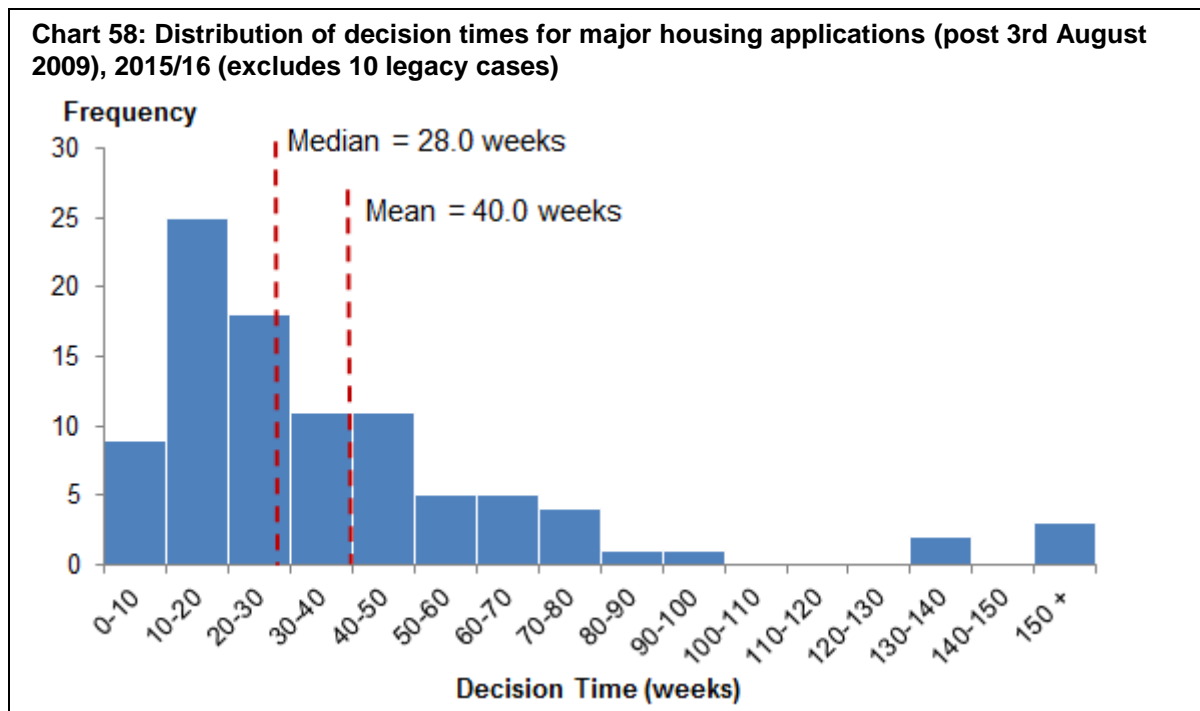
For 2015/16, local housing developments have the most applications where the clock has been stopped, with 41.6 weeks on average removed from decision times. This represents 8.5% of all applications for local housing developments. There are a variety of reasons why the clock is stopped but are often due to delays in concluding legal agreements and waiting for the applicant to sign a planning obligation. Other reasons include site survey required in relation to European protected species that must await a particular season, external consultants delay or awaiting advert fees to be paid.

Stop the clock advice has been issued to planning authorities to help with decisions for stopping the clock and is available at;

