

PEOPLE, COMMUNITIES AND PLACES

Annual and Quarterly Planning Performance Statistics, 2016/17

This report presents statistics on planning decision-making and timescales across the years 2012/13 to 2016/17. 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)

Chart 1: Applications for Local Developments: Number of decisions

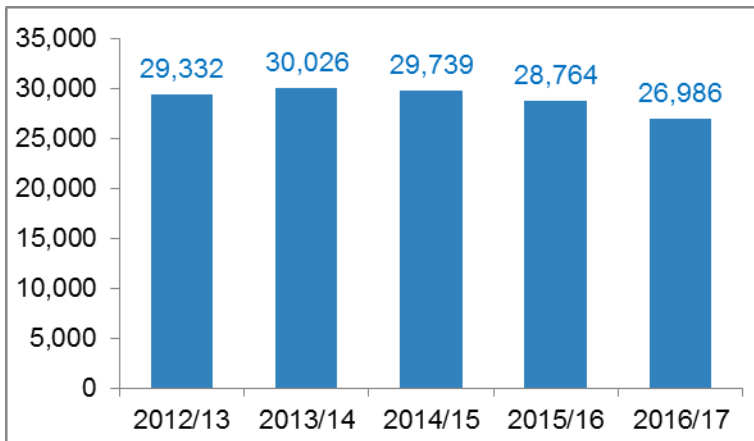


Chart 2: Applications for Local Developments: Average decision time (weeks)

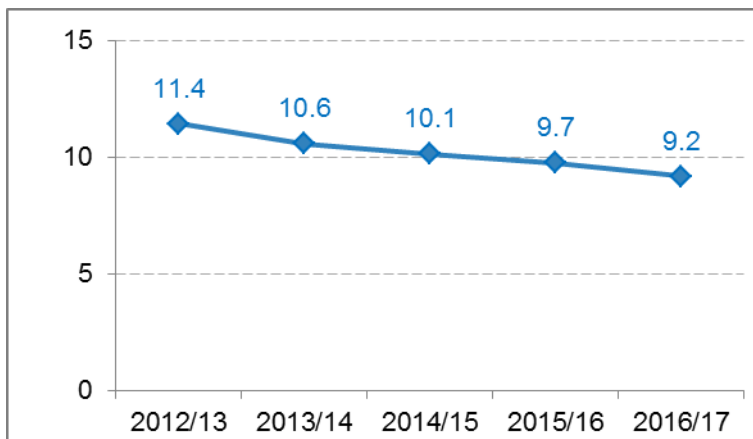


Chart 3: Applications for Major Developments: Number of decisions

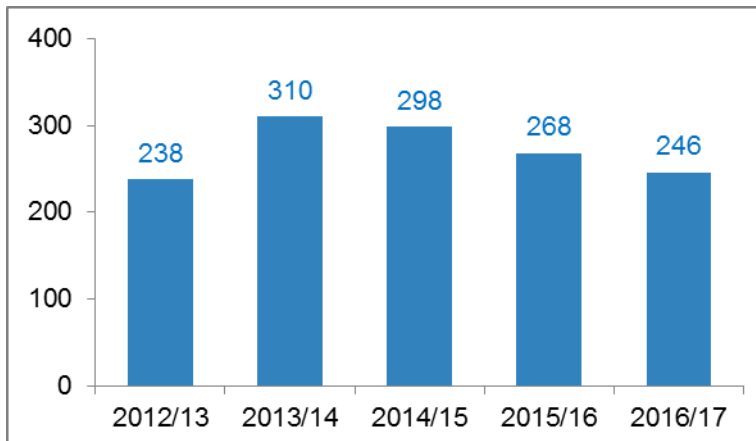
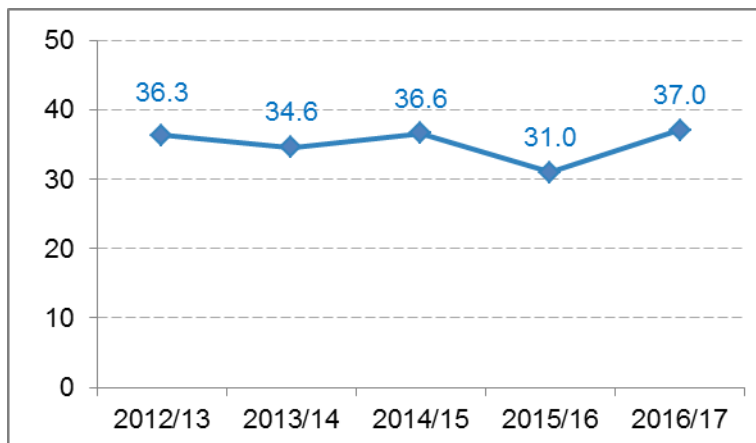


Chart 4: Applications for Major Developments: Average decision time (weeks)



Key Findings for the year 2016/17¹:

Reduction in planning applications decided in 2016/17 compared with previous four years.

- The number of Local Development² decisions in 2016/17 totalled 26,986, a decrease of 6% (1,778 applications) from the previous year. This drop was largely due to fewer decisions for housing, electricity generation, householder, business & industry and other developments.
- The number of Major Development³ decisions in 2016/17 totalled 246, a decrease of 8% (22 applications) from 2015/16. There were decreases across all categories of development apart from those for housing and business & industry.

¹ Figures exclude pre 3rd August 2009 legacy cases and processing agreements.

² 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.

³ 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.

The overall average decision time for Local Developments is the quickest annual figure since the start of this data collection in 2012/13.

- Local Development decisions were quicker by an average of 4 days per application compared with 2015/16 (9.2 weeks in 2016/17 compared with 9.7 weeks in 2015/16) and were the quickest since the start of this data collection in 2012/13.
- Improvements were seen in average decision times for most categories of Local Developments apart from electricity generation, AMSCs⁴, waste management and telecommunications. In particular, the average decision time for local housing developments was 12.7 weeks for 2016/17, one week quicker than the previous year (13.7 weeks).
- A total of 22 out of 34 planning authorities have reported improvements in their average decision times for Local Developments in 2016/17 compared to 2015/16.

The overall average decision time for Major Developments is the slowest annual figure since the start of this data collection in 2012/13.

- Major Development decisions were slower by an average of 6 weeks per application compared with 2015/16 (37.0 weeks in 2016/17 compared with 31.0 weeks in 2015/16) and were the slowest since the start of this data collection in 2012/13.
- Average figures based on a relatively small number of Major Development applications can be skewed by a few lengthy decisions. Almost 69% of Major applications in 2016/17 were decided in a time quicker than the average of 37.0 weeks.
- Decisions for most categories of Major Developments were slower apart from minerals and waste management applications. In particular, the average decision time for major housing developments was 44.9 weeks for 2016/17, more than four weeks slower than the previous year (40.6 weeks).

⁴ 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

Quarterly Trends (excludes legacy cases and processing agreements)

Chart 5: Applications for Local Developments: Number of decisions

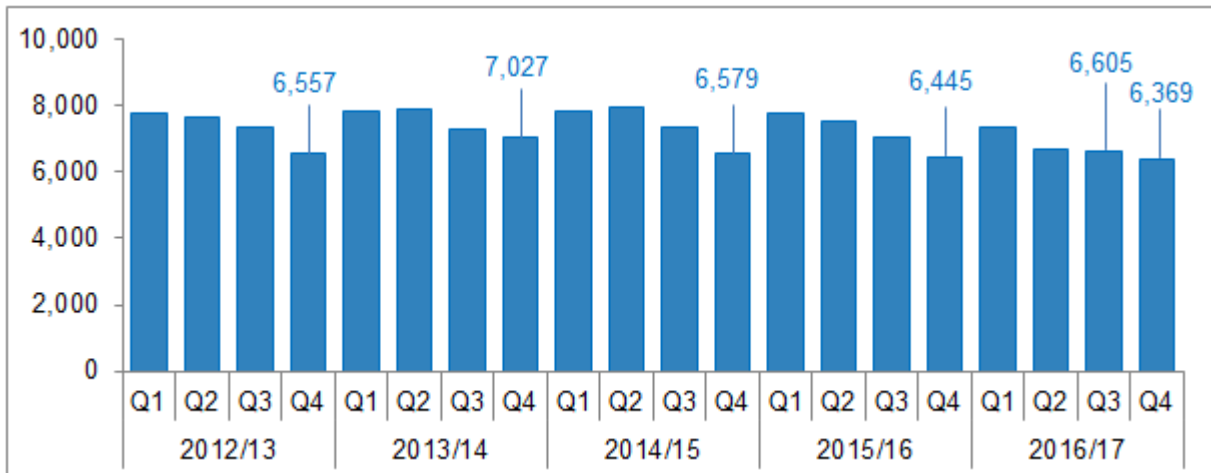
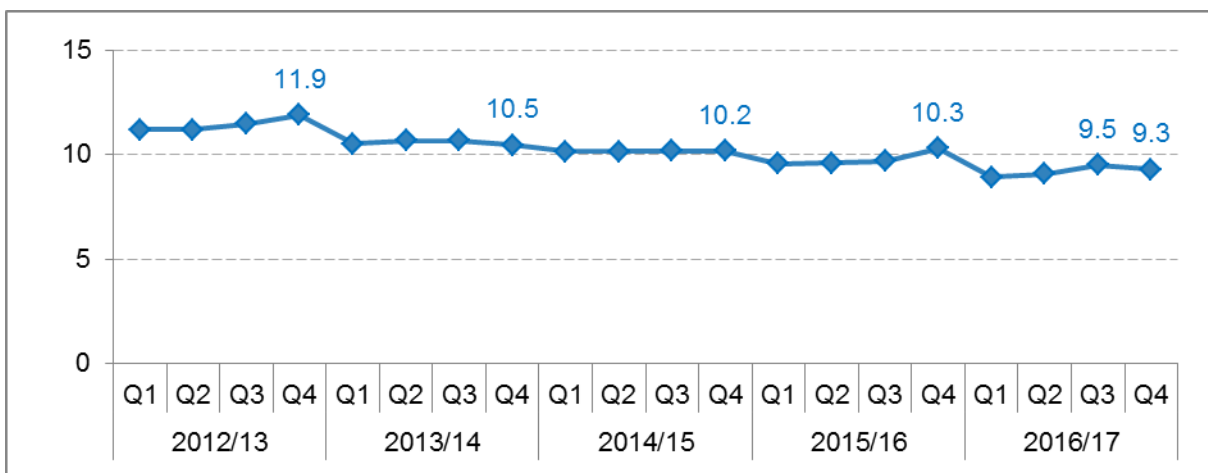


Chart 6: Applications for Local Developments: Average decision time (weeks)



Key Findings for Quarter 4 of 2016/17⁵:

The overall average decision time for Local Developments was quicker in quarter 4 of 2016/17 when compared with the previous quarter, and was quicker than the equivalent quarter four figures in each of the previous four years.

- For quarter 4 of 2016/17, the average decision time for Local Developments was 9.3 weeks. This is almost two days quicker than the previous quarter (9.5 weeks), and one week quicker than the equivalent quarter in 2015/16 (10.3 weeks).
- Local housing applications were decided in an average of 12.8 weeks, the same as the previous quarter (12.8 weeks), but quicker by almost thirteen days than the equivalent quarter in the previous year (14.6 weeks).

⁵ Figures exclude pre 3rd August 2009 legacy cases and processing agreements.

Chart 7: Applications for Major Developments: Number of decisions

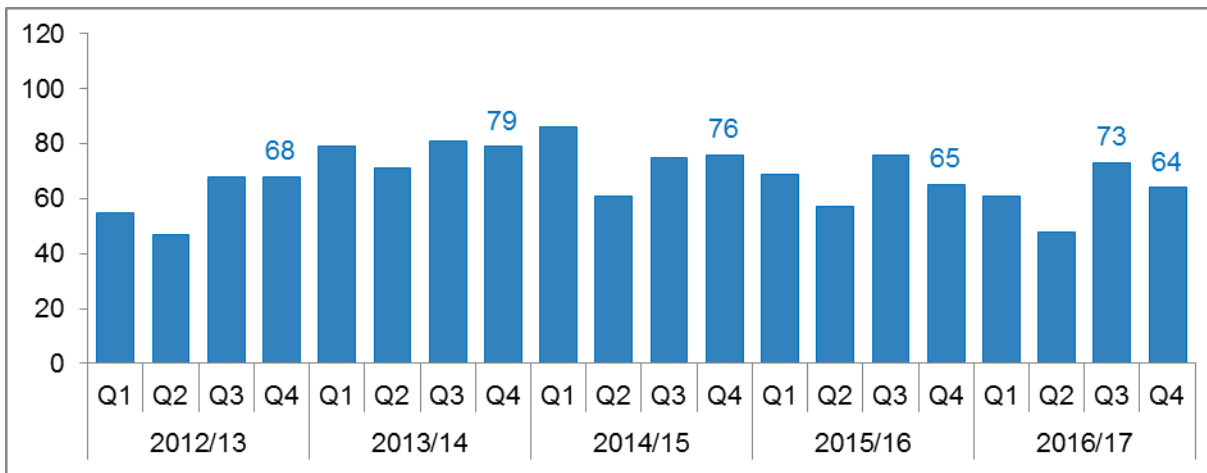
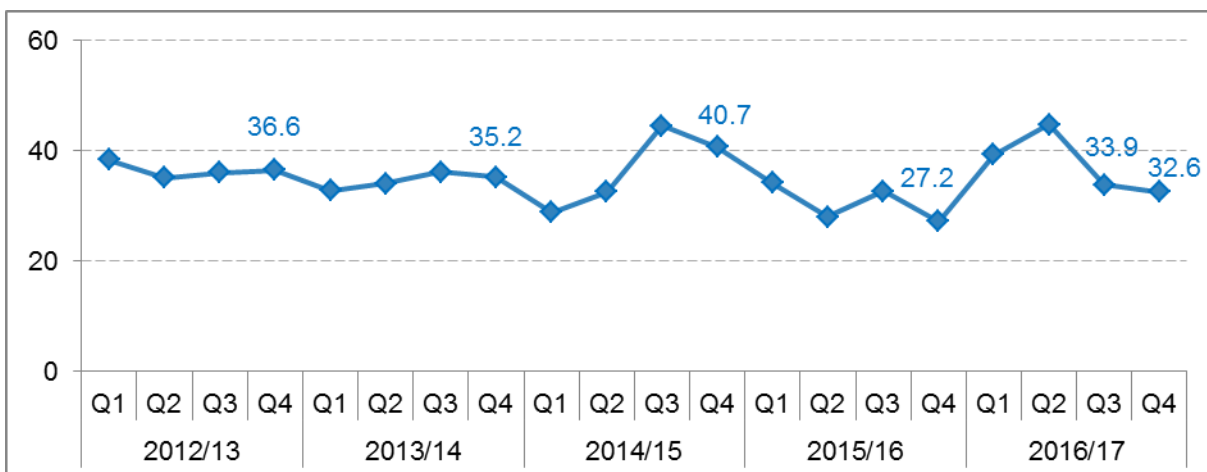


Chart 8: Applications for Major Developments: Average decision time (weeks)



The overall average decision time for Major Developments in quarter 4 of 2016/17 was quicker than the previous quarter but slower than quarter 4 in the previous year.

- For quarter 4 of 2016/17, the average decision time for Major Developments was 32.6 weeks, more than one week quicker than the previous quarter (33.9 weeks), but more than 5 weeks slower than the equivalent quarter in 2015/16 (27.2 weeks).
- Major housing applications were decided in an average of 45.6 weeks, six and a half weeks slower than in the previous quarter (39.1 weeks), and twelve and a half weeks slower than in the equivalent quarter in the previous year (33.1 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 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>

1.3 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.

1.4 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 2016/17 as well as previous year's results are available at: [Planning Authority Performance Statistics 2016/17 Annual](#) (These tables are referred to throughout this bulletin as "Annual, 2016/17")

Quarter 4 results for 2016/17 as well as previous quarter's results are available at: [Planning Authority Performance Statistics 2016/17 Quarter 4](#) (These tables are referred to throughout this bulletin as "Quarter 4, 2016/17")

1.5 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 the redevelopment of the Dundee Waterfront) and are identified in the National Planning Framework (<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0045/00453683.pdf>).

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

1.6 Calculation of decision times

The average decision time in weeks is calculated in days from the date of validation⁶ 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 five 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](#).

For further explanation of planning performance methodology please refer to [Planning Performance Technical Notes](#).

1.7 Stopping the clock

For the year 2016/17, 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 1,170 applications decided during 2016/17 (3.4% of all applications) where the clock had been stopped at some point in the application process, compared to 1,402 (3.8% of all applications) in the previous year.

Stopping the clock will have an effect on overall average decision times for both local and major applications.

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

⁶ 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.

1.8 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 2016/17 there were a total of 16 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 major developments in quarter 3 of 2016/17 has decreased from 34.2 weeks to 33.9 weeks.

The revisions have been listed on a separate revisions sheet in the latest quarterly publication: [Planning Authority Performance Statistics 2016/17 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, 2016/17: 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 2016/17 there were a total of 1,503 applications that were subject to a processing agreement, with 81.7% of these processed within agreed timescales. This compares to 680 applications for the previous year, with 76.6% within agreed timescales. Of these 1,194 were for local developments with 83.4% processed within agreed timescales, the highest percentage since the start of the data collection in 2012/13. A further 95 were for major developments with 68.4% processed within agreed timescales, the lowest percentage since the start of the data collection in 2012/13. The 95 major applications concluded by the use of a processing agreement represents 28% of all major development applications concluded in 2016/17.

Chart 9: Applications for Local Developments: Number of processing agreements

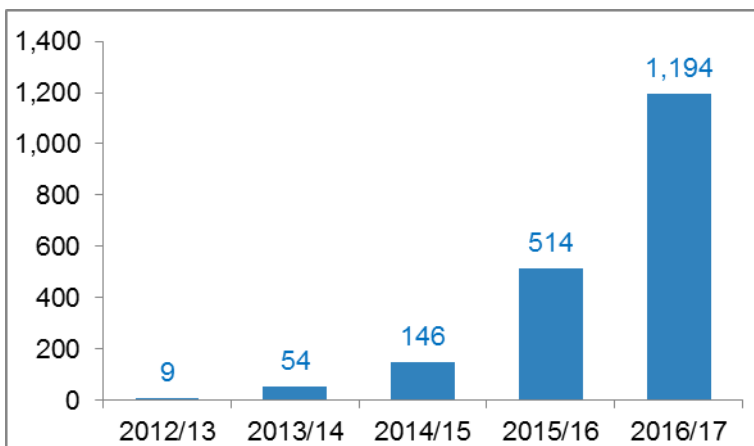


Chart 10: Applications for Local Developments: Percentage processed within agreed timescales

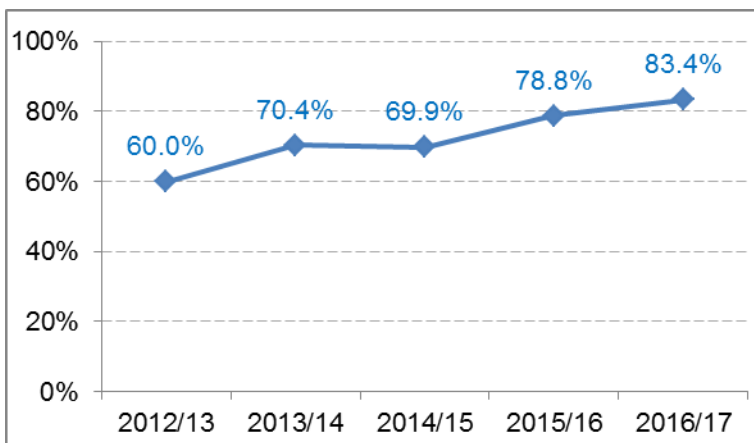


Chart 11: Applications for Major Developments: Number of processing agreements

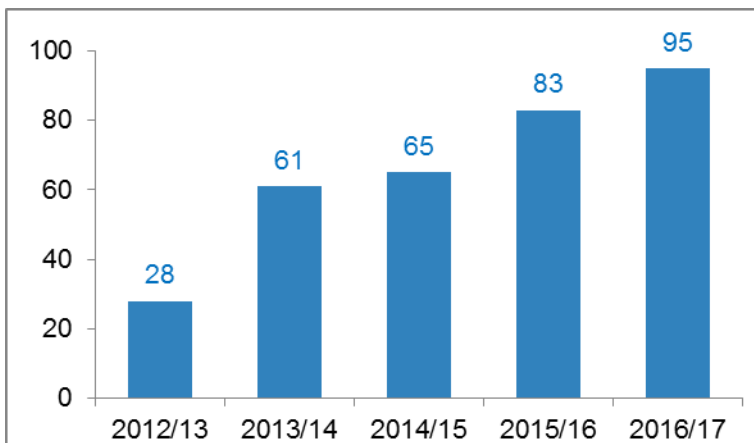
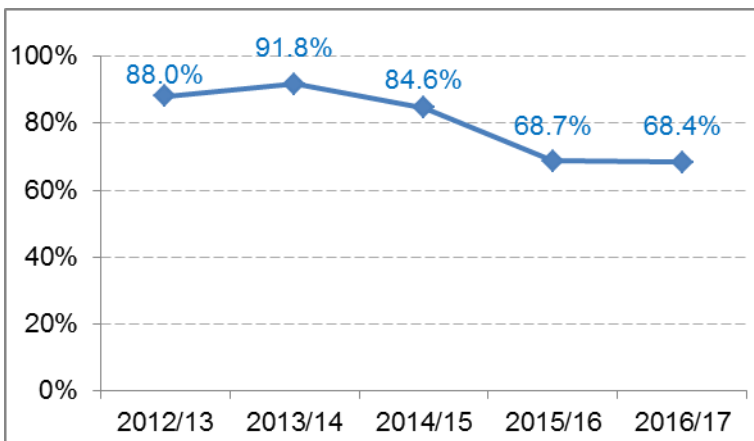


Chart 12: Applications for Major Developments: Percentage processed within agreed timescales



22 out of 34 planning authorities used processing agreements in 2016/17. Aberdeenshire with a total 491 processing agreements had a share of almost one third of these agreements, with 93.5% of these meeting agreed timescales.