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning/DataSupplierArea>

## 14.2 Distribution of decision times for major applications.

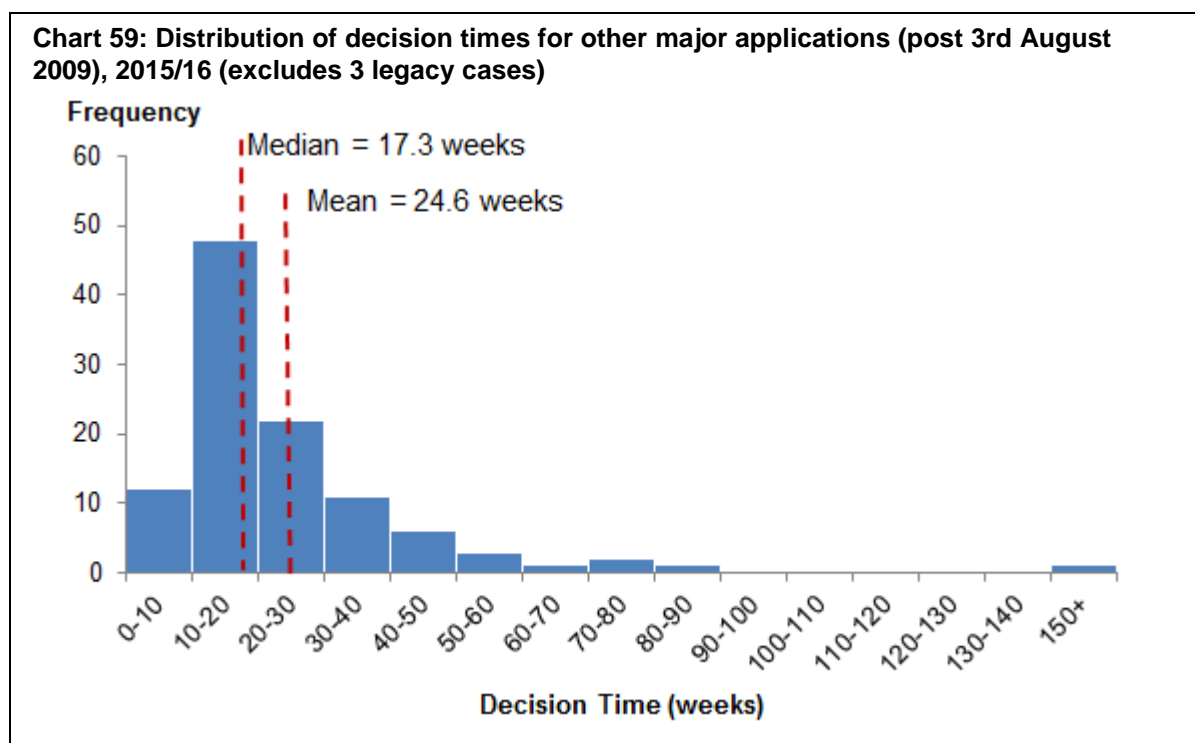
Chart 58 shows the distribution of the decision times for major housing applications (post 3rd August 2009) that were concluded in 2015/16.



The vertical line at 40.0 weeks shows the mean (average) decision time for major housing developments. The second line at 28.0 weeks shows the median decision time. Decision times range from 1.9 weeks to 249.1 weeks. The chart shows that the mean decision time has been skewed by several lengthy decisions. Almost two thirds of major housing applications were decided in a time quicker than the average of 40.0 weeks. Almost half of major housing applications were decided within 6 months.

The three lengthiest decisions that all took more than 150 weeks are one each in Aberdeenshire, East Ayrshire and West Lothian. The Aberdeenshire application was for a residential development, primary education provision and associated infrastructure including roads and drainage, the East Ayrshire application was for 299 residential units, with associated access, drainage and landscaping proposals and the West Lothian application is described as a 10 hectare residential development with associated roads and landscaping. The Aberdeenshire and West Lothian applications were approved, but the East Ayrshire application was refused.

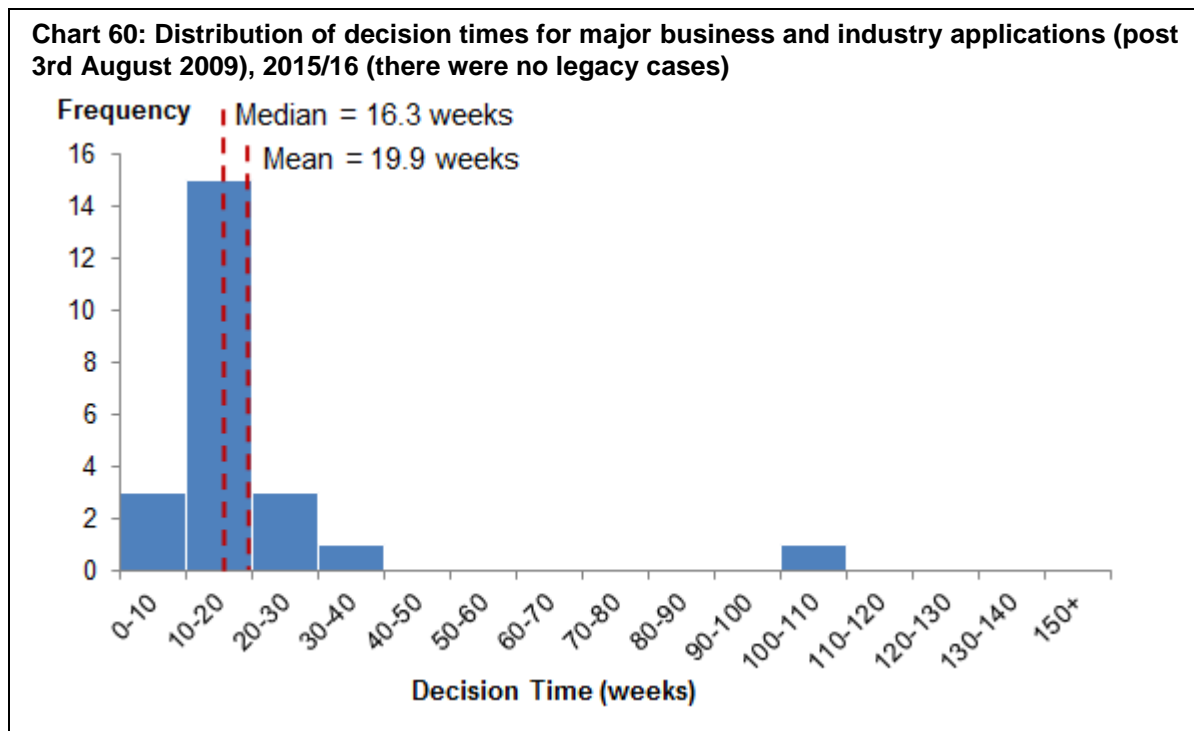
Chart 59 shows the distribution of the decision times for other major applications (post 3rd August 2009) that were concluded in 2015/16. This is the category for developments that do not fall into one of the other specific categories of application and includes, for example, applications for retail developments, food and drink outlets, hotels, hospitals, schools and leisure & tourism developments.



The vertical line at 24.6 weeks shows the mean (average) decision time for other major developments. The second line at 17.3 weeks shows the median decision time. Decision times range from 5.0 weeks to 207.9 weeks. The chart shows that the average decision time has been skewed by several lengthy decisions. Almost two thirds of other major applications were decided in a time quicker than the average of 24.6 weeks and 70% were decided within 6 months.

The lengthiest decision that took 207.9 weeks is in Falkirk Local Authority and is described as a residential and mixed use phased development, including up to 1,500 residential units, community and enterprise facilities, transport and environmental infrastructure and employment space. The application was refused.

Chart 60 shows the distribution of the decision times for major business and industry applications (post 3rd August 2009) that were concluded in 2015/16.