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. The category “other developments” includes all developments and uses not covered in the list above. It includes, but is not limited to, retail, leisure and entertainment, education, healthcare, community facilities, transport interchanges, water and drainage developments and projects. It can also include mixed use projects. ([Annual, 2016/17: Scotland table](#)).

Details for the classification of all development types can be found here: <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/278390/0083657.pdf>

Chart 13: Post 3rd August 2009 Applications: Local Developments, 2016/17: Number of decisions

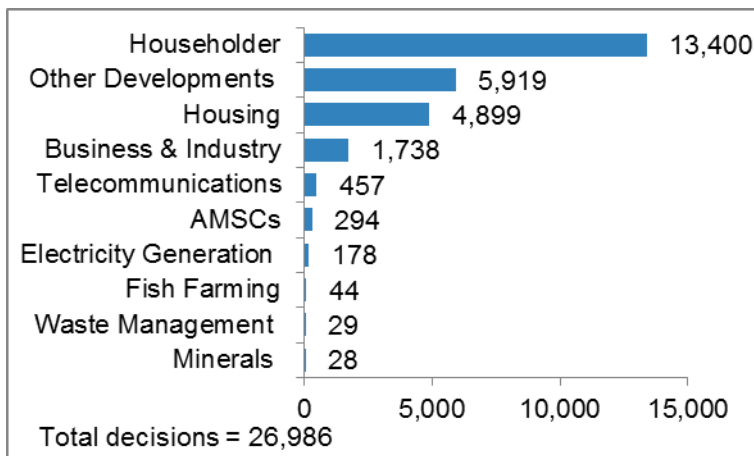
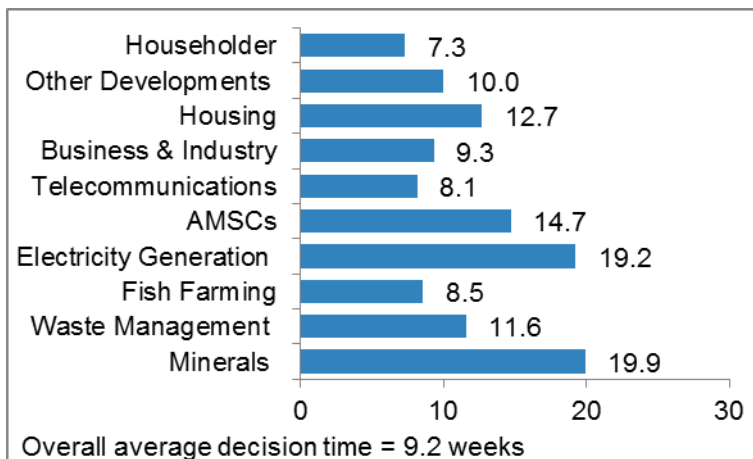


Chart 14: Post 3rd August 2009 Applications: Local Developments, 2016/17: Average decision time (weeks)



The following charts 15 and 16 include an additional four legacy cases (Other Developments (1), Housing (2) and Waste Management (1)) compared to charts 13 and 14.

Chart 15: All Applications: Local Developments, 2016/17: Number of decisions

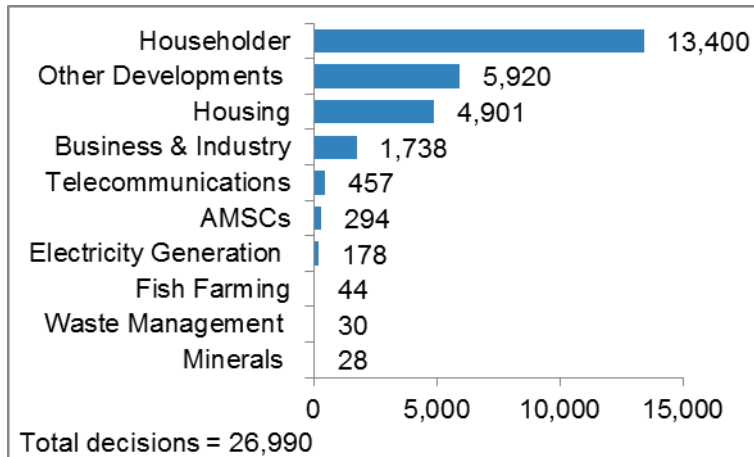
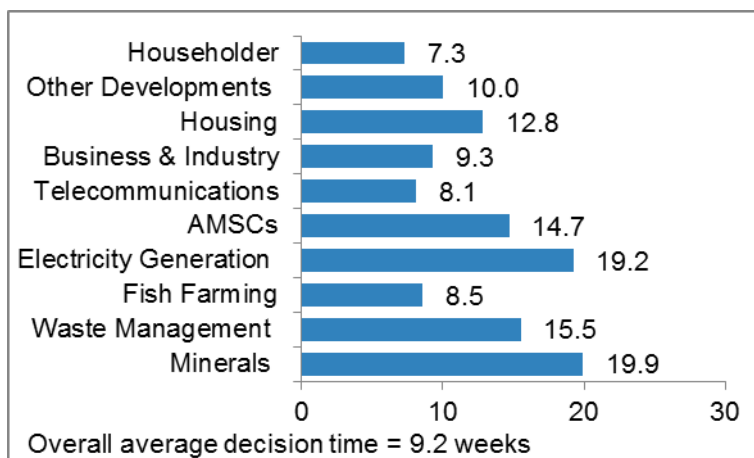


Chart 16: All Applications: Local Developments, 2016/17: Average decision time (weeks)



The average decision time for the 26,986 (post 3rd August 2009) local applications in 2016/17 was 9.2 weeks, quicker by an average of 4 days per application compared with 2015/16 (9.7 weeks) and the quickest annual average since the start of this data collection in 2012/13. When the 4 legacy cases are included the average decision time remains at 9.2 weeks.

Charts 14 and 16 show that average decision times vary between types of development. The largest share of local developments is for householder developments (almost 50%) and these have the shortest decision time of on average 7.3 weeks. Minerals applications (0.1% of all local decisions) have the longest average decision time equal to 19.9 weeks. Legacy cases can skew average decision times. For example, when the 1 legacy case is included in the average decision time for waste management the average decision time increases from 11.6 to 15.5 weeks.

During the year 2016/17 there was a total of 944 local development decisions where the clock had been stopped at some point within the application process (3.5% of all local development decisions). On average almost 19 weeks has been removed for these applications, and this will have had an effect on overall average decision times. For the previous year, there were 1,143 local development decisions where the clock had been stopped at some point (4.0% of all local application decisions). 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, 2016/17: Tables 23 & 28](#)).

In addition, there were 1,194 local developments decided in 2016/17 that had processing agreements in place, with more than 83% of these meeting agreed timescales. Developments with processing agreements are not included in average time calculations.

The following Tables 1 and 2 show that the overall decision time for local developments in 2016/17 were the quickest since the start of this data collection in 2012/13. In 2016/17 the average decision times for householder (7.3 weeks), other developments (10.0 weeks), housing (12.7 weeks), business & industry (9.3 weeks) and fish farming (8.5 weeks) developments were all the quickest since the start of this data collection in 2012/13. Between 2015/16 and 2016/17 minerals developments had the biggest improvement in average decision time from 35.0 weeks to 19.9 weeks. For telecommunications, AMSCs, electricity generation and waste management there were increases in average decision times compared to 2015/16. The increase in the average decision time for electricity generation developments and AMSCs can partly be explained by a total of twenty applications with decision times longer than one year. The lengthiest AMSC decision was an approval required by conditions for the erection of 42 dwellings, formation of vehicular access, car parking and roads including engineering works to re-profile and stabilise a cliff face. The lengthiest electricity generation decision was for the erection of a 50kW, 34.6 metre high (to the tip of the blades) wind turbine. Both applications were approved.

Table 1: Post 3rd August 2009 Applications: Local Developments: Annual average decision times by Development Type

Post-3rd August Local Developments	2016/17		2015/16		2014/15		2013/14		2012/13	
	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)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)
Householder	13,400	7.3	13,641	7.4	14,115	7.5	13,904	7.7	13,446	8.0
Other Developments	5,919	10.0	6,126	10.3	6,099	10.4	6,258	10.5	5,822	11.3
Housing	4,899	12.7	5,590	13.7	5,807	14.5	5,762	15.2	5,563	17.2
Business & Industry	1,738	9.3	1,941	10.4	2,257	10.7	2,370	11.1	2,531	11.8
Telecommunications	457	8.1	441	7.9	416	7.6	404	8.5	301	8.5
AMSCs	294	14.7	319	13.0	318	14.8	302	17.4	255	16.3
Electricity Generation	178	19.2	561	17.4	626	22.4	861	23.1	1,247	21.2
Fish Farming	44	8.5	84	9.4	53	13.3	63	12.5	43	10.6
Waste Management	29	11.6	22	10.8	23	17.8	55	19.4	89	16.3
Minerals	28	19.9	39	35.0	25	17.7	47	15.8	35	26.9
TOTAL	26,986	9.2	28,764	9.7	29,739	10.1	30,026	10.6	29,332	11.4

Table 2: All Applications: Local Developments: Annual average decision times by Development Type

All Applications Local Developments	2016/17		2015/16		2014/15		2013/14		2012/13	
	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)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)
Householder	13,400	7.3	13,644	7.5	14,116	7.5	13,904	7.7	13,450	8.1
Other Developments	5,920	10.0	6,131	10.5	6,102	10.5	6,264	10.8	5,833	11.7
Housing	4,901	12.8	5,616	14.4	5,836	15.3	5,831	17.5	5,671	20.9
Business & Industry	1,738	9.3	1,944	11.2	2,259	10.9	2,385	12.9	2,548	13.0
Telecommunications	457	8.1	441	7.9	416	7.6	404	8.5	301	8.5
AMSCs	294	14.7	319	13.0	319	15.1	303	18.0	255	16.3
Electricity Generation	178	19.2	561	17.4	626	22.4	863	23.5	1,251	21.7
Fish Farming	44	8.5	84	9.4	53	13.3	63	12.5	43	10.6
Waste Management	30	15.5	22	10.8	23	17.8	57	26.8	95	28.7
Minerals	28	19.9	40	35.1	25	17.7	49	22.3	36	31.6
TOTAL	26,990	9.2	28,802	10.0	29,775	10.3	30,123	11.3	29,483	12.4

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 finfish farming, marine shellfish farming and other developments. The category “other developments” includes all developments and uses not covered in the list above. It includes, but is not limited to, retail, leisure and entertainment, education, healthcare, community facilities, transport interchanges, water and drainage developments and projects. It can also include mixed use projects. 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, 2016/17: Scotland table](#)).

Details for the classification of all development types can be found here: <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/278390/0083657.pdf>

Chart 17: Post 3rd August 2009 Applications: Major Developments, 2016/17: Number of decisions

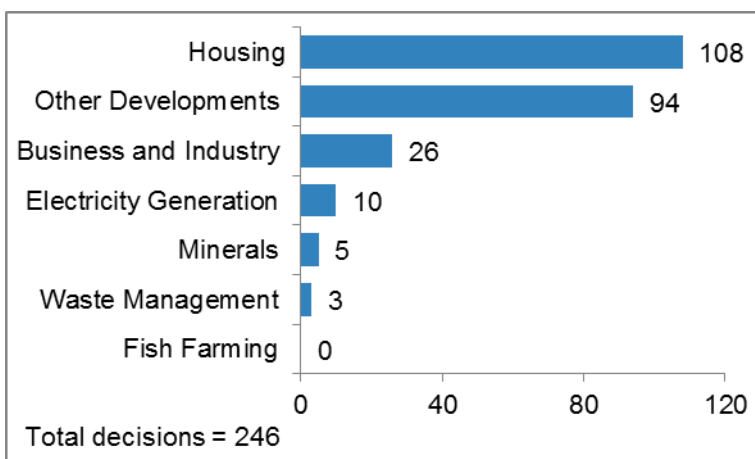
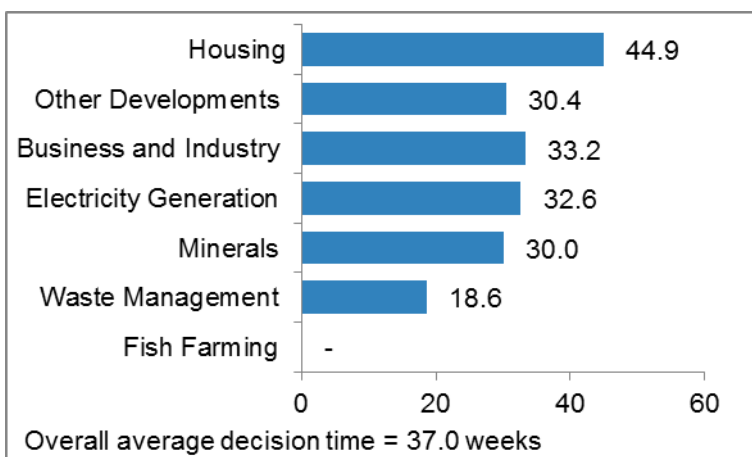


Chart 18: Post 3rd August 2009 Applications: Major Developments, 2016/17: Average decision time (weeks)



The following charts 19 and 20 include an additional three legacy cases (Other Developments (2) and Minerals (1)) compared to charts 17 and 18.

Chart 19: All Applications: Major Developments, 2016/17: Number of decisions

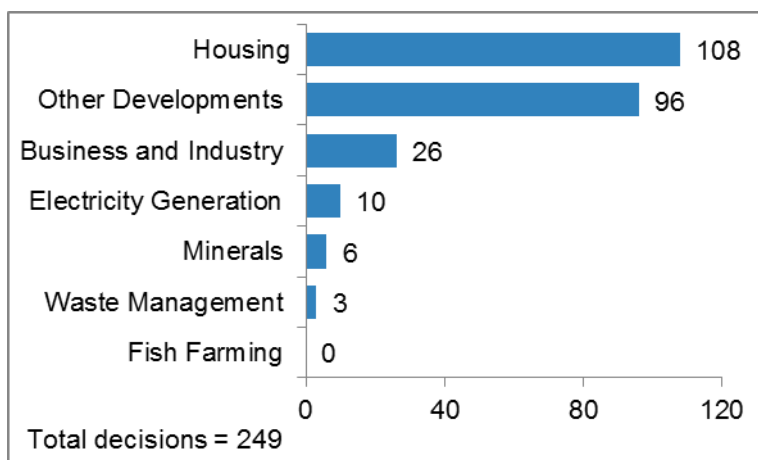
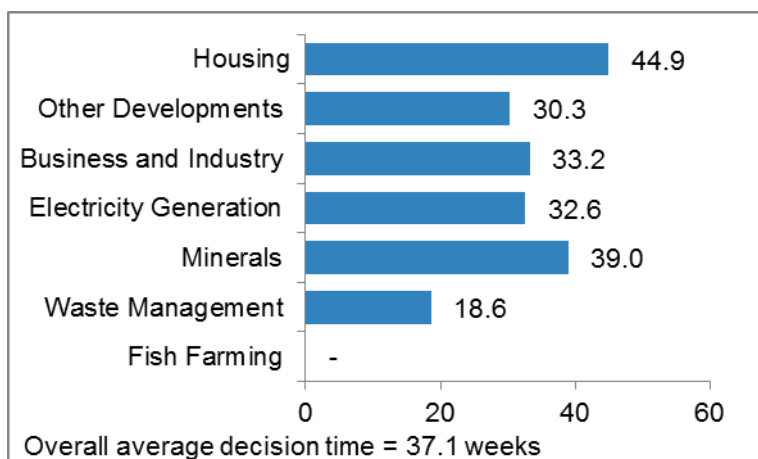


Chart 20: All Applications: Major Developments, 2016/17: Average decision time (weeks)



The average decision time for the 246 (post 3rd August 2009) major applications in 2016/17 was 37.0 weeks, slower by 6 weeks per application compared with 2015/16 (31.0 weeks) and the slowest annual average since the start of this data collection in 2012/13. When the 3 legacy cases are included the average decision time increases from 37.0 weeks to 37.1 weeks.

Charts 17 and 18 show that a large share (almost 44%) of major developments are for housing developments that have an average decision time of 44.9 weeks. Legacy cases can skew average decision times. For example, when one legacy case is included in the average decision time for minerals, the average increases by 9 weeks from 30.0 to 39.0 weeks.

During the year 2016/17 over 29% of all major development decisions had involved a clock stop at some point within the application process. The average time stopped was 62.0 weeks for these applications. This will have had an effect on overall average decision times. See [Annex 14.1](#) for further details.

In addition there were a further 95 major development applications concluded in 2016/17 that were subject to separate processing agreements. Over 68% 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.

The following tables 3 and 4 give figures for the previous four years. Table 3 shows that the overall decision time for major developments in 2016/17 was the slowest since the start of this data collection in 2012/13. In contrast Table 4 shows that, when legacy cases are included, the overall decision time for major developments in 2016/17 was the quickest since the start of the data collection in 2012/13. 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.

Table 3 shows that in 2016/17 the average decision times for housing and business & industry applications were slower than for the previous four years. Between 2015/16 and 2016/17 the average decision time slowed for electricity generation and other developments. In contrast, the average decision times for minerals and waste management development times improved in 2016/17 compared to the previous year.

In Table 4, when legacy cases are included, the trend is reversed for major housing and in 2016/17 the average decision time is quicker than for the previous four years. Average decision times in 2016/17 for electricity generation, minerals and waste management are also quicker than the previous four years. In contrast, average decision times for business & industry and other developments are slower in 2016/17 compared to 2015/16.

In 2016/17 there were 14 major applications that took longer than 2 years for a decision. The lengthiest decision was for planning permission in principle for a development of up to 550 houses, a neighbourhood centre including retail and community uses, access junctions, new access roads, provision of a nature conservation area, associated roads and infrastructure. The application was approved.

Table 3: Post 3rd August 2009 Applications: Major Developments: Annual average decision times by Development Type

Post-3rd August Major Developments	2016/17		2015/16		2014/15		2013/14		2012/13	
	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)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)
Housing	108	44.9	95	40.6	113	41.3	117	41.9	76	40.1
Other Developments	94	30.4	108	25.1	101	28.7	105	25.9	66	34.3
Business & Industry	26	33.2	23	19.9	39	33.1	41	26.6	45	22.8
Electricity Generation	10	32.6	16	31.7	19	53.6	27	58.4	24	50.7
Minerals	5	30.0	16	33.6	16	52.1	13	20.6	21	46.6
Waste Management	3	18.6	9	22.4	9	18.4	7	23.7	5	22.3
Fish Farming	0	-	1	18.0	1	31.6	0	-	1	4.4
TOTAL	246	37.0	268	31.0	298	36.6	310	34.6	238	36.3

Table 4: All Applications: Major Developments: Annual average decision times by Development Type

All Applications Major Developments	2016/17		2015/16		2014/15		2013/14		2012/13	
	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)	Number of decisions	Average decision time (weeks)
Housing	108	44.9	105	52.1	125	54.1	147	69.9	104	74.8
Other Developments	96	30.3	111	26.3	103	32.9	115	38.7	73	46.2
Business & Industry	26	33.2	23	19.9	41	41.3	45	39.8	51	56.2
Electricity Generation	10	32.6	17	53.7	21	69.1	27	58.4	28	64.4
Minerals	6	39.0	18	41.8	17	70.0	15	59.0	23	47.4
Waste Management	3	18.6	9	22.4	10	24.8	7	23.7	7	87.4
Fish Farming	0	-	1	18.0	1	31.6	0	-	1	4.4
TOTAL	249	37.1	284	37.8	318	46.4	356	53.8	287	61.1

4. Average decision times - Quarterly trends for Local Developments

4.1 All Local Developments

There were 6,369 local applications (validated post 3rd August 2009) decided during the fourth quarter of 2016/17, with an overall average decision time of 9.3 weeks, quicker by almost two days compared to the previous quarter (9.5 weeks) and the quickest quarter four figure since the start of the data collection in 2012/13. When the additional 1 legacy case is included the average decision time remains at 9.3 weeks ([Quarter 4, 2016/17: Tables 3 & 4](#)).

In addition, there were 349 local developments decided during the fourth quarter of 2016/17 that had processing agreements in place, with 84% of these meeting agreed timescales. Developments with processing agreements are not included in average time calculations.

Chart 21: All Local Developments: Number of decisions

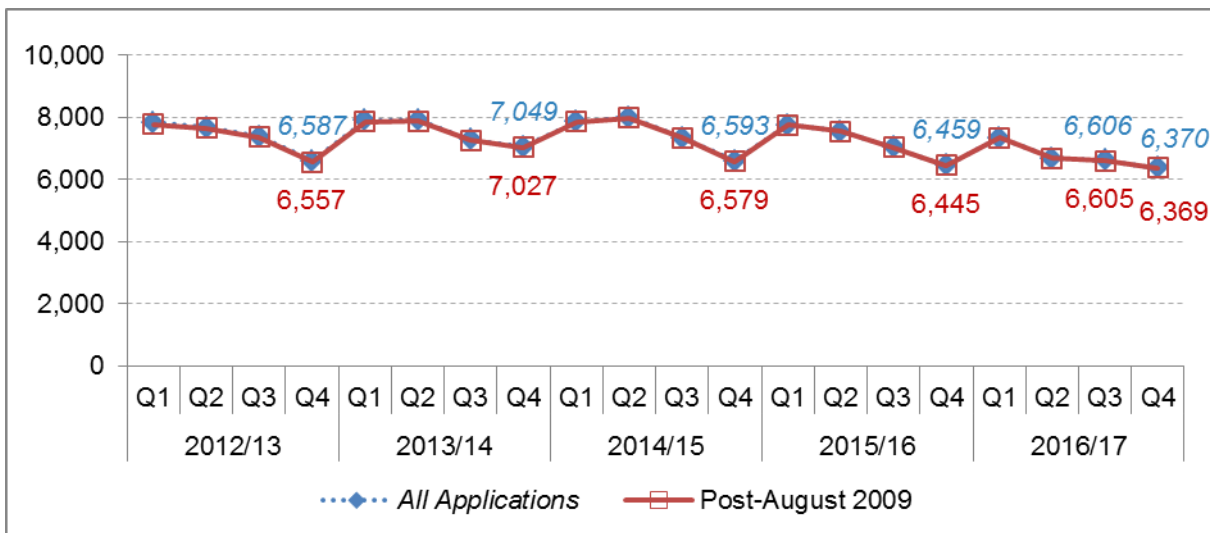
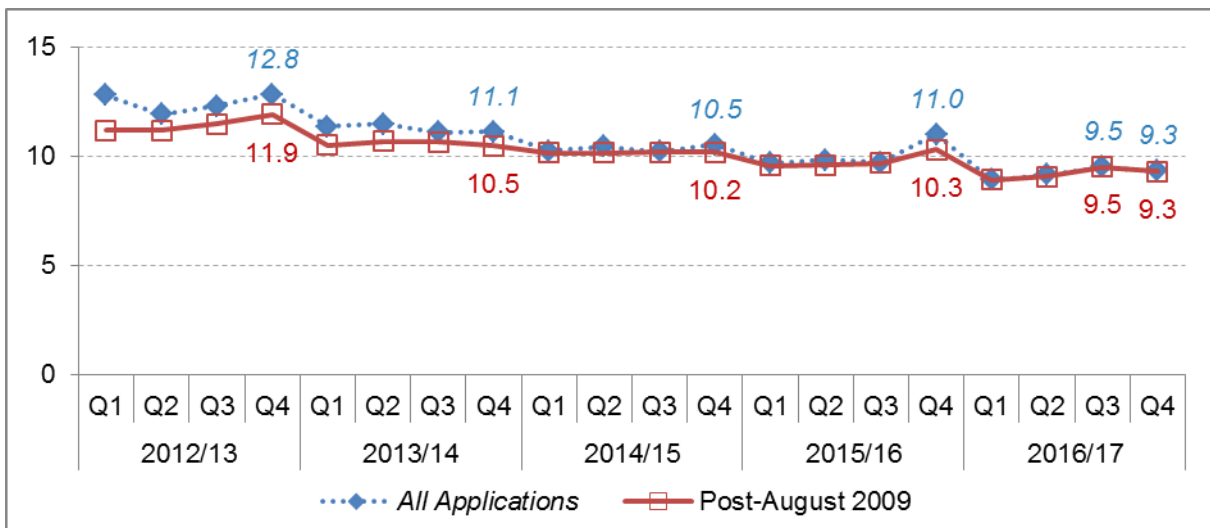


Chart 22: All Local Developments: Average decision time (weeks)



4.2 All Local (Non Householder) Developments

There were 3,381 local (non householder) developments decided during the fourth quarter of 2016/17, with an overall average decision time of 11.2 weeks. This is quicker than the previous quarter (11.3 weeks) and is the quickest quarter four figure since the start of the data collection in 2012/13.

When the one legacy case is included, the average decision time for quarter four of 2016/17 remains at 11.2 weeks. ([Quarter 4, 2016/17: Table 5](#)).

Chart 23: All Local Developments (Non Householder): Number of decisions

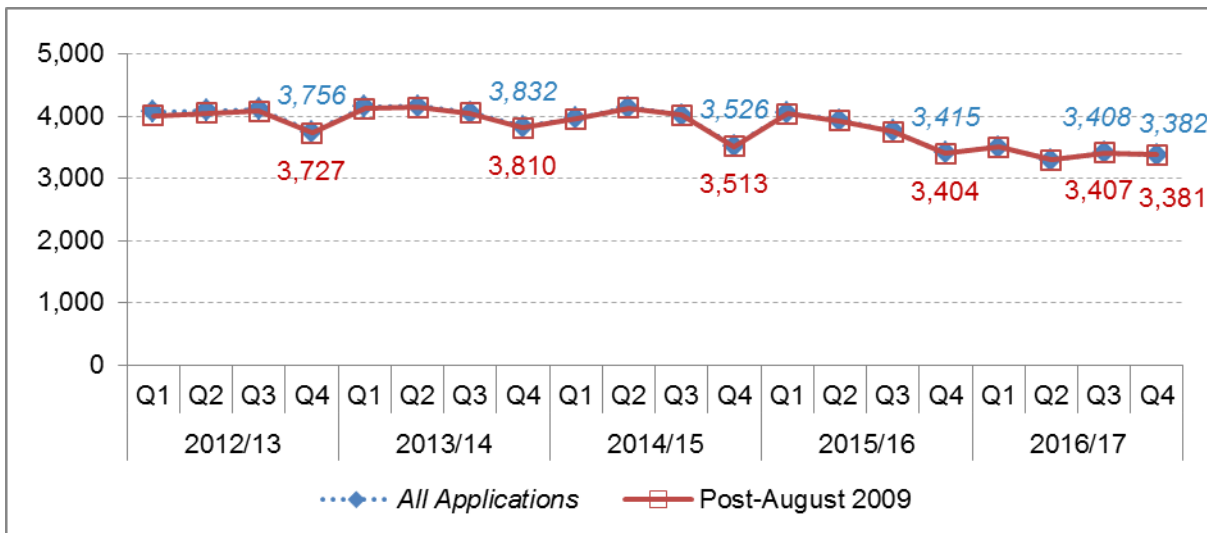
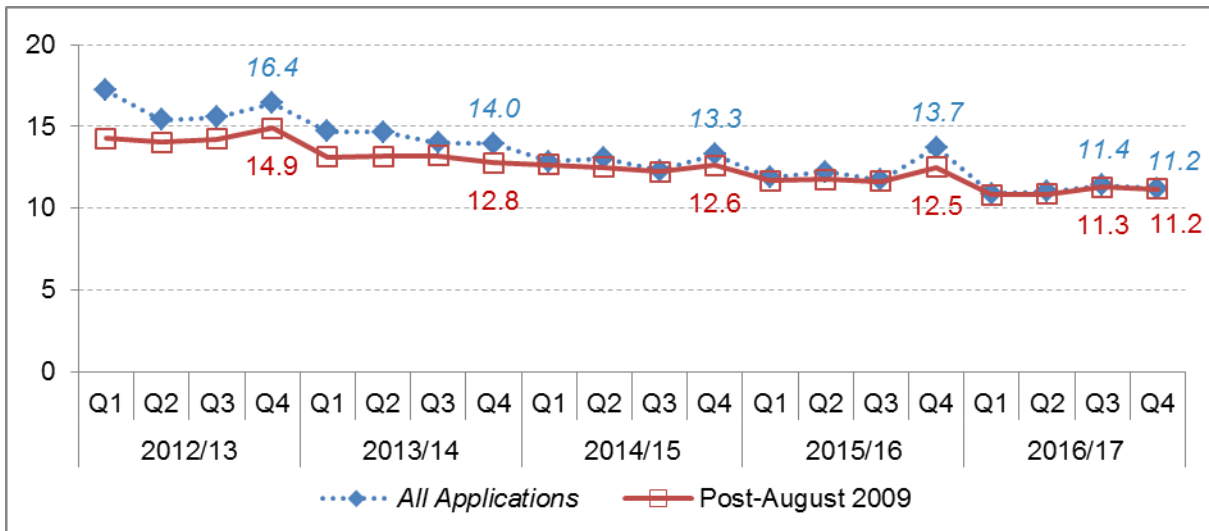


Chart 24: All Local Developments (Non Householder): Average decision time (weeks)



4.3 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 2,988 householder applications decided during the fourth quarter of 2016/17, with an overall average decision time of 7.1 weeks, quicker by three days compared to the previous quarter (7.5 weeks) and the quickest decision time since the start of the data collection in 2012/13.

There were no householder legacy cases decided in quarter four of 2016/17. ([Quarter 4, 2016/17: Table 6](#)).

Chart 25: Householder developments: Number of decisions

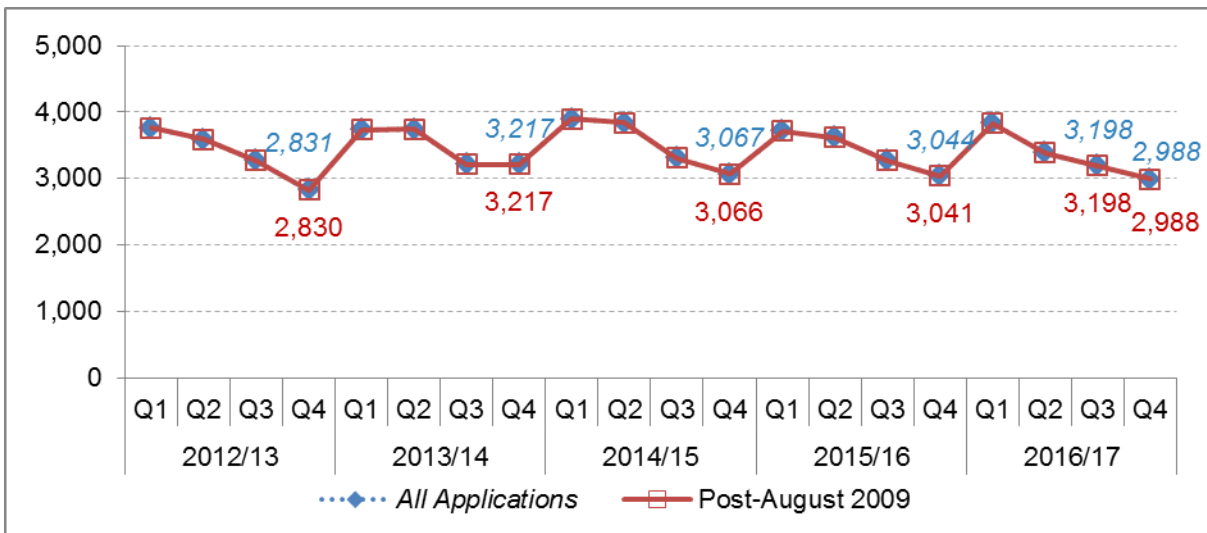
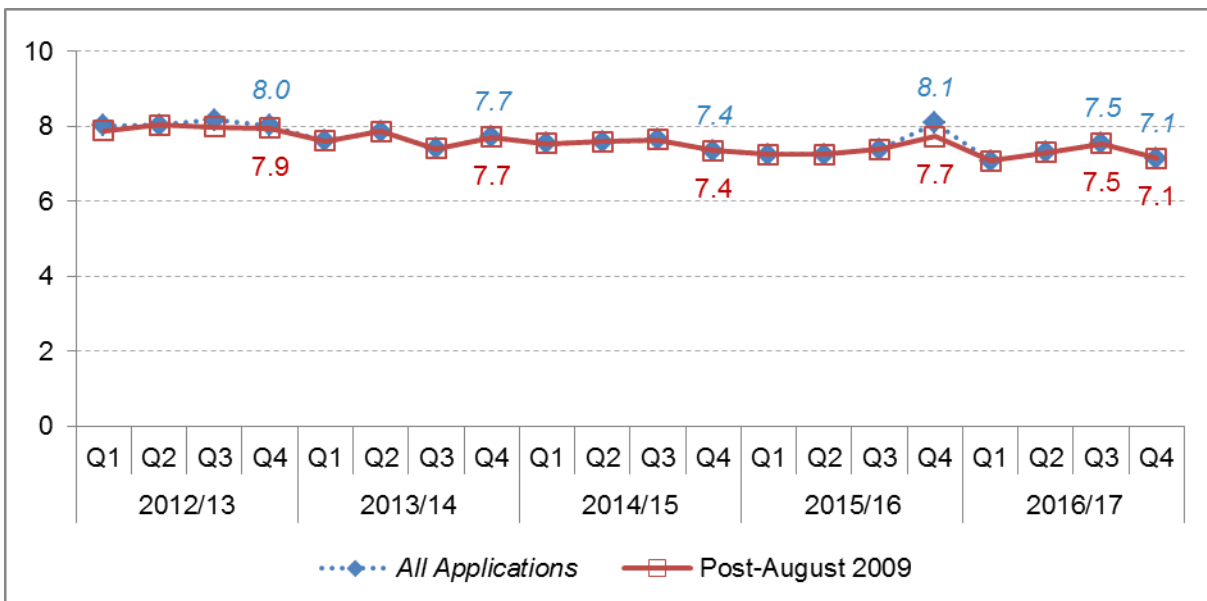


Chart 26: Householder developments: Average decision time (weeks)



4.4 Local Housing

Local Housing developments are those that have less than 50 dwellings and with a site area that is less than 2 hectares.

In quarter four of 2016/17 there were 1,187 decisions made on local housing applications. The overall average decision time was 12.8 weeks, the same as the previous quarter (12.8 weeks) and quicker than the equivalent quarter four figures in each of the previous four years.

There were a further 140 local housing applications concluded that were subject to separate processing agreements, of which 125 (89%) met the agreed timescale. This compares with 133 (89% of 150 local housing applications) that met the agreed timescale for the previous quarter.

There were no local housing legacy cases decided in quarter four of 2016/17. ([Quarter 4, 2016/17: Table 8](#)).

Chart 27: Local Housing developments: Number of decisions

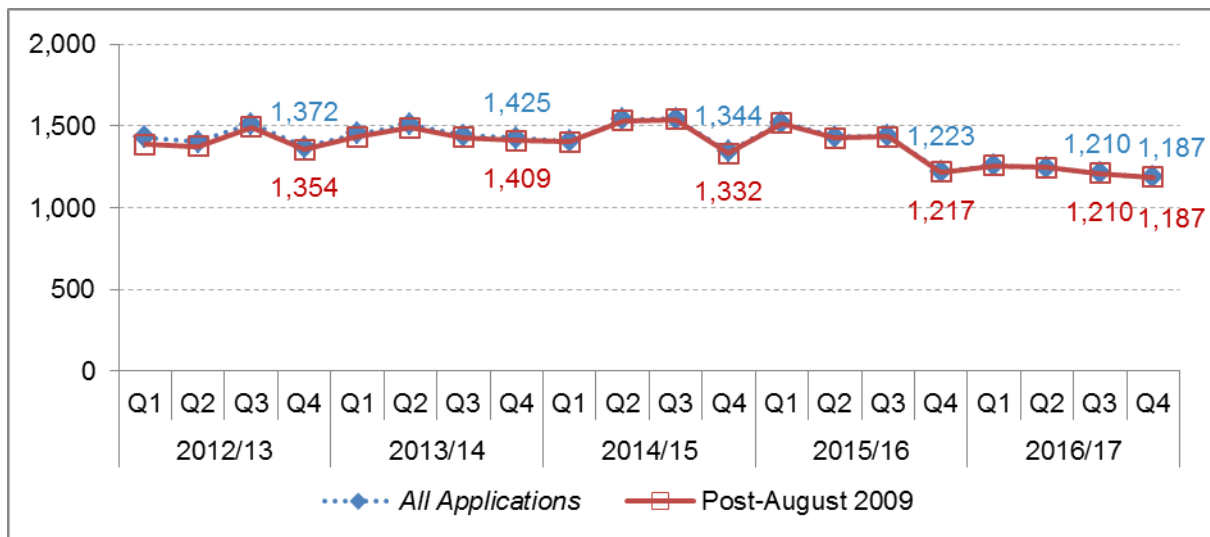
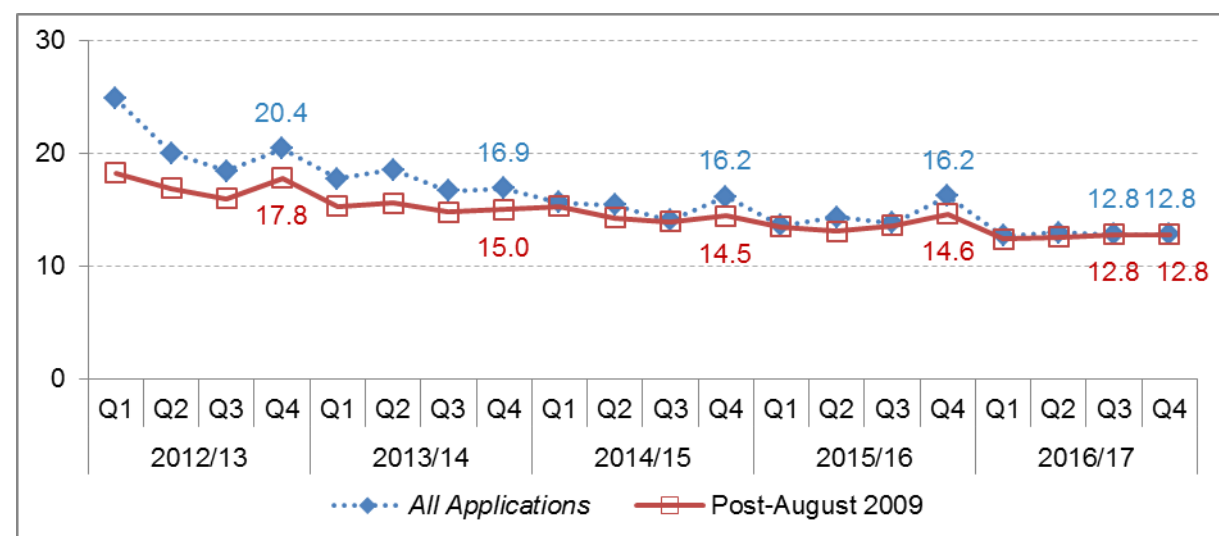


Chart 28: Local Housing developments: Average decision time (weeks)



4.5 Local Business and Industry

Local Business and Industry developments are those with floor space less than 10,000 square metres and with a site area less than 2 hectares.

There were 429 local business and industry applications decided during the fourth quarter of 2016/17, with an overall average decision time of 10.0 weeks, slower by two days compared to the previous quarter (9.7 weeks) but quicker than the equivalent quarter four figures in each of the previous four years.

There were no local business and industry legacy cases decided in quarter four of 2016/17. ([Quarter 4, 2016/17: Table 10](#)).