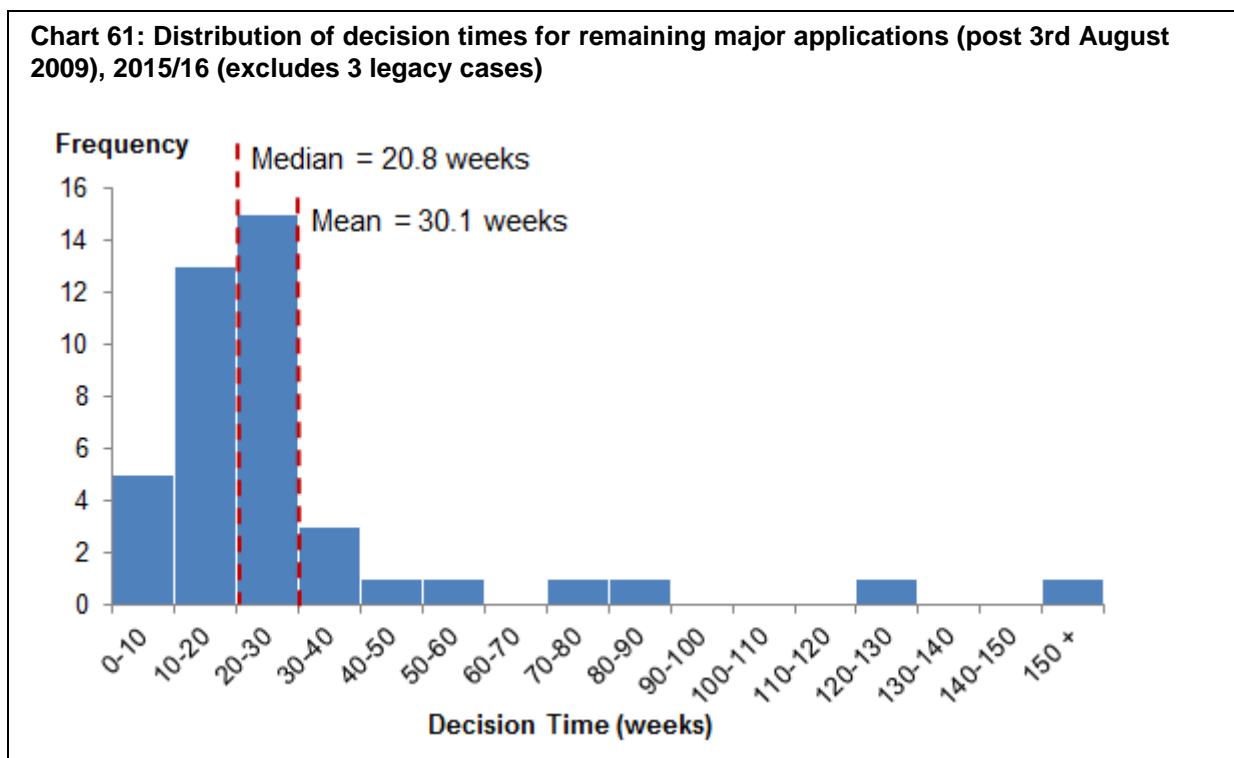


The vertical line at 19.9 weeks shows the mean (average) decision time for major business and industry developments. The second line at 16.3 weeks shows the median decision time. Decision times range from 7.1 weeks to 109.0 weeks. The average decision time has been skewed by one lengthy decision that increases the average by four weeks. More than 78% of major business and industry applications were decided in a time quicker than the average of 19.9 weeks and more than 91% were decided within 6 months.

The lengthiest decision that took 109.0 weeks is in Aberdeenshire and is described as the erection of business, industrial, storage and distribution, hotel and associated infrastructure. The application was approved.



Chart 61 shows the distribution of the decision times for the remaining major applications (post 3rd August 2009) that were concluded in 2015/16. These include applications for minerals, waste management, electricity generation and marine shellfish farming.



The vertical line at 30.1 weeks shows the mean (average) decision time for the remaining major developments. The second line at 20.8 weeks shows the median decision time. Decision times range from 4.0 weeks to 178.9 weeks. The chart shows that the average decision time has been skewed by several lengthy decisions. Almost 79% of the remaining major applications were decided in a time quicker than the average of 30.0 weeks and 64% were decided within 6 months.

The lengthiest decision that took 178.9 weeks is in South Lanarkshire and is described as an extension to sand and gravel quarry, including retention of site processing area, with restoration to rough grazing. The application was approved.

### 14.3 Planning Performance Guidance

Detailed guidance is available to planning authorities to help with submission of quarterly data. This can be found here:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning/DataSupplierArea>

### 14.4 Calculation of cut-off date for 2 month target

Months are measured from a specific day in one month until the day with the preceding date in the following or subsequent months. Further guidelines on how this is calculated can be found here:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning/DataSupplierArea>

## 14.5 Revisions

The revisions policy for planning performance statistics has been developed in accordance with the UK Statistics Authority Code of practice for Official Statistics and further details are available at:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning/Revisions>

During the analysis of annual figures for 2015/16 there have been a very small number of changes to previously published quarterly data, which have been incorporated into annual summaries.

The quarterly revisions have been footnoted in the latest publication:

[Planning Authority Performance Statistics 2015/16 Quarter 4](#)

## 14.6 Uses of the Statistics

The key objective of the statistics is to allow Scottish Government and the planning authorities to monitor the performance of planning authorities in the timeliness of deciding planning applications. The statistics monitor the impact of the development management system, part of the modernising planning agenda, which was implemented on 3rd August 2009. These statistics also feed into the evidence used in the territorial liaison meetings between Scottish Government Department for Built Environment officials and planning authorities. Further details are available at:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning/DataUses>

## 14.7 Statistics for other UK countries

Information and statistics on planning applications for the other UK countries can be accessed at the following links:

England: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-applications-statistics>

Wales: <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/planning/planningstats/?lang=en>

Northern Ireland: <http://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/tools/about-statistics.htm>

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### **How to access background or source data**

The data collected for this statistical bulletin

- are available in more detail through Scottish Neighbourhood Statistics
- are available via excel spreadsheets on the Planning Statistics webpages at: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning>

Details for individual planning applications are also available on planning authorities' eplanning websites.

- may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors.
- cannot be made available by Scottish Government for further analysis as Scottish Government is not the data controller.

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