Chart 29: Local Business and Industry developments: Number of decisions

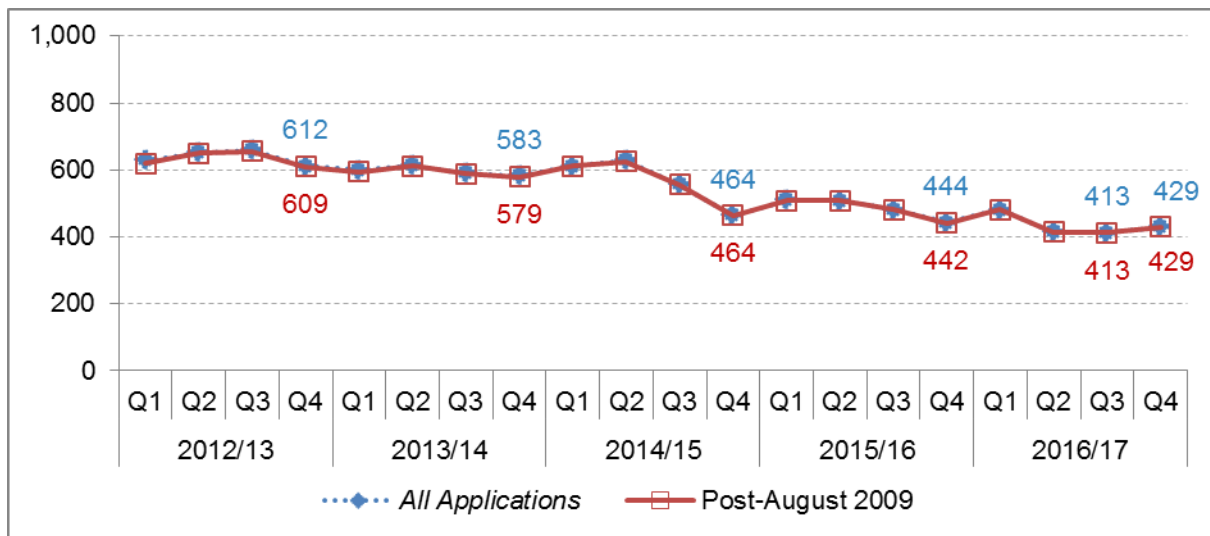
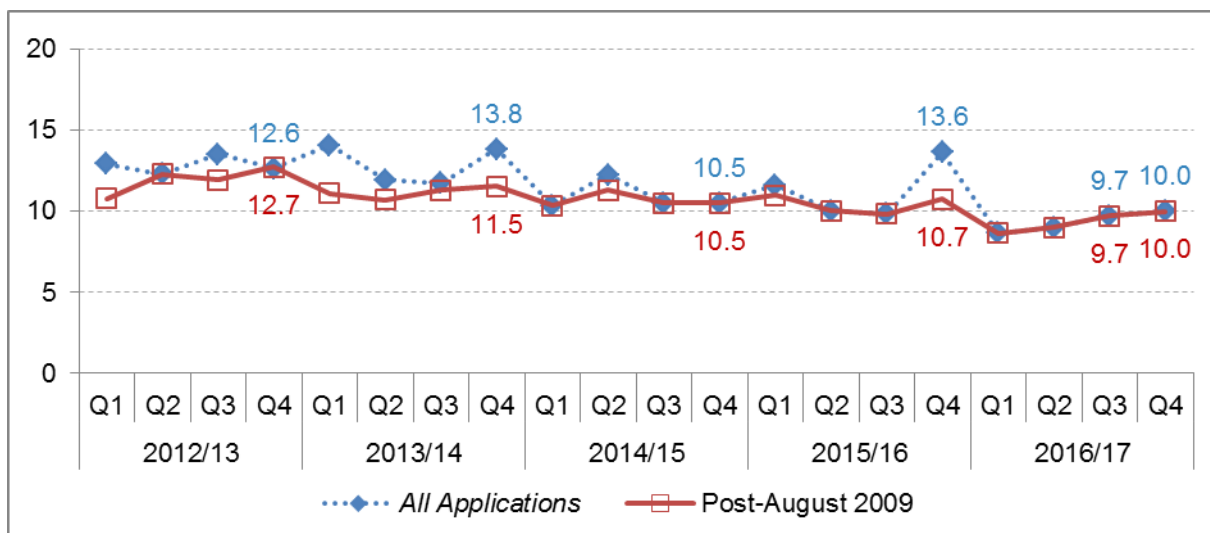


Chart 30: Local Business and Industry developments: Average decision time (weeks)



4.6 Local Other Developments

The category “other developments” includes any developments not falling wholly within any of the specific categories of development for minerals, housing, business & industry, waste management, electricity generation, fish farming and AMSCs. It includes, but is not limited to, retail, leisure and entertainment, education, healthcare, community facilities, transport interchanges, water and drainage developments and projects. It can also include mixed use projects. Local other developments are those where the gross floor space of any building, structure or erection as a result of such development is less than 5,000 square metres or the area of the site is less than 2 hectares.

There were 1,447 local other developments decided during the fourth quarter of 2016/17, with an overall average decision time of 10.2 weeks, quicker than both the previous quarter (10.4 weeks), and the equivalent quarter four figures in each of the previous four years.

Chart 31: Local Other Developments: Number of decisions

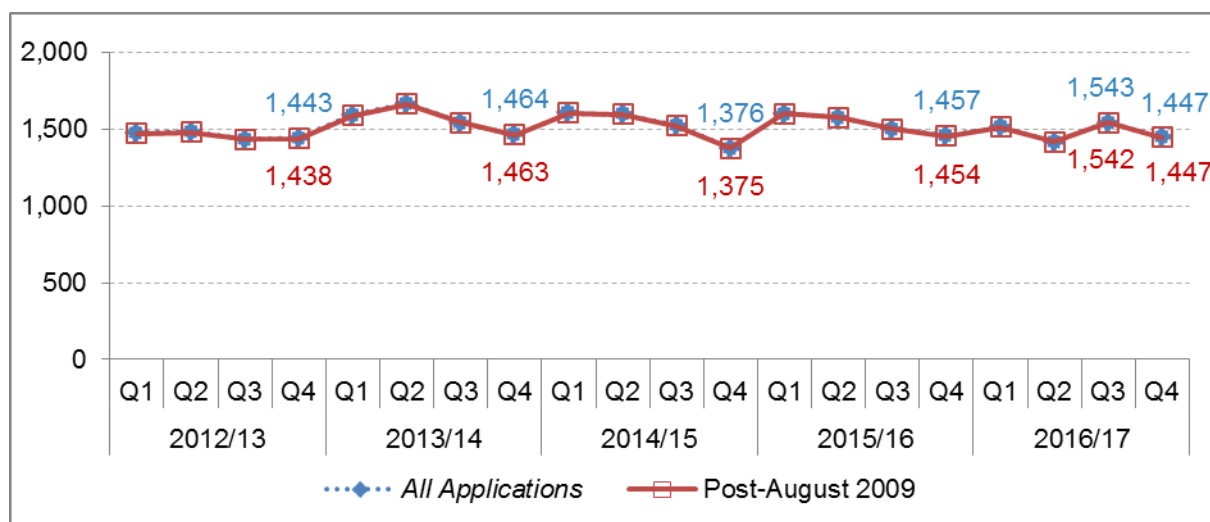
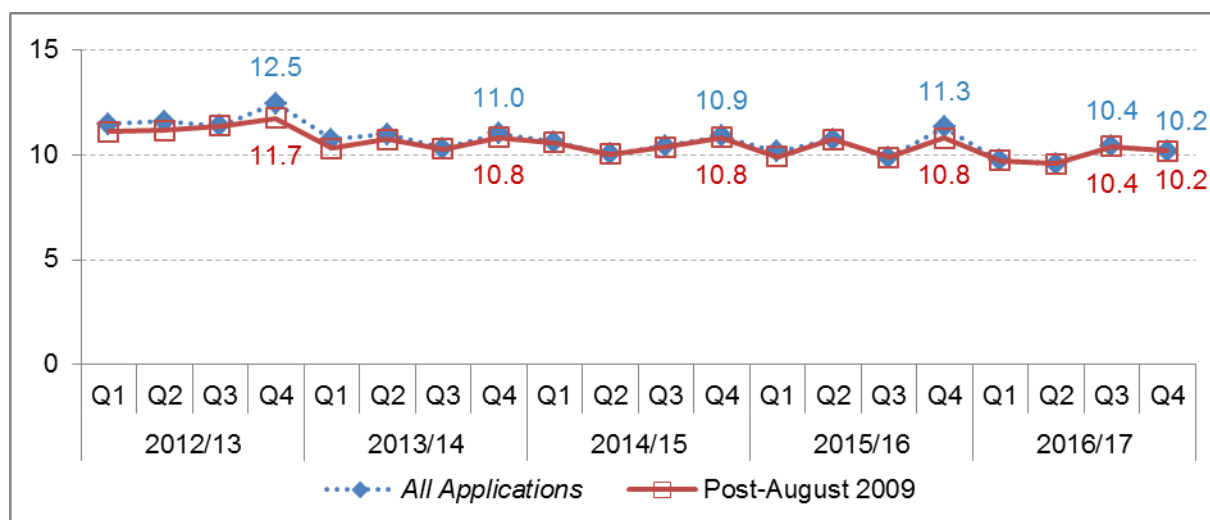


Chart 32: Local Other Developments: Average decision time (weeks)



Information on decisions for other specific categories of developments is available within the detailed excel tables at: [Planning Authority Performance Statistics 2016/17 Quarter 4](#)

5. Average decision times – Quarterly trends for Major Developments

5.1 All Major Developments

During the fourth quarter of 2016/17 there were 64 major applications decided, with an overall average decision time of 32.6 weeks, quicker by nine days compared to the previous quarter (33.9 weeks) but slower by more than five weeks compared to quarter four of 2015/16 (27.2 weeks).

When the 2 legacy cases are included the average decision time increases by almost 3 days to 33.0 weeks ([Quarter 4, 2016/17: Table 2](#)).

In addition, there were 23 major developments decided in quarter four of 2016/17 that had processing agreements in place, with 74% of these meeting agreed timescales. Developments with processing agreements are not included in average time calculations.

Chart 33: All Major Developments: Number of decisions

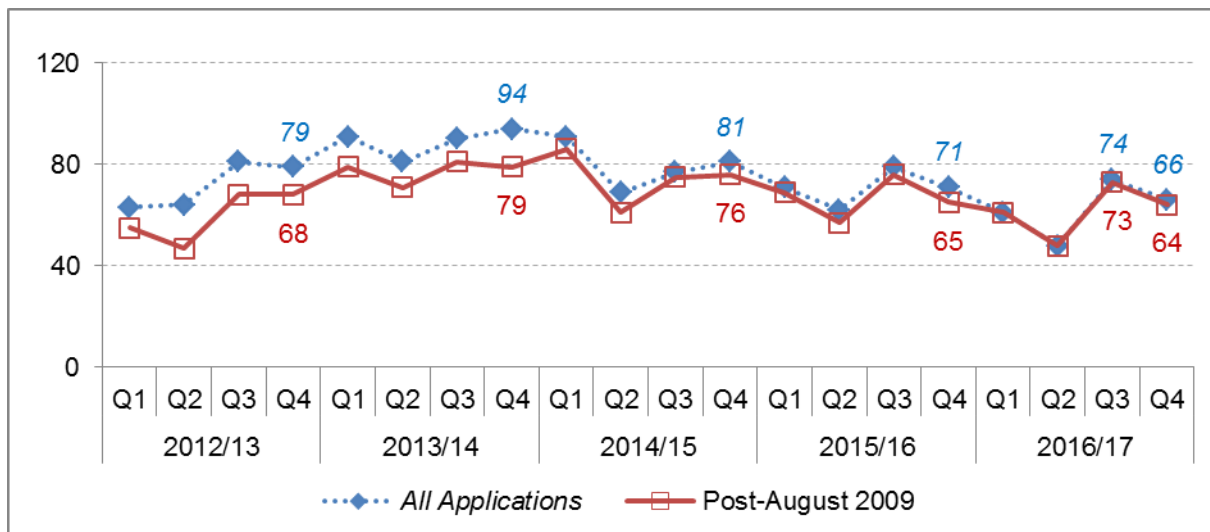
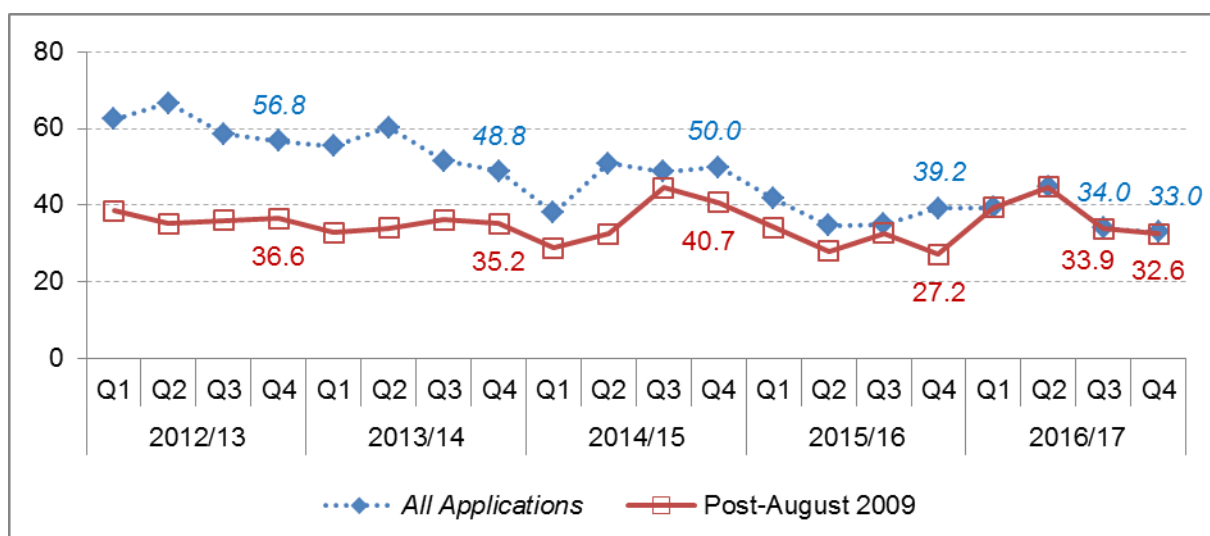


Chart 34: All Major Developments: Average decision time (weeks)



5.2 Major Housing

Major Housing developments are those with 50 or more dwellings or have a site area that is or exceeds 2 hectares where the predominant use is for housing.

There were 27 major housing applications decided during the fourth quarter of 2016/17, with an overall average decision time of 45.6 weeks, slower by six and a half weeks than the previous quarter (39.1 weeks) and slower than the equivalent quarter four figures for the previous three years. ([Quarter 4, 2016/17: Table 7](#)).

In addition, there were 9 major housing applications that were subject to processing agreements with two thirds of these meeting agreed timescales.

Chart 35: Major Housing developments: Number of decisions

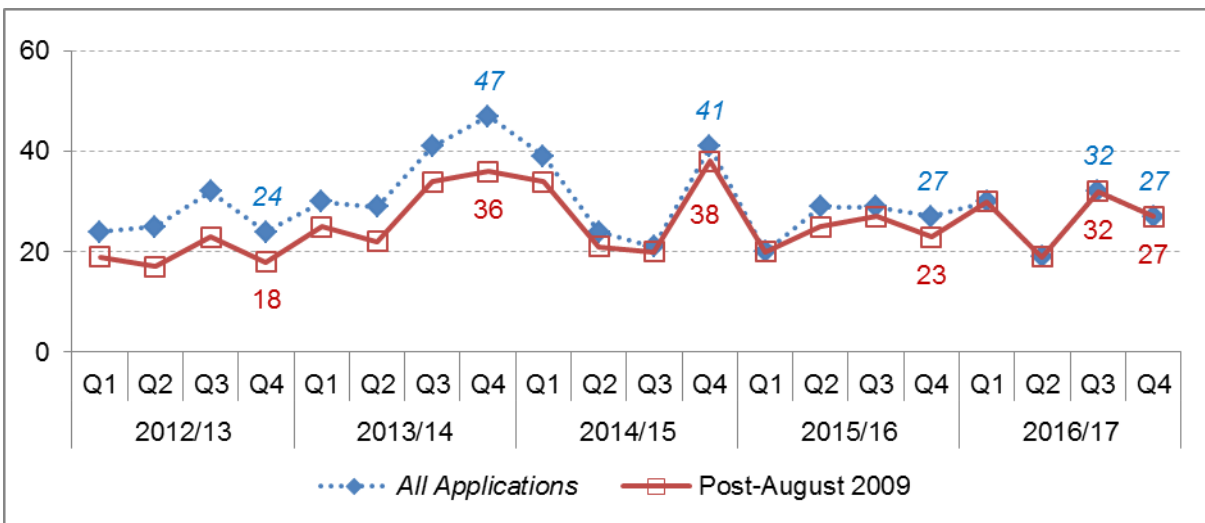
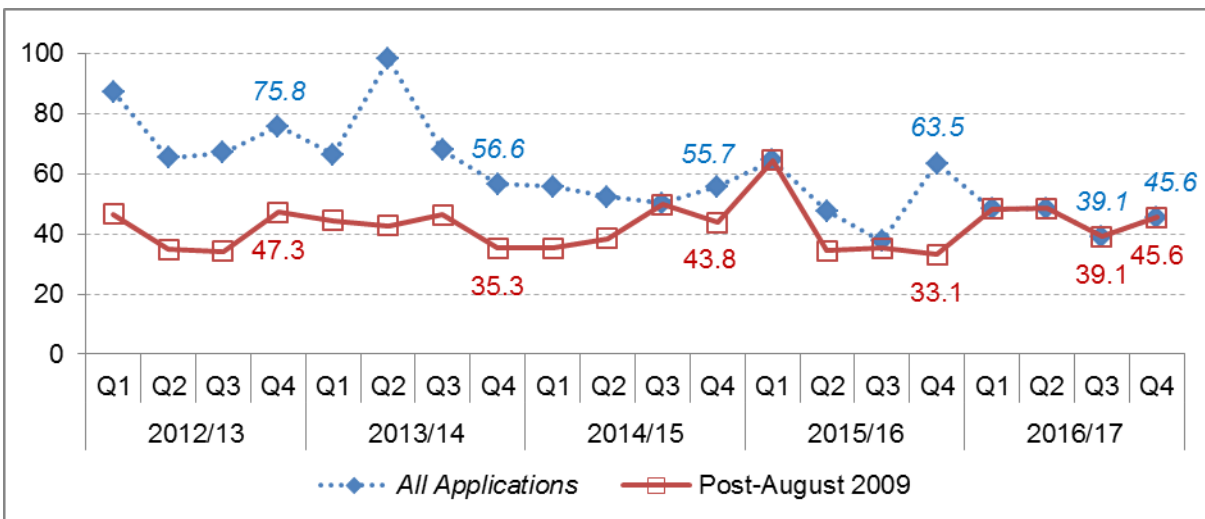


Chart 36: Major Housing developments: Average decision time (weeks)



Average figures based on a small number of applications can be volatile. In this quarter there were eight applications with a decision time of more than one year that increased the average. Two thirds of the 27 major housing development applications were decided in a time that was quicker than the average.

5.3 Major Business and Industry

Major Business and Industry developments are those with floor space that is or exceeds 10,000 square metres or have a site area that is or exceeds 2 hectares.

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 7 applications with an overall average decision time of 17.1 weeks, this compares with 7 applications with an average decision time of 43.4 weeks for the previous quarter. Quarter four figures for earlier years are 16.8 weeks in 2015/16, 22.3 weeks in 2014/15, 16.0 weeks in 2013/14 and 24.2 weeks in 2012/13. ([Quarter 4, 2016/17: Table 9](#)).

Chart 37: Major Business and Industry developments: Number of decisions

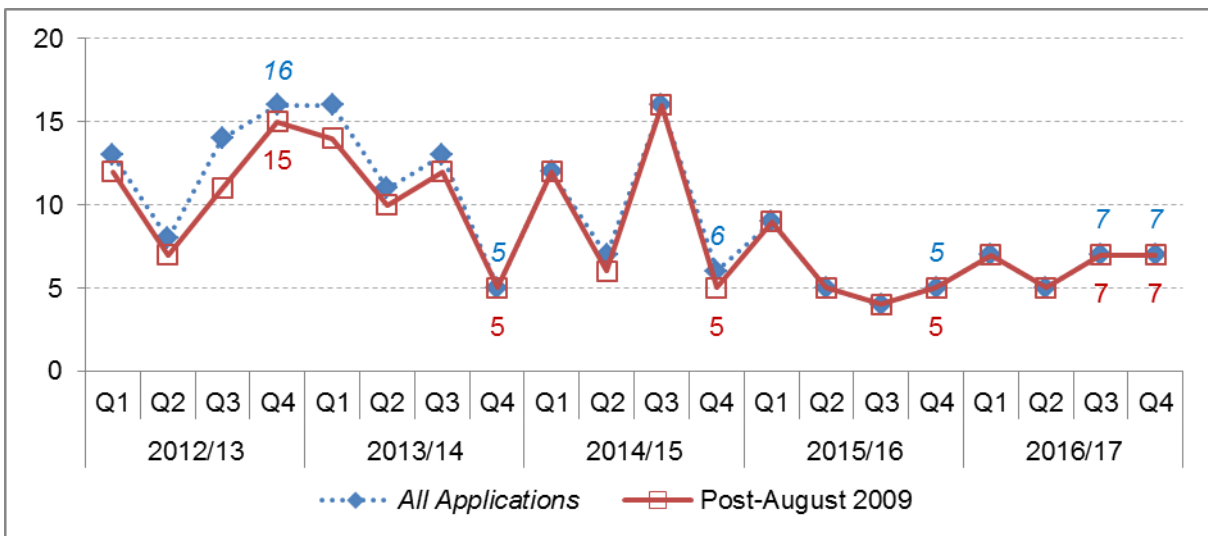
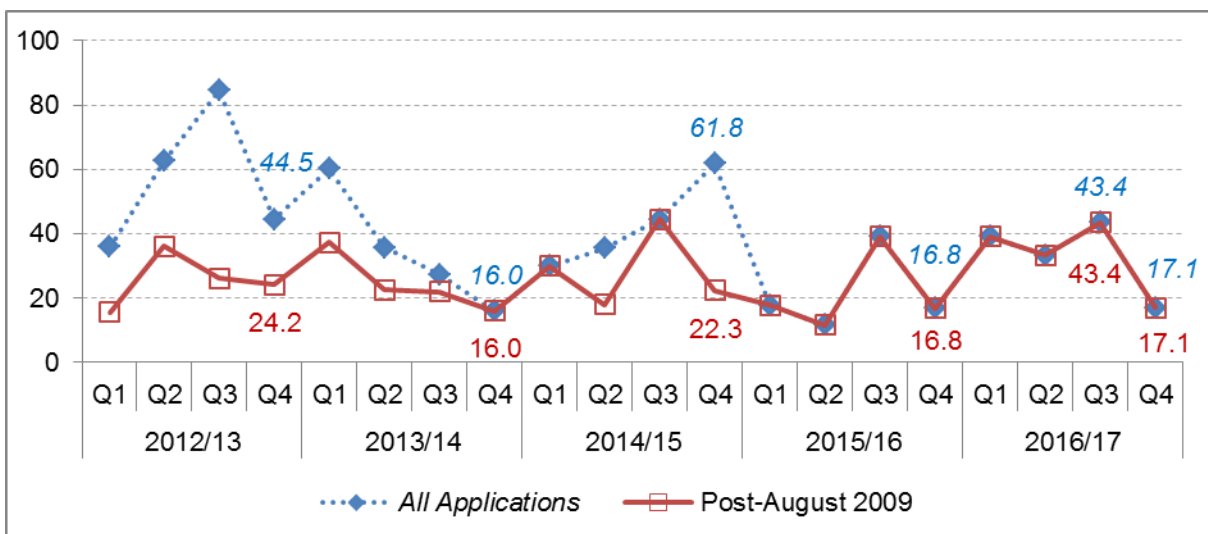


Chart 38: Major Business and Industry developments: Average decision time (weeks)



In addition, there were two major business and industry applications that were subject to a processing agreement with one that met agreed timescales.

5.4 Major Other Developments

The category “other developments” includes any developments not falling wholly within any of the specific categories of development for minerals, housing, business & industry, waste management, electricity generation, fish farming. It includes, but is not limited to, retail, leisure and entertainment, education, healthcare, community facilities, transport interchanges, water and drainage developments and projects. It can also include mixed use projects. Major other developments are where the gross floor space of any building, structure or erection as a result of such development is or exceeds 5,000 square metres or the area of the site is or exceeds 2 hectares.

There were 25 major other developments in quarter four of 2016/17. These had an average decision time of 27.3 weeks, four and a half weeks slower than the previous quarter (22.8 weeks) and slower than the equivalent quarter four figure for 2015/16 (26.1 weeks). ([Quarter 4, 2016/17 – Table 11](#))

72% of the 25 major other development applications were decided in a time that was quicker than the average.

Chart 39: Major Other Developments: Number of decisions

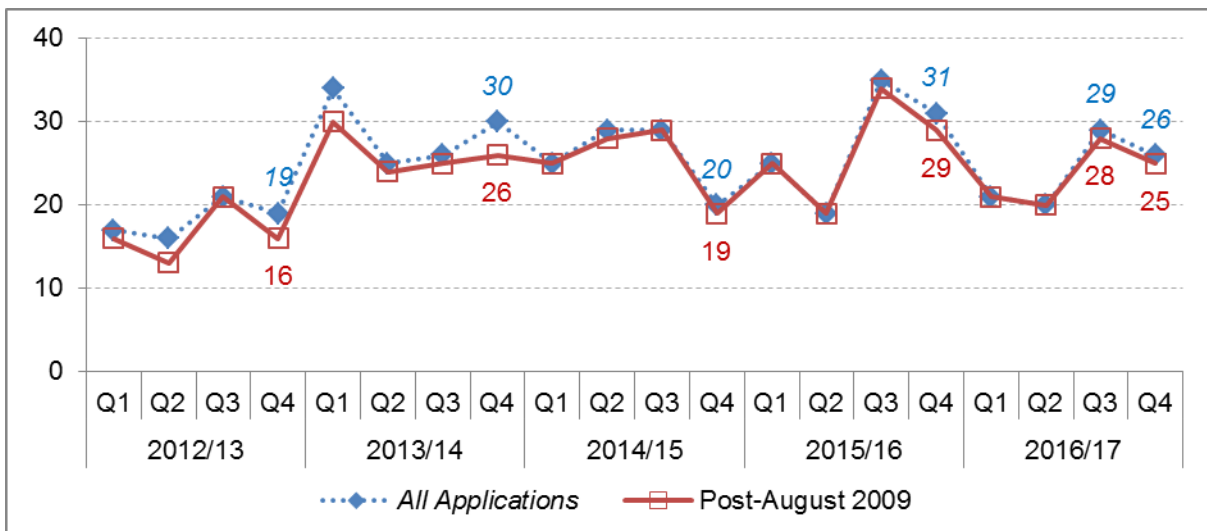
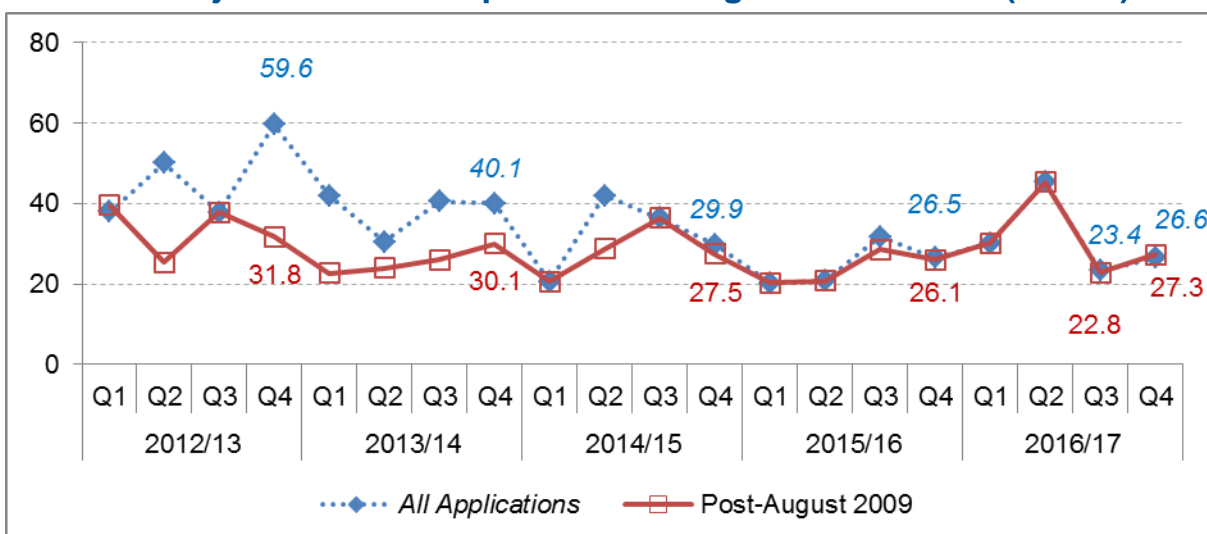


Chart 40: Major Other Developments: Average decision time (weeks)



In addition, there were nine major other developments applications that were subject to a processing agreement with seven that met agreed timescales.

Information on decisions for other specific categories of developments is available within the detailed excel tables at: [Planning Authority Performance Statistics 2016/17 Quarter 4](#)

6. Average decision times - Quarterly trends for Legal Agreements

The timescales for applications with legal agreements ([Quarter 4, 2016/17: 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 131 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 23.6 weeks, the quickest quarterly figure since the start of this data collection in quarter one of 2012/13.

Chart 41: Local Developments with Legal Agreements: Number of decisions

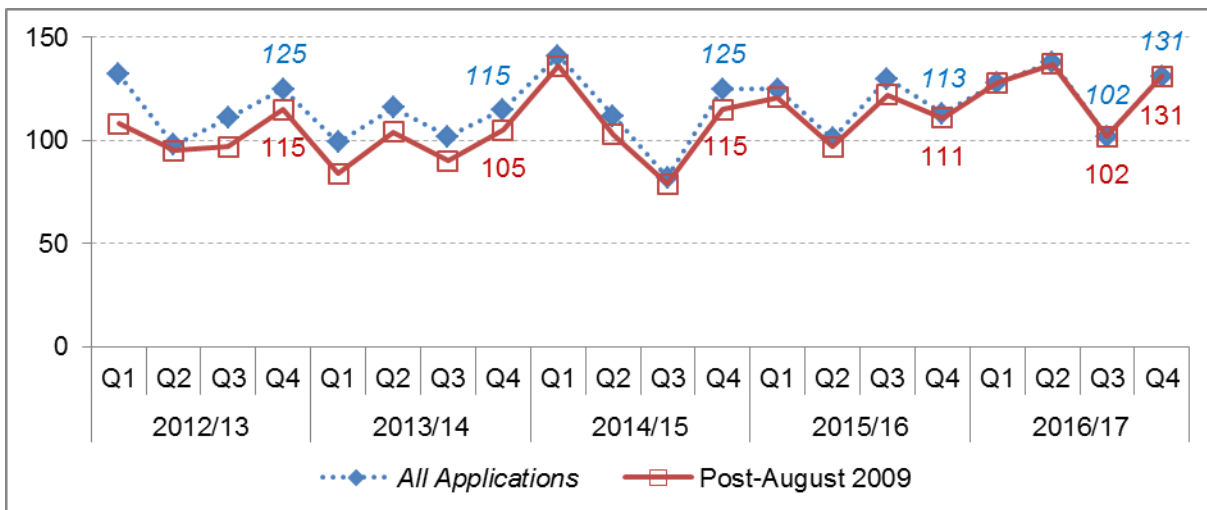
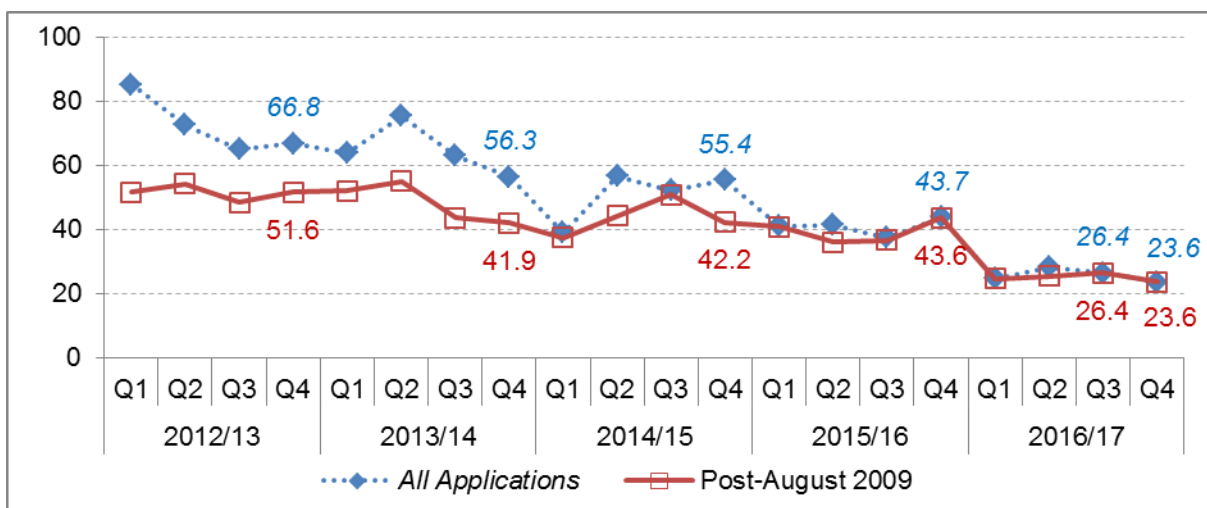


Chart 42: Local Developments with Legal Agreements: Average decision time (weeks)



6.2 Major Developments with Legal Agreements

There were 24 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 46.4 weeks in quarter four of 2016/17, quicker than the previous quarter (46.7 weeks) but slower than the equivalent quarter four figure in 2015/16 (31.5 weeks).

Chart 43: Major Developments with Legal Agreements: Number of decisions/

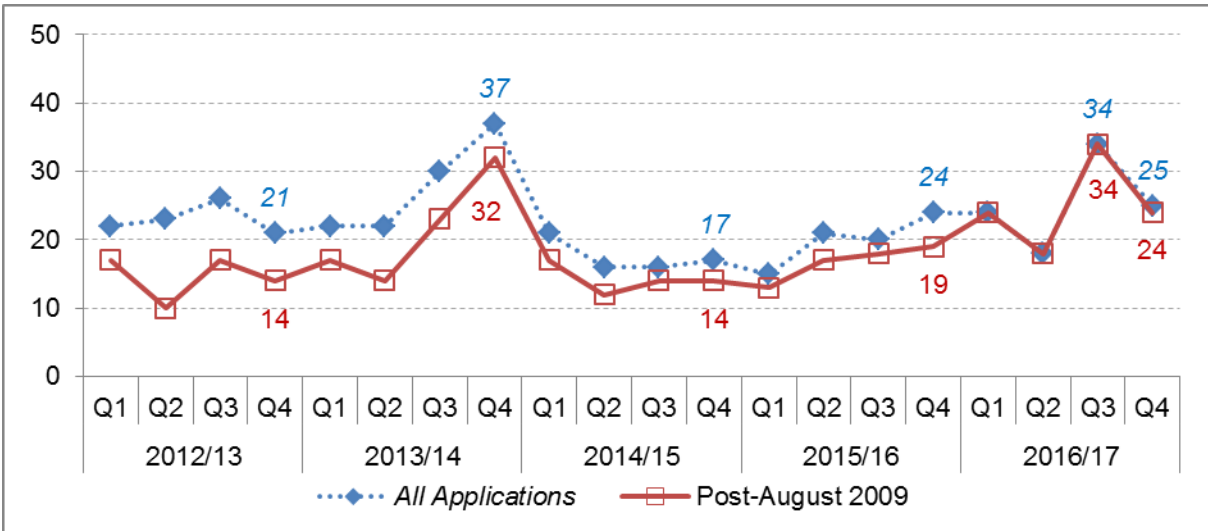
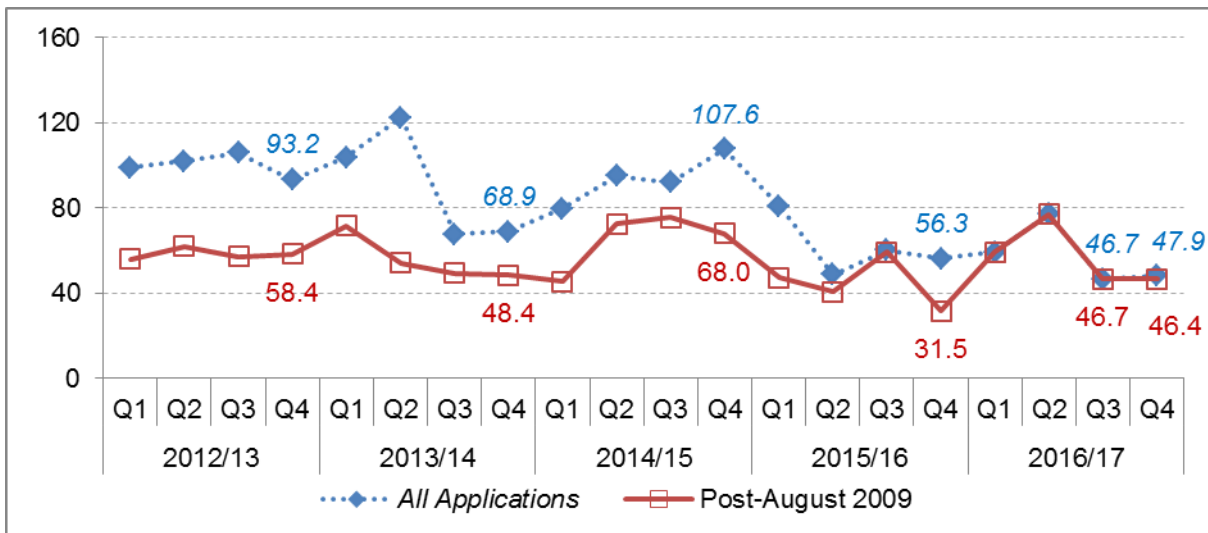


Chart 44: Major Developments with Legal Agreements: Average decision time (weeks)



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 five 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, increased in 2013/14 but has decreased again for the latest three years (not included are the 1,194 local developments in 2016/17 that were subject to a processing agreement). There were 26,986 local applications (validated post 3rd August 2009) decided during the year 2016/17, and the percentage of these decisions made in less than two months was 75.4%, an increase from 73.4% in the previous year and the highest percentage over the past seven years. When the 4 legacy cases in 2016/17 are included the percentage of decisions made in less than two months decreases slightly to 75.3% ([Annual, 2016/17: Table 4](#)).

Chart 45: All Local Developments: Number of decisions

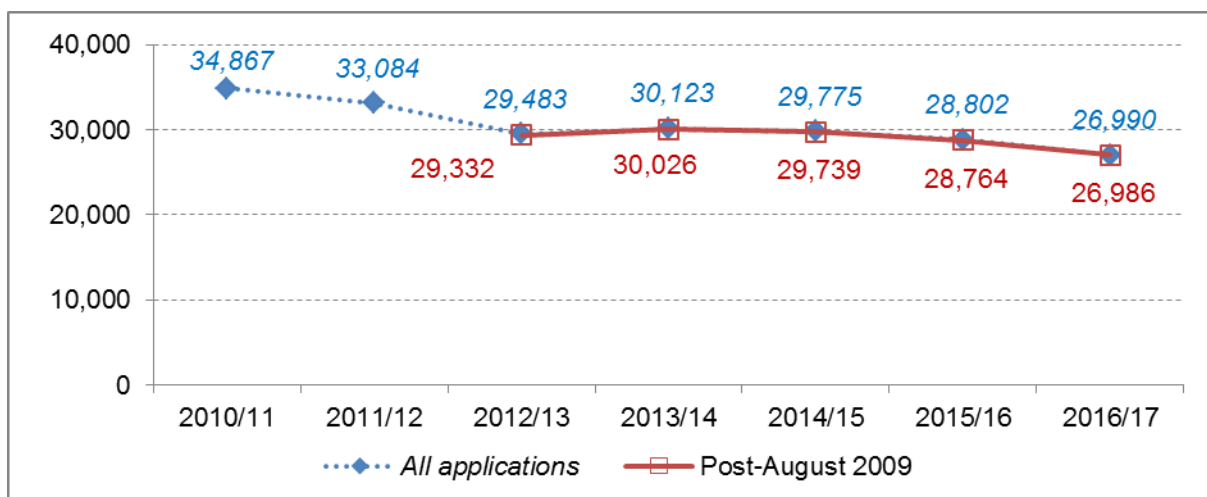
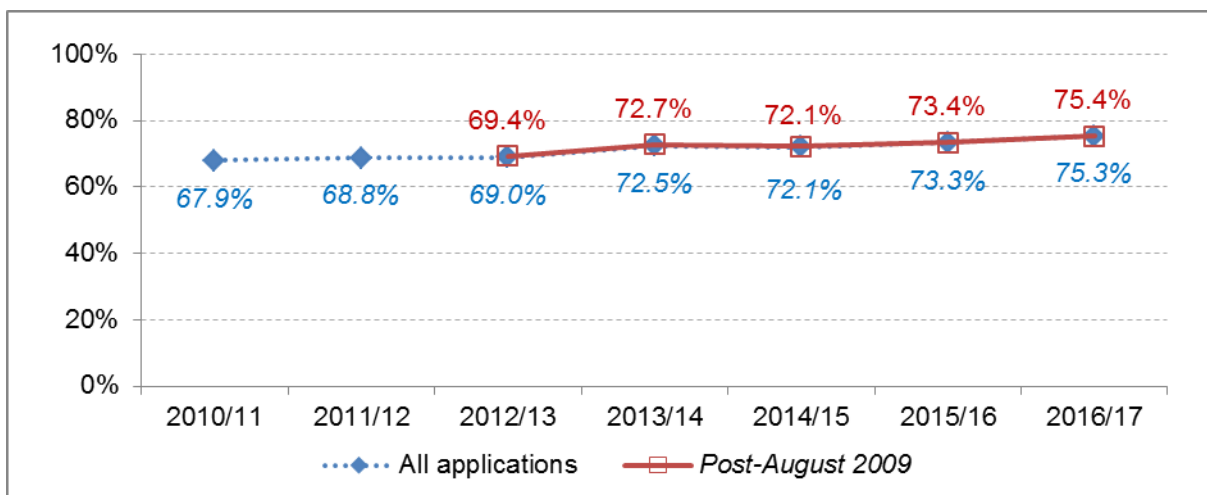


Chart 46: All Local Developments: Percentage under 2 months



7.2 All Local (Non Householder) developments

The number of decisions for local non-householder developments fell to a low of 13,586 applications in 2016/17. The percentage of local (non householder) developments decided within two months was 63.8% in 2016/17, up from the previous quarter (62.4%) and the highest percentage over the past seven years. ([Annual, 2016/17: Table 5](#)).

Chart 47: All Local Developments (Non Householder): Number of decisions

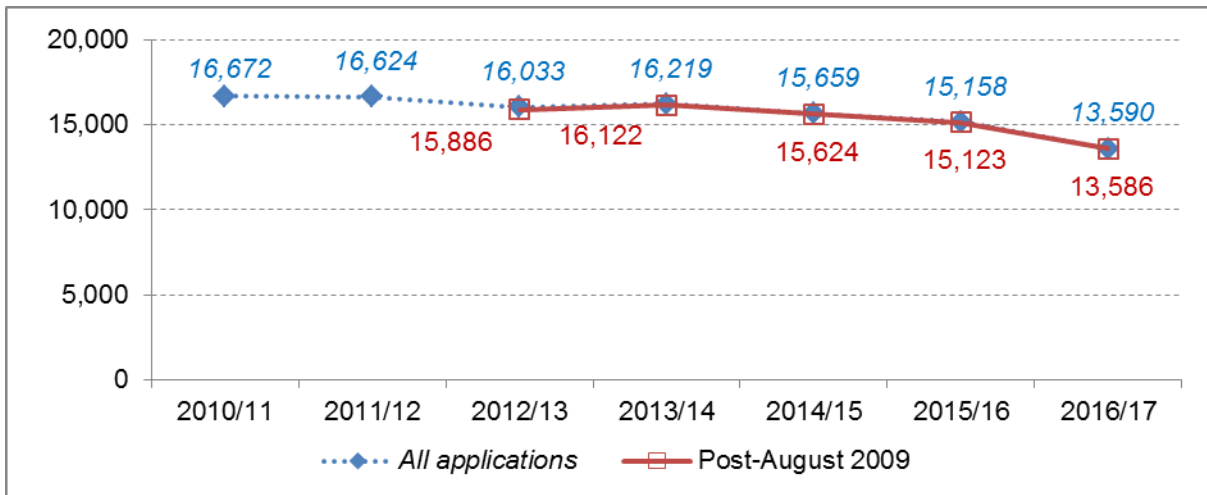
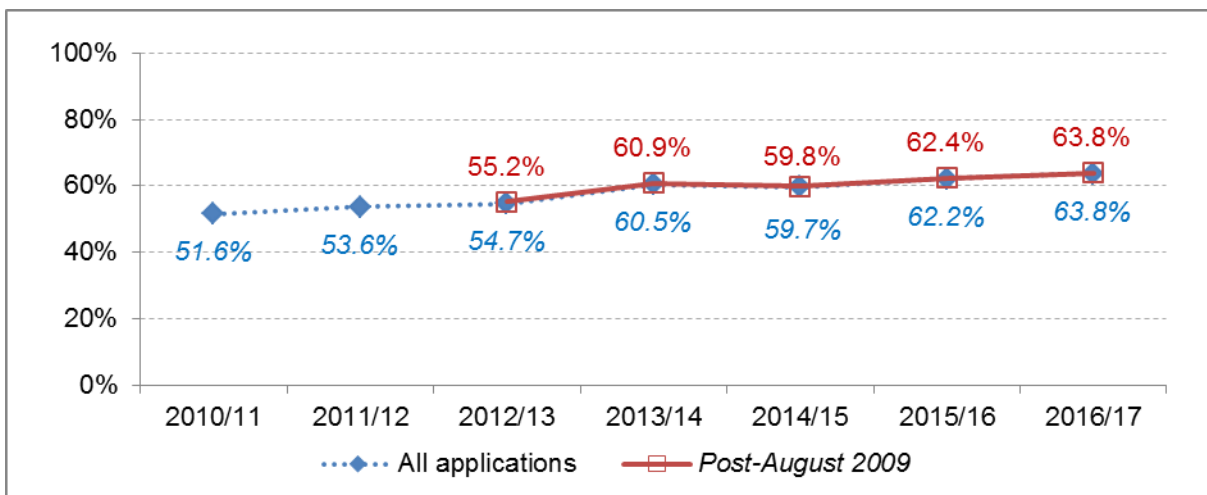


Chart 48: All Local Developments (Non Householder): Percentage under 2 months



7.3 Householder Developments

The number of decisions for householder applications fell to a low of 13,446 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. For the most recent year the number of decisions fell to a new low of 13,400 and the percentage of decisions made in under two months was 87.1%, higher than 85.7% in the previous year and the highest percentage over the past seven years. ([Annual, 2016/17: Table 6](#)).

Chart 49: Householder developments: Number of decisions

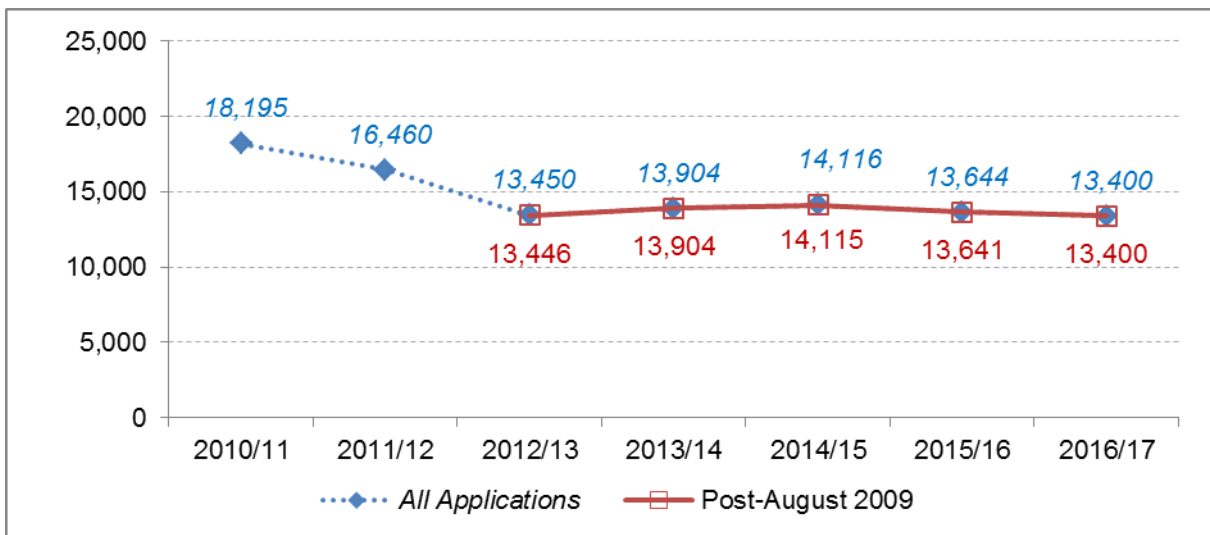
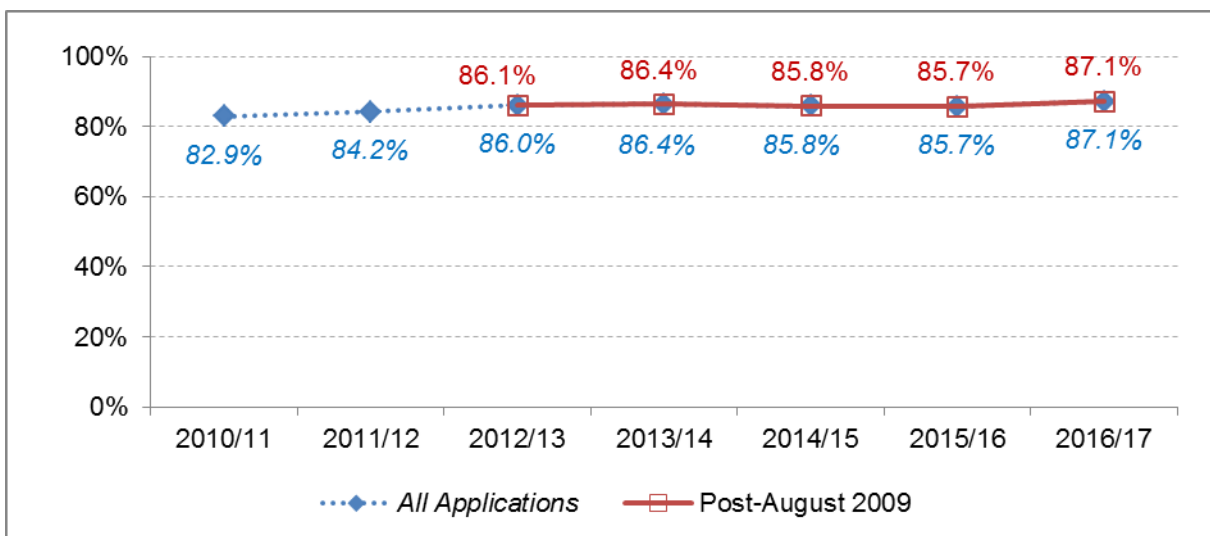


Chart 50: Householder developments: Percentage under two months



7.4 Local Housing

The number of decisions for local housing applications fell to a low of 4,899 in 2016/17. The percentage of decisions made in under two months (for applications validated post 3rd August 2009) was 57.7%, the highest percentage over the past seven years ([Annual, 2016/17: Table 10](#)).

Chart 51: Local Housing developments: Number of decisions

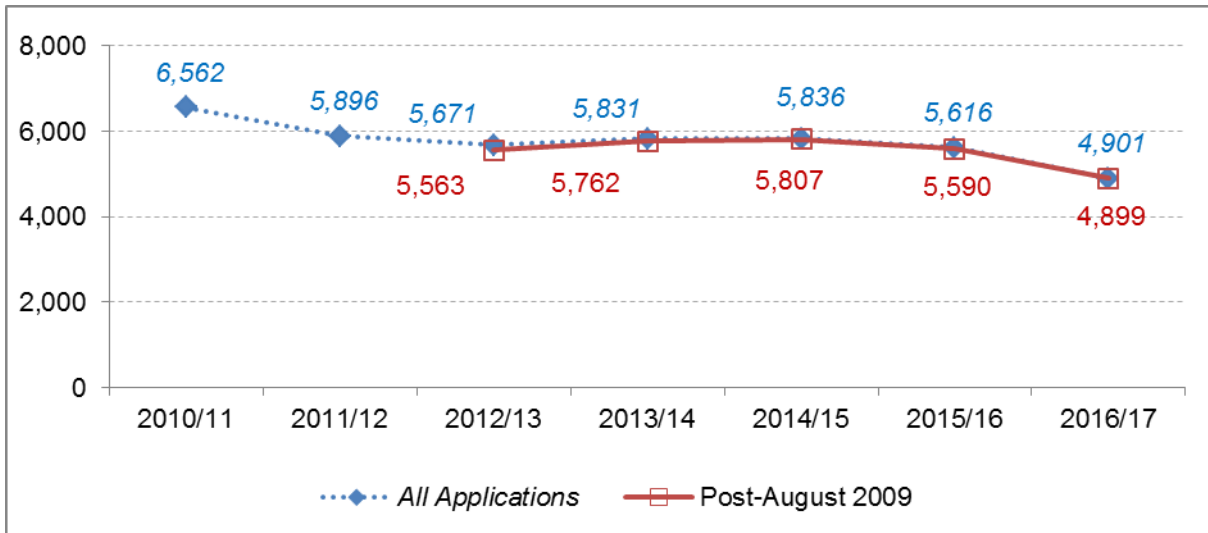
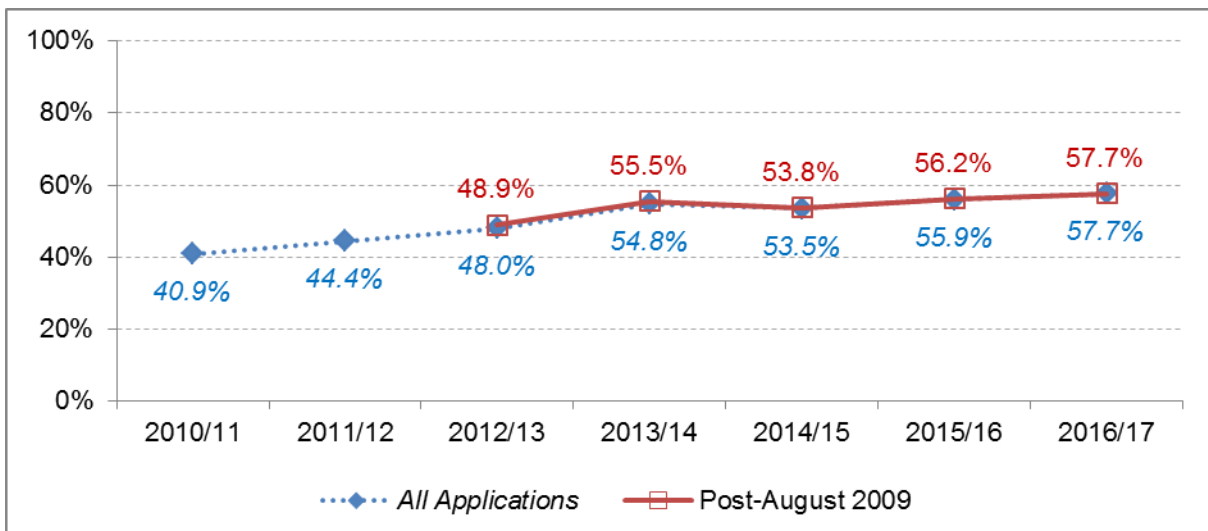


Chart 52: Local Housing developments: Percentage under 2 months



7.5 Local Business & Industry

The number of decisions made for local business and industry applications fell to a low of 1,738 in the year 2016/17 (for applications validated post 3rd August 2009). The percentage of decisions made in under two months was 70.8%, the highest percentage over the past seven years ([Annual, 2016/17: Table 12](#)).

Chart 53: Local Business & Industry developments: Number of decisions

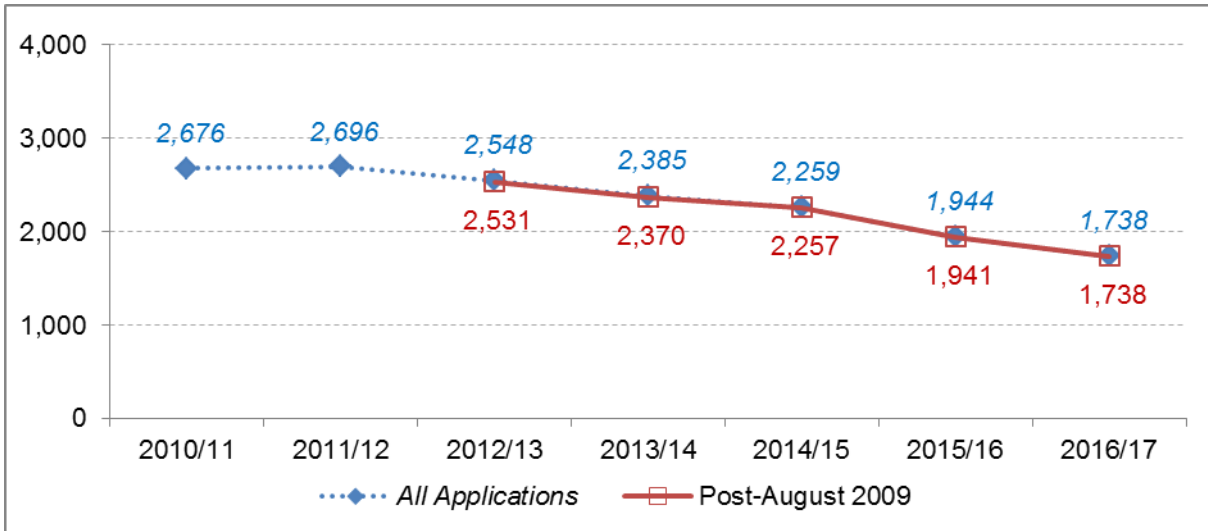
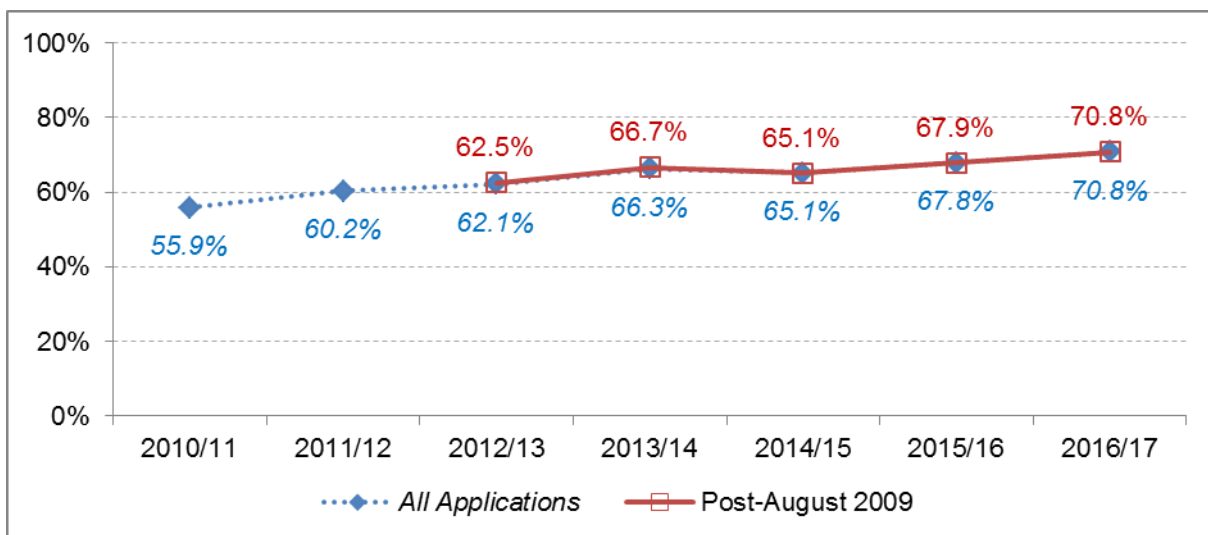


Chart 54: Local Business & Industry developments: Percentage under 2 months



7.6 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 now dropped to a low of 178 applications in 2016/17. 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). For the most recent year the percentage of decisions made in less than two months is 40.4% down from 43.7% in 2015/16. ([Annual, 2016/17: Table 16](#)).

Chart 55: Local Electricity Generation developments: Number of decisions

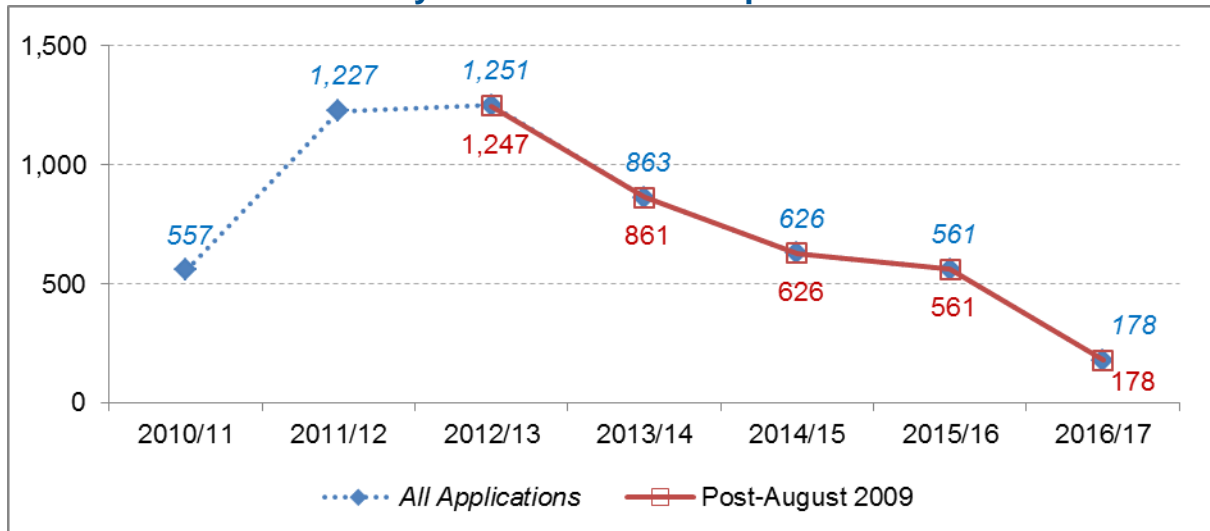
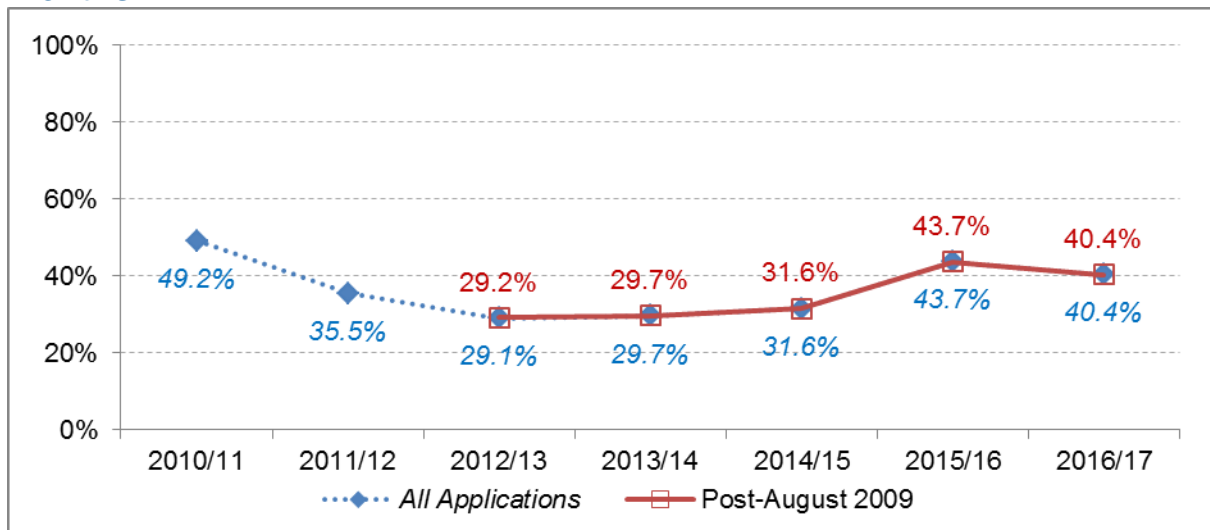


Chart 56: Local Electricity Generation developments: Percentage under 2 months



7.7 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 for the latest year is 67.3%, similar to the previous year (67.4%). ([Annual, 2016/17: Table 20](#)).

Chart 57: Local Other developments: Number of decisions

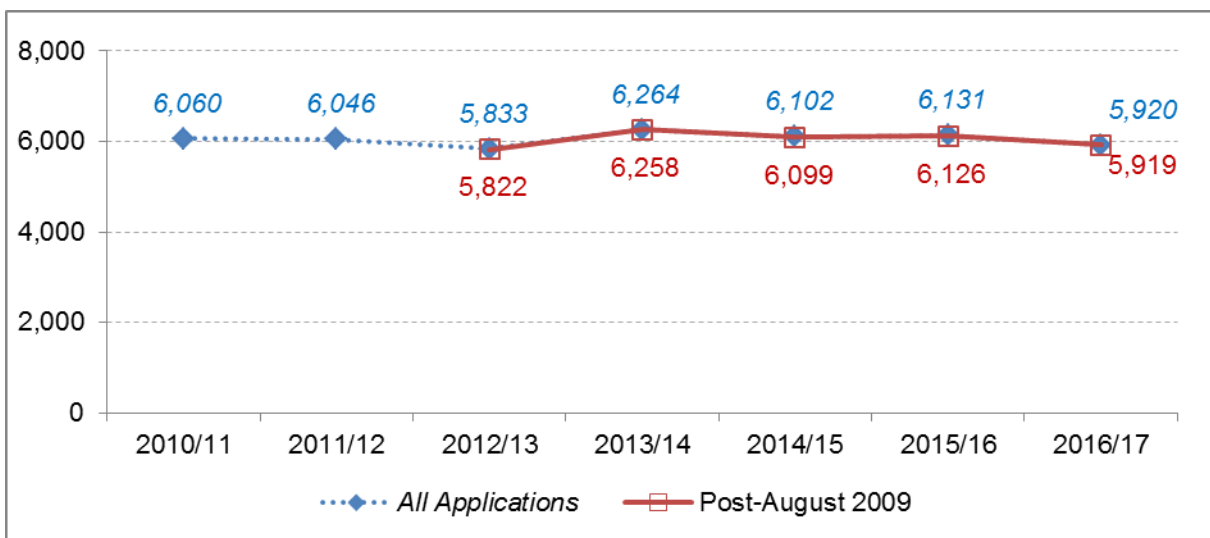
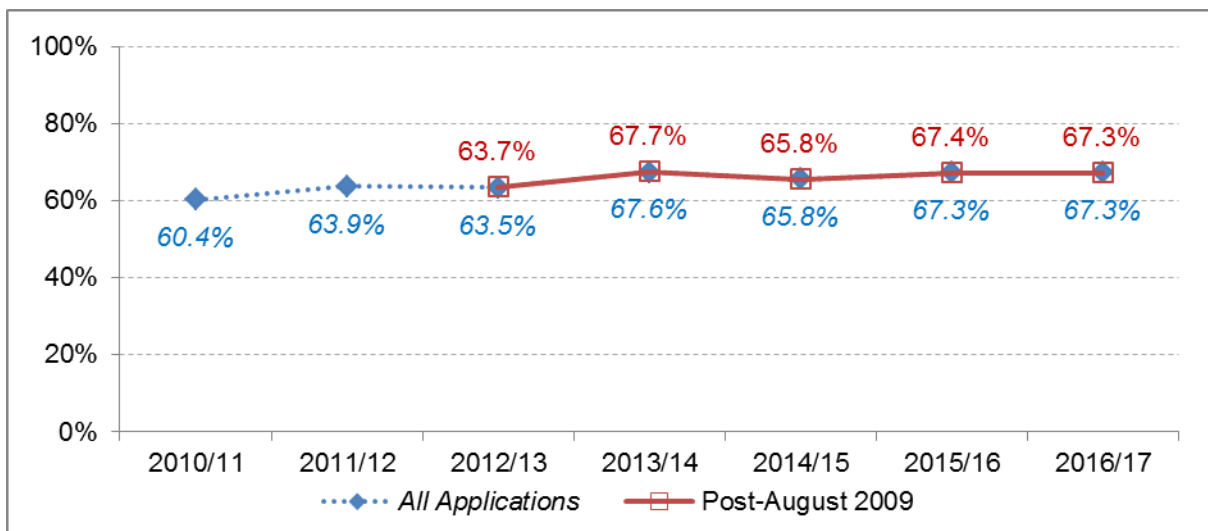


Chart 58: Local Other developments: Percentage under 2 months



Information on decisions for other specific categories of local developments is available within the detailed excel tables at: [Planning Authority Performance Statistics 2016/17 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, 2016/17: Table 34](#)) The delegation rate for 2016/17 was 95.3%. This is the highest delegation rate over the past seven years.

Table 5: Percentage of all applications delegated in period

2016/17	2015/16	2014/15	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
95.3%	94.9%	94.5%	92.6%	91.2%	90.4%	91.2%

9. Approval Rates

The overall rate of approvals for all types of application was 94.2% for the year 2016/17. This is the highest approval rate over the past seven years. ([Annual, 2016/17: Table 33](#))

Table 6: Percentage of all applications approved in period

2016/17	2015/16	2014/15	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
94.2%	93.8%	93.9%	94.1%	92.8%	92.2%	92.9%

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 550 cases in 2016/17, of which 55.6% had the original decision upheld. In the previous year 60.2% (545 cases) had the original decision upheld. ([Annual, 2016/17: Table 30](#))

In addition, 48.2% (280 cases) of delegated appeals to Scottish Ministers in 2016/17 had the original decision upheld. This compares with 47.1% (344 cases) for 2015/16. ([Annual, 2016/17: 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 2016/17 was 5,524. Of these cases there were 542 notices served, with 4 being reported to the Procurator Fiscal and 2 cases resulting in prosecution. In 2015/16 there were 5,475 cases taken up, 495 notices served, 2 reports to the Procurator Fiscal and 2 cases resulting in prosecution. ([Annual, 2016/17: Table 32](#))

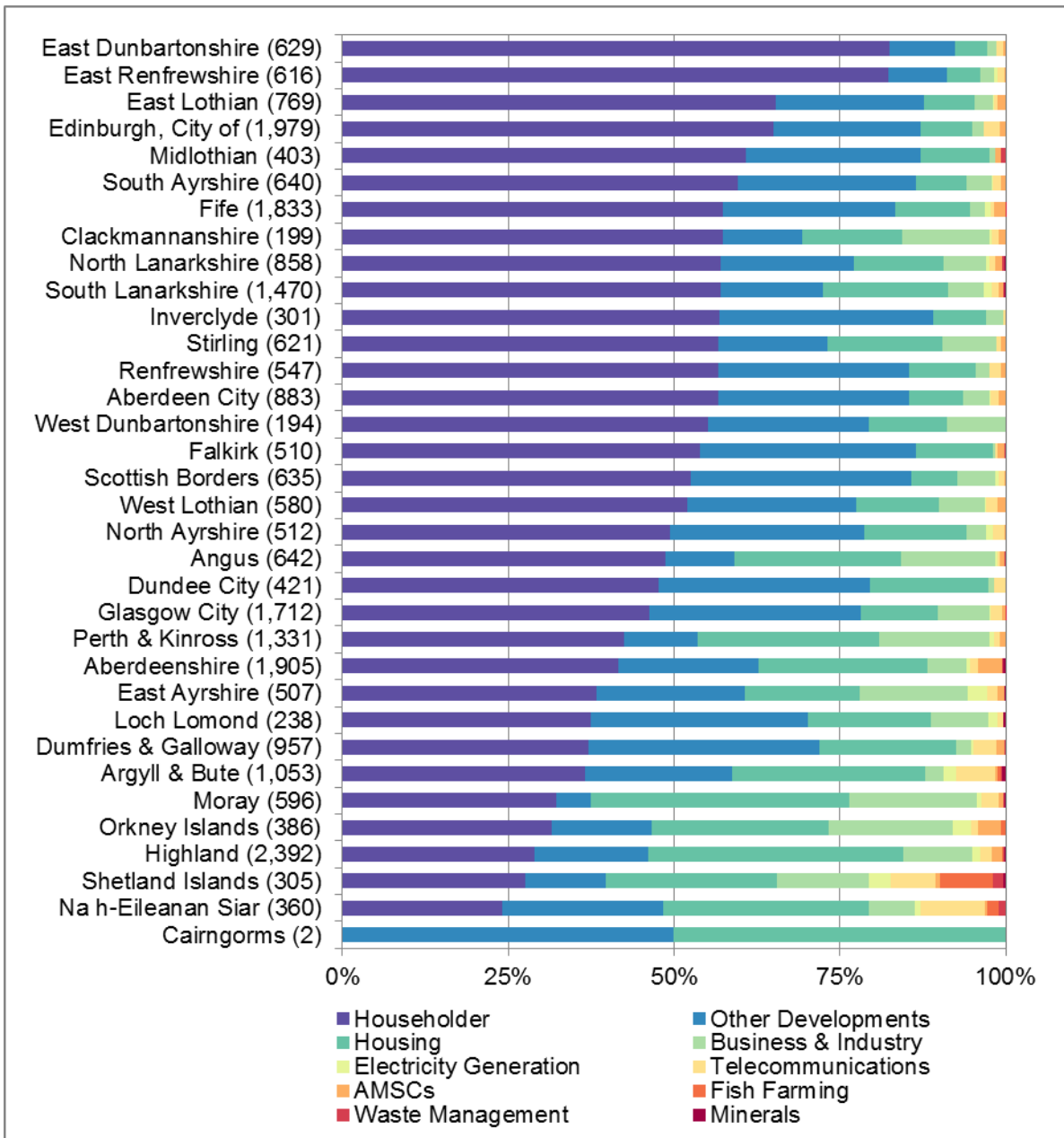
12. Local Developments by Planning Authority, 2016/17

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, 2016/17

Chart 59: Local Developments by planning authority and development type, 2016/17¹



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.

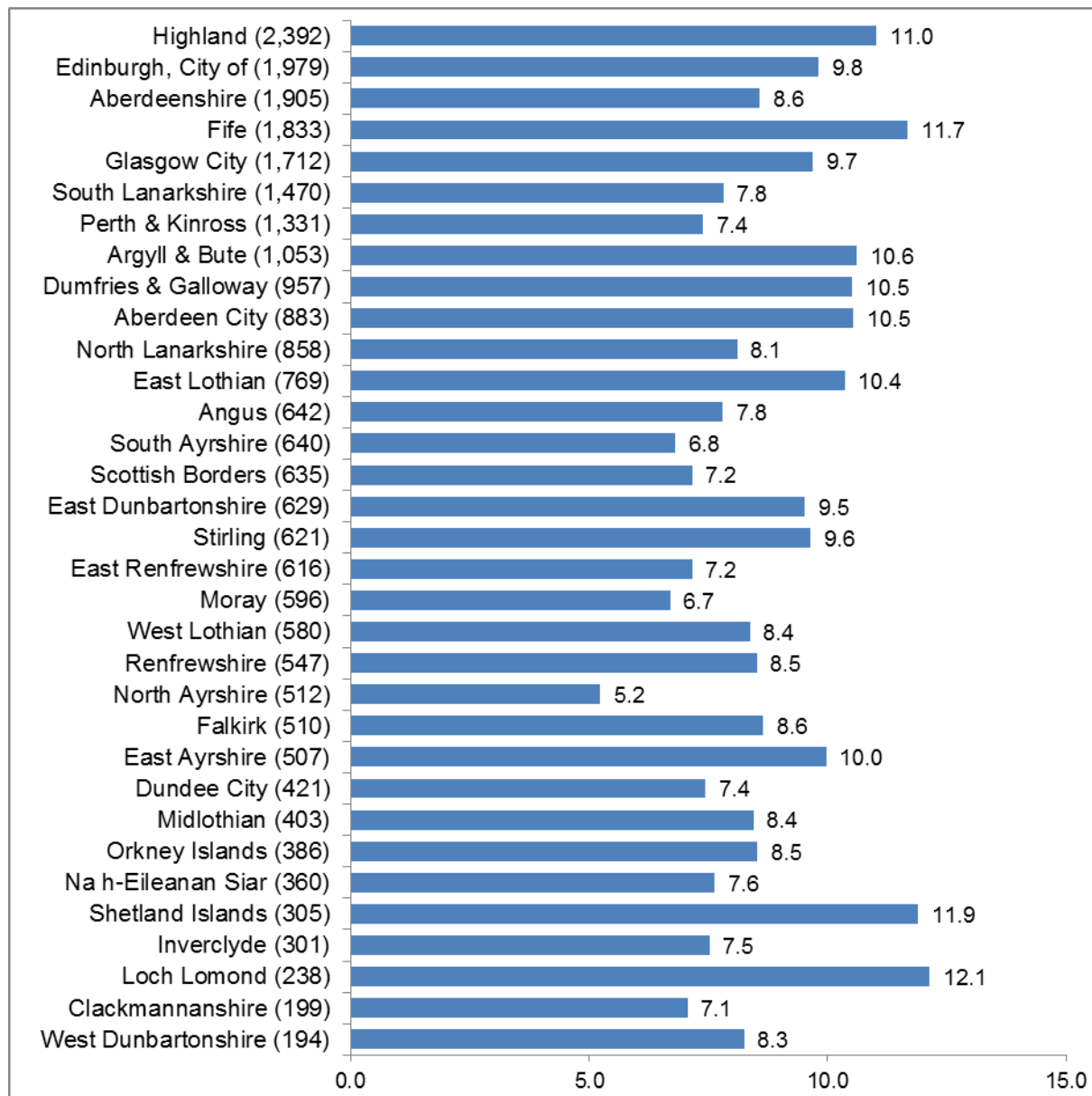
The chart shows information on the case mix for each planning authority, ordered by the most frequent (householder) applications. For the sixteen planning authorities from East Dunbartonshire down to West Lothian over half of decisions

made on local developments were for householder applications. At the other end of the scale, in the Cairngorms National Park 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, 2016/17

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 26,986 decisions made on local developments in 2016/17 with an overall average decision time of 9.2 weeks.

Chart 60: Local Developments by planning authority, 2016/17: Average decision time (weeks)



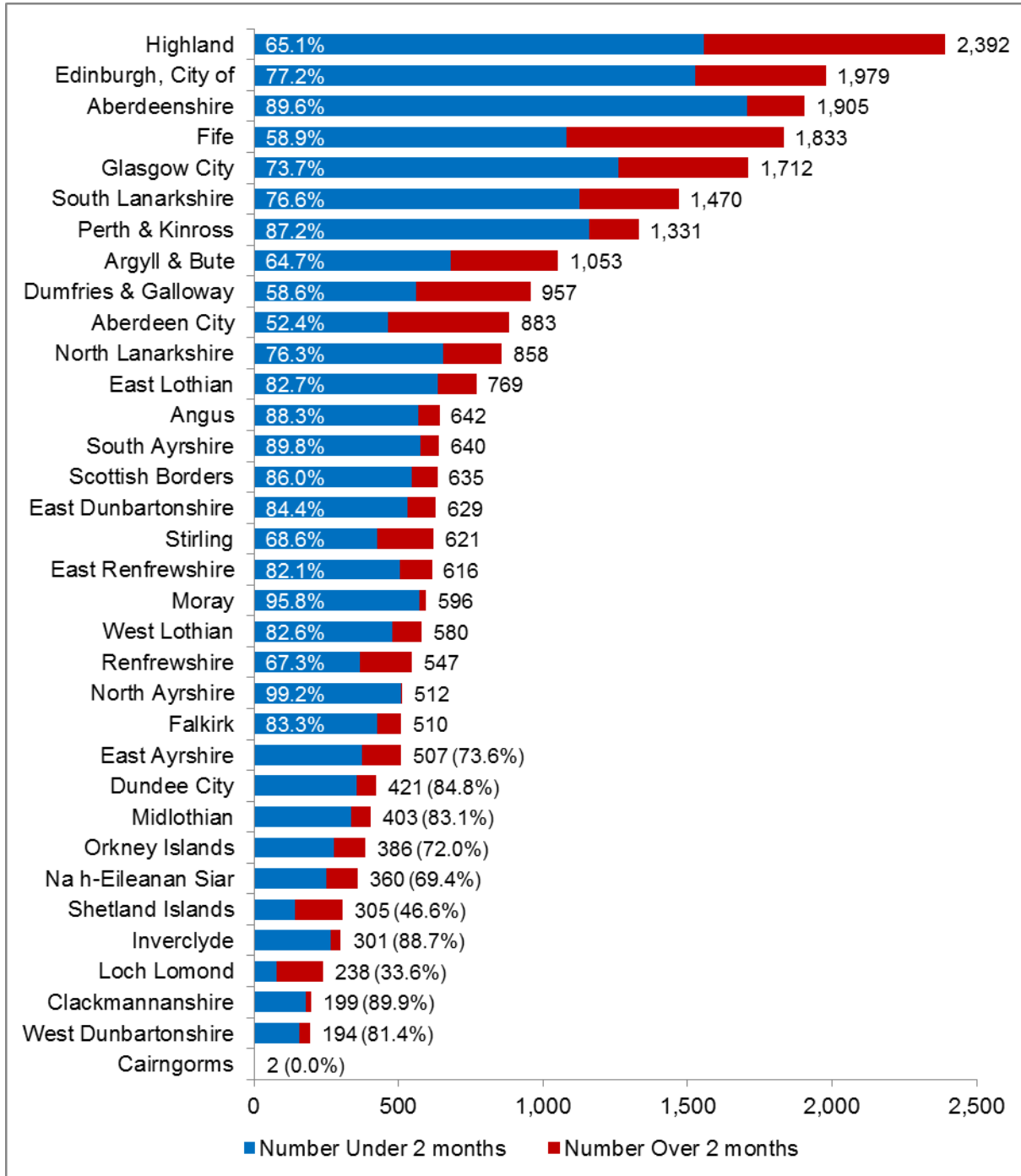
1. The number in brackets gives the total number of local development decisions by planning authority (excluding processing agreements). See [Section 2](#) for further details of processing agreements.

The average decision time for the Cairngorms National Park (70.8 weeks for 2 applications) has not been shown in the above chart. It should be expected that Cairngorms has a longer average decision time as they 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 National Park 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 National Park. In addition, Cairngorms National Park have no householder applications in their case mix for 2016/17. For these reasons average times for Cairngorms National Park applications can be expected to be higher than those of the other planning authorities. In 2016/17 Cairngorms National Park made decisions for a further 17 local applications using processing agreements with 16 (94%) of these meeting agreed timescales.

12.3 Local Developments – percentages under two months, 2016/17

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

Chart 61: Local Developments by planning authority, 2016/17: Percentage under 2 months



At Scotland level the percentage of decisions made in less than two months was 75.4%. Highland made the most decisions on local developments (2,392) and 65.1% of these were made in less than 2 months.

The following table is an extract from [Annual, 2016/17 - Table 4](#) and allows comparison with results from previous years.

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

Planning Authority	2016/17			2015/16			2014/15			2013/14			2012/13		
	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)	Number of applications	Percent Under 2 Months	Overall Average Time (weeks)
Aberdeen City	883	52.4%	10.5	1,140	46.7%	12.2	1,170	36.3%	14.4	1,227	52.2%	12.5	1,189	52.6%	11.9
Aberdeenshire	1,905	89.6%	8.6	2,685	76.1%	10.7	2,982	65.5%	11.9	2,913	69.9%	12.2	3,075	62.7%	15.4
Angus	642	88.3%	7.8	727	77.4%	9.2	737	80.6%	9.1	798	75.3%	8.2	763	80.3%	9.2
Argyll & Bute	1,053	64.7%	10.6	996	73.4%	9.2	1,097	77.8%	9.5	1,083	76.3%	10.3	1,061	69.2%	11.6
Cairngorms NP	2	0.0%	70.8	7	14.3%	14.6	37	13.5%	21.3	46	19.6%	17.7	48	8.3%	18.3
Clackmannanshire	199	89.9%	7.1	195	87.2%	6.5	184	94.0%	6.4	197	92.4%	6.8	192	84.9%	7.8
Dumfries & Galloway	957	58.6%	10.5	1,110	66.9%	9.8	1,860	69.4%	9.5	1,485	50.3%	11.9	1,264	46.8%	12.9
Dundee City	421	84.8%	7.4	462	77.1%	8.1	401	81.8%	7.8	438	81.7%	7.6	377	84.1%	7.0
East Ayrshire	507	73.6%	10.0	432	69.2%	11.8	429	62.0%	12.7	430	68.6%	13.0	492	60.4%	11.7
East Dunbartonshire	629	84.4%	9.5	646	86.5%	9.4	623	92.5%	8.6	618	90.3%	8.7	662	84.1%	10.1
East Lothian	769	82.7%	10.4	785	85.4%	9.0	749	87.0%	9.7	840	86.5%	10.7	738	83.3%	11.6
East Renfrewshire	616	82.1%	7.2	600	91.8%	6.9	606	87.5%	7.0	581	85.0%	7.3	546	84.2%	8.3
Edinburgh, City of	1,979	77.2%	9.8	2,253	79.0%	9.4	2,219	78.2%	9.1	2,148	80.6%	8.6	2,069	82.4%	8.3
Falkirk	510	83.3%	8.6	493	80.3%	9.4	512	78.1%	8.9	514	79.6%	8.8	507	65.9%	11.7
Fife	1,833	58.9%	11.7	1,767	59.0%	11.2	1,899	55.8%	11.9	1,756	60.3%	12.7	1,751	64.2%	12.8
Glasgow City	1,712	73.7%	9.7	1,565	63.9%	10.6	1,503	69.3%	10.7	1,584	67.5%	11.0	1,403	69.6%	11.3
Highland	2,392	65.1%	11.0	2,487	68.6%	10.6	2,383	70.9%	10.7	2,597	70.7%	10.6	2,436	67.3%	11.4
Inverclyde	301	88.7%	7.5	279	91.0%	6.7	270	91.9%	7.0	303	86.8%	7.1	306	82.4%	7.7
Loch Lomond & The Trossachs NP	238	33.6%	12.1	223	39.0%	12.3	193	56.5%	12.2	201	63.7%	12.0	237	59.9%	12.3
Midlothian	403	83.1%	8.4	488	83.0%	8.7	423	87.0%	8.4	424	85.1%	10.0	444	74.8%	10.8
Moray	596	95.8%	6.7	718	94.6%	7.2	789	92.6%	7.2	856	83.3%	10.1	817	67.2%	14.9
Na h-Eileanan Siar	360	69.4%	7.6	317	65.9%	8.6	353	64.3%	11.1	400	60.5%	9.8	413	59.1%	10.7
North Ayrshire	512	99.2%	5.2	454	98.7%	5.3	471	97.7%	5.7	495	96.0%	6.2	457	90.8%	7.7
North Lanarkshire	858	76.3%	8.1	858	68.9%	9.6	838	73.3%	9.2	917	87.5%	8.4	875	73.7%	11.3
Orkney Islands	386	72.0%	8.5	435	64.4%	8.6	365	67.4%	9.0	381	62.7%	10.6	609	46.1%	10.7
Perth & Kinross	1,331	87.2%	7.4	1,407	81.8%	9.1	1,412	72.1%	9.5	1,495	73.5%	10.3	1,449	69.4%	10.2
Renfrewshire	547	67.3%	8.5	554	72.0%	8.6	532	80.8%	7.7	566	80.7%	7.8	556	78.8%	9.2
Scottish Borders	635	86.0%	7.2	884	73.6%	12.1	912	68.0%	15.0	907	69.7%	16.6	947	64.2%	13.9
Shetland Islands	305	46.6%	11.9	313	47.0%	12.3	294	57.1%	9.6	356	57.0%	11.0	286	68.2%	11.0
South Ayrshire	640	89.8%	6.8	687	90.4%	6.4	736	79.5%	7.9	693	90.8%	7.1	722	86.7%	7.6
South Lanarkshire	1,470	76.6%	7.8	1,375	72.8%	10.3	1,431	71.1%	10.9	1,327	67.3%	13.1	1,274	68.8%	11.9
Stirling	621	68.6%	9.6	596	68.1%	10.2	579	73.7%	9.5	630	77.6%	9.5	580	78.4%	9.7
West Dunbartonshire	194	81.4%	8.3	208	69.2%	8.8	180	75.0%	8.5	208	75.5%	9.8	213	83.1%	9.3
West Lothian	580	82.6%	8.4	618	82.4%	8.7	570	83.9%	8.0	612	77.8%	9.2	574	73.2%	12.0
SCOTLAND	26,986	75.4%	9.2	28,764	73.4%	9.7	29,739	72.1%	10.1	30,026	72.7%	10.6	29,332	69.4%	11.4

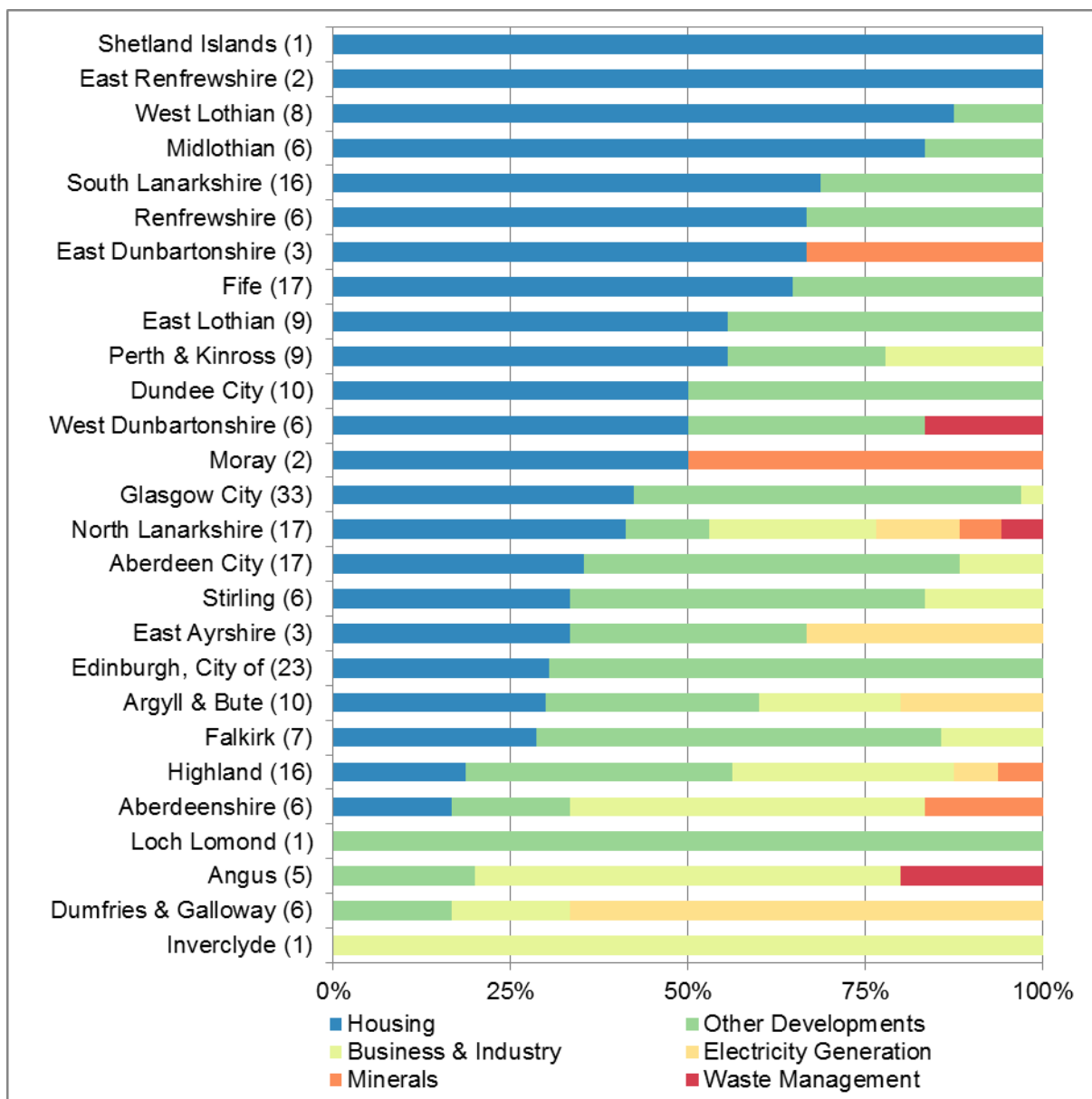
Aberdeenshire, Angus, Scottish Borders and West Dunbartonshire saw the biggest improvements in the percentage of decisions made in less than two months between 2015/16 and 2016/17.

13. Major Developments by Planning Authority, 2016/17

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, 2016/17

Chart 62: Major Developments by planning authority and development type, 2016/17¹



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.

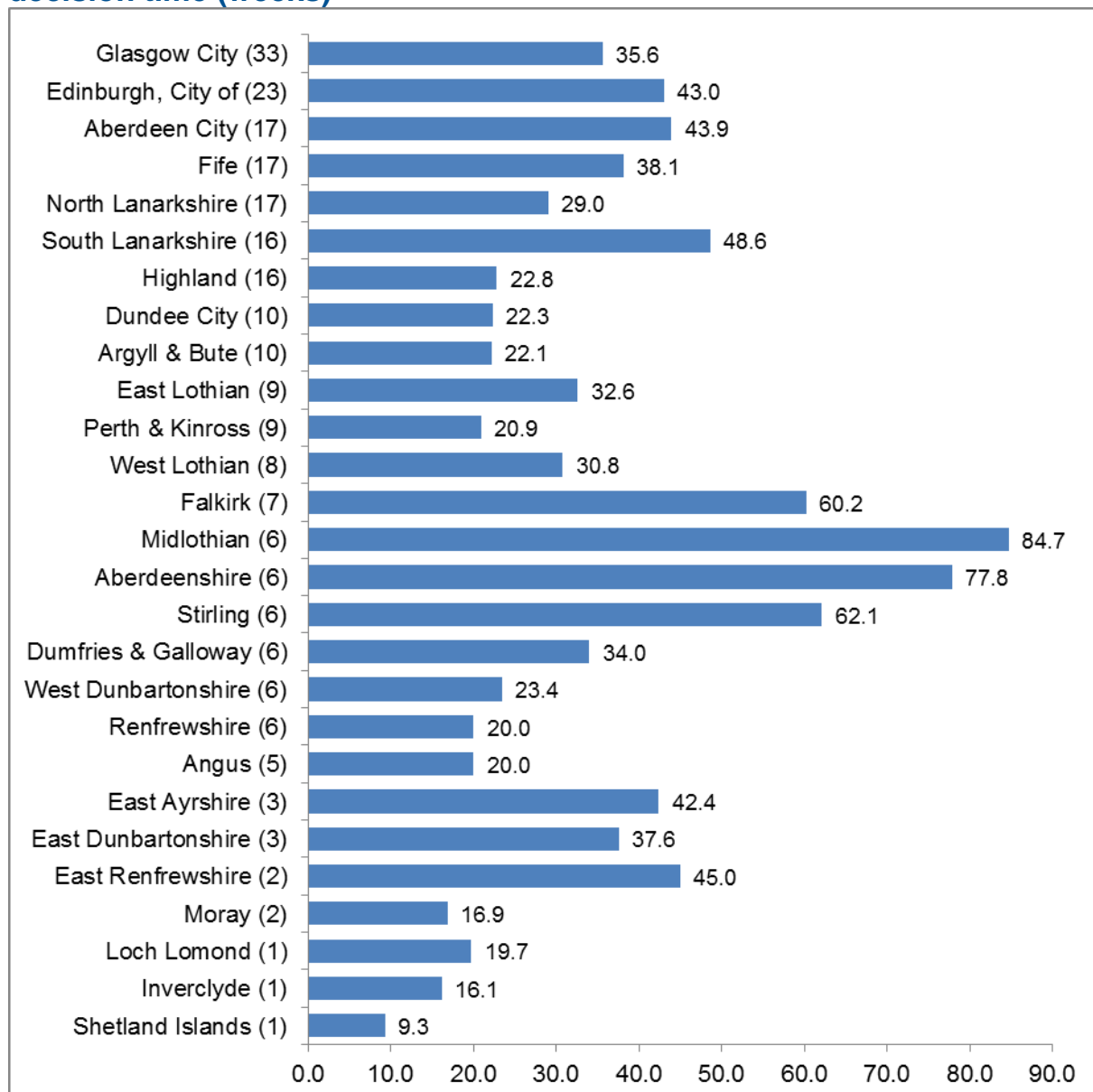
The chart shows information on the case mix for each planning authority, ordered by housing followed by other developments. Overall there were 246 decisions made for major developments in 2016/17. In addition and not shown in the above chart there were 95 decisions made for major developments that used processing agreements. Glasgow made the most decisions (33) for major planning applications

with 14 for housing, 18 for other major developments and 1 for business and industry developments. In addition Glasgow used processing agreements for a further four major developments. Edinburgh used processing agreements for eleven of their major development decisions and when these are included Edinburgh made 34 decisions in total on major developments. Aberdeenshire made the most decisions for major developments using processing agreements with 93.8% (15 out of 16) of these meeting agreed timescales.

13.2 Major Developments – average decision times, 2016/17

The following chart 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 246 decisions made on major developments in 2016/17 with an overall average decision time of 37.0 weeks. A further 95 major developments that were subject to a processing agreement are not included in these average decision times.

Chart 63: Major Developments by planning authority, 2016/17: 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 Midlothian was partly due to one application that took over three years for a decision on planning permission in principle for a residential development on a 4.5 hectare site with associated car parking and access.

Cairngorms National Park, Clackmannanshire, Na h-Eileanan Siar, North Ayrshire, Orkney Islands, Scottish Borders and South Ayrshire did not make any decisions for major developments that were subject to average time calculations in 2016/17 and are therefore not included in the charts in this section. Instead Cairngorms National Park, Na h-Eileanan Siar, North Ayrshire, Scottish Borders and South Ayrshire used processing agreements for all of their major developments. Percentages that were agreed within agreed timescales can be seen in Table 1 of [Planning Authority Performance Statistics 2016/17 Annual](#).

The following table is an extract from [Annual, 2016/17: Table 2](#) and allows comparison of the average decision times for major applications between years.

Table 8: Major Applications: Average Decision Time

Planning Authority	2016/17		2015/16		2014/15		2013/14		2012/13	
	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)	Total number of applications	Overall Average Time (weeks)
Aberdeen City	17	43.9	15	24.1	17	47.6	15	45.9	10	53.7
Aberdeenshire	6	77.8	14	60.2	24	89.7	23	53.9	12	41.5
Angus	5	20.0	6	22.0	8	31.1	5	30.1	4	33.3
Argyll & Bute	10	22.1	7	17.0	3	14.1	4	26.9	3	59.0
Cairngorms	0	-	0	-	4	61.4	0	-	0	-
Clackmannanshire	0	-	1	39.3	1	16.0	2	7.9	0	-
Dumfries & Galloway	6	34.0	7	31.6	8	20.6	18	53.0	15	34.9
Dundee City	10	22.3	7	12.5	6	13.1	6	12.5	3	23.7
East Ayrshire	3	42.4	5	64.4	5	61.2	4	44.9	5	39.5
East Dunbartonshire	3	37.6	3	41.8	6	32.3	3	19.4	4	13.5
East Lothian	9	32.6	9	26.6	12	28.1	6	43.5	4	20.7
East Renfrewshire	2	45.0	4	17.5	3	19.6	5	16.7	5	39.9
Edinburgh, City of	23	43.0	13	29.9	12	22.8	14	27.9	6	22.7
Falkirk	7	60.2	4	74.5	2	132.4	5	27.9	0	-
Fife	17	38.1	21	30.8	25	45.0	25	49.7	21	45.5
Glasgow City	33	35.6	31	24.9	28	24.1	35	27.5	34	38.2
Highland	16	22.8	15	20.6	8	24.9	13	31.6	15	26.1
Inverclyde	1	16.1	1	45.1	1	12.1	0	-	4	26.0
Loch Lomond	1	19.7	0	-	1	13.1	1	26.3	0	-
Midlothian	6	84.7	13	35.1	6	21.6	4	27.4	10	31.8
Moray	2	16.9	4	20.0	2	13.1	7	49.4	8	55.7
Na h-Eileanan Siar	0	-	0	-	2	28.5	1	44.9	0	-
North Ayrshire	0	-	5	26.7	5	12.6	6	19.8	6	34.1
North Lanarkshire	17	29.0	19	24.3	26	19.6	31	19.2	12	21.0
Orkney Islands	0	-	1	24.1	1	7.0	1	7.3	0	-
Perth & Kinross	9	20.9	6	14.8	12	41.7	11	39.2	9	14.2
Renfrewshire	6	20.0	5	13.3	4	10.1	10	14.0	10	36.6
Scottish Borders	0	-	2	27.6	8	30.9	8	53.3	10	60.8
Shetland Islands	1	9.3	3	11.9	5	23.5	3	14.0	0	-
South Ayrshire	0	-	5	42.6	8	26.0	6	26.4	3	21.6
South Lanarkshire	16	48.6	21	38.4	23	42.4	17	30.1	10	43.2
Stirling	6	62.1	5	38.3	3	43.3	6	30.5	3	14.9
West Dunbartonshire	6	23.4	5	24.6	7	19.8	4	32.4	2	19.2
West Lothian	8	30.8	11	49.0	12	45.3	11	44.7	10	38.7
SCOTLAND	246	37.0	268	31.0	298	36.6	310	34.6	238	36.3

Due to the small numbers of major applications, especially at local authority level, average times are more variable. However, East Ayrshire, Inverclyde and West Lothian have all improved their overall average decision time by over 30% compared to 2015/16.

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 2016/17 there were a total of 1,170 applications where the clock was stopped for an average of 21.4 weeks. This compares with 1,402 applications stopped for an average of 30.8 weeks in the previous year. The table below shows the number of applications where the clock has been stopped by planning authority.

Table 9: Clock stops by planning authority, 2016/17^{1,2}

Planning Authority	Total applications decided in 2016/17	Number of applications with clock stopped	Percentage of applications with clock stopped	Average length of time clock stopped (weeks)
Aberdeen City	1,162	139	12.0%	15.1
Aberdeenshire	2,153	50	2.3%	5.4
Angus	773	11	1.4%	30.1
Argyll & Bute	1,311	56	4.3%	34.1
Cairngorms NP	2	1	50.0%	23.7
Clackmannanshire	237	5	2.1%	4.8
Dumfries & Galloway	1,106	10	0.9%	52.5
Dundee City	610	43	7.0%	13.4
East Ayrshire	643	84	13.1%	30.4
East Dunbartonshire	720	58	8.1%	6.4
East Lothian	970	11	1.1%	53.3
East Renfrewshire	685	12	1.8%	23.5
Edinburgh, City of	3,405	14	0.4%	84.6
Falkirk	612	17	2.8%	28.4
Fife	2,548	4	0.2%	20.3
Glasgow City	2,724	130	4.8%	22.4
Highland	2,754	15	0.5%	78.8
Inverclyde	388	23	5.9%	14.5
Loch Lomond & Trossachs NP	317	12	3.8%	22.0
Midlothian	493	25	5.1%	46.2
Moray	687	37	5.4%	7.2
Na h-Eileanan Siar	424	3	0.7%	14.3
North Ayrshire	631	9	1.4%	8.6
North Lanarkshire	1,054	38	3.6%	21.9
Orkney Islands	488	50	10.2%	12.7
Perth & Kinross	1,672	72	4.3%	26.0
Renfrewshire	697	24	3.4%	11.9
Scottish Borders	812	2	0.2%	185.6
Shetland Islands	367	33	9.0%	12.6
South Ayrshire	856	3	0.4%	22.2
South Lanarkshire	1,683	51	3.0%	16.5
Stirling	790	1	0.1%	78.3
West Dunbartonshire	246	50	20.3%	11.6
West Lothian	724	77	10.6%	19.5
SCOTLAND	34,744	1,170	3.4%	21.4

1. Processing Agreements are not included in this analysis.

2. Includes Legacy Cases

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

Table 10: Clock stops by development type, 2016/17

Development Type	Total applications decided in 2016/17	Number of applications with clock stopped	Percentage of applications with clock stopped	Average length of time clock stopped (weeks)
Local developments				
Householder	13,400	172	1.3%	7.7
Other developments	5,920	226	3.8%	19.9
Housing	4,901	381	7.8%	22.7
Business and Industry	1,738	102	5.9%	12.9
Telecommunications	457	8	1.8%	11.3
AMSCs	294	25	8.5%	38.0
Electricity Generation	178	20	11.2%	26.2
Waste Management	30	1	3.3%	312.9
Minerals	28	3	10.7%	27.0
Marine Shellfish Farming	26	3	11.5%	9.8
Marine Finfish Farming	18	3	16.7%	4.4
Freshwater Fish Farming	0	0	-	-
TOTAL	26,990	944	3.5%	18.8
Major developments				
Housing	108	37	34.3%	41.0
Other Developments	96	22	22.9%	80.7
Business and Industry	26	7	26.9%	44.3
Electricity Generation	10	4	40.0%	62.6
Minerals	6	2	33.3%	325.9
Waste Management	3	1	33.3%	19.7
Marine Shellfish Farming	0	0	-	-
Freshwater Fish Farming	0	0	-	-
Marine Finfish Farming	0	0	-	-
TOTAL	249	73	29.3%	62.0
Other Consents				
Listed bldg.+con.area consents	3,593	92	2.6%	20.3
Advertisements	2,057	50	2.4%	13.0
Other consents and certificates	1,828	5	0.3%	11.2
Hazardous substances consents	14	5	35.7%	8.5
TOTAL	7,492	152	2.0%	17.2
Local with EIA				
Local Developments Subject To EIA	12	1	8.3%	64.3
AMSCs (Subject to EIA)	1	0	-	-
TOTAL	13	1	7.7%	64.3

1. Processing Agreements are not included in this analysis.

2. Includes Legacy Cases

For 2016/17, local housing developments have the most applications where the clock has been stopped, with 22.7 weeks on average removed from decision times. This represents 7.8% 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.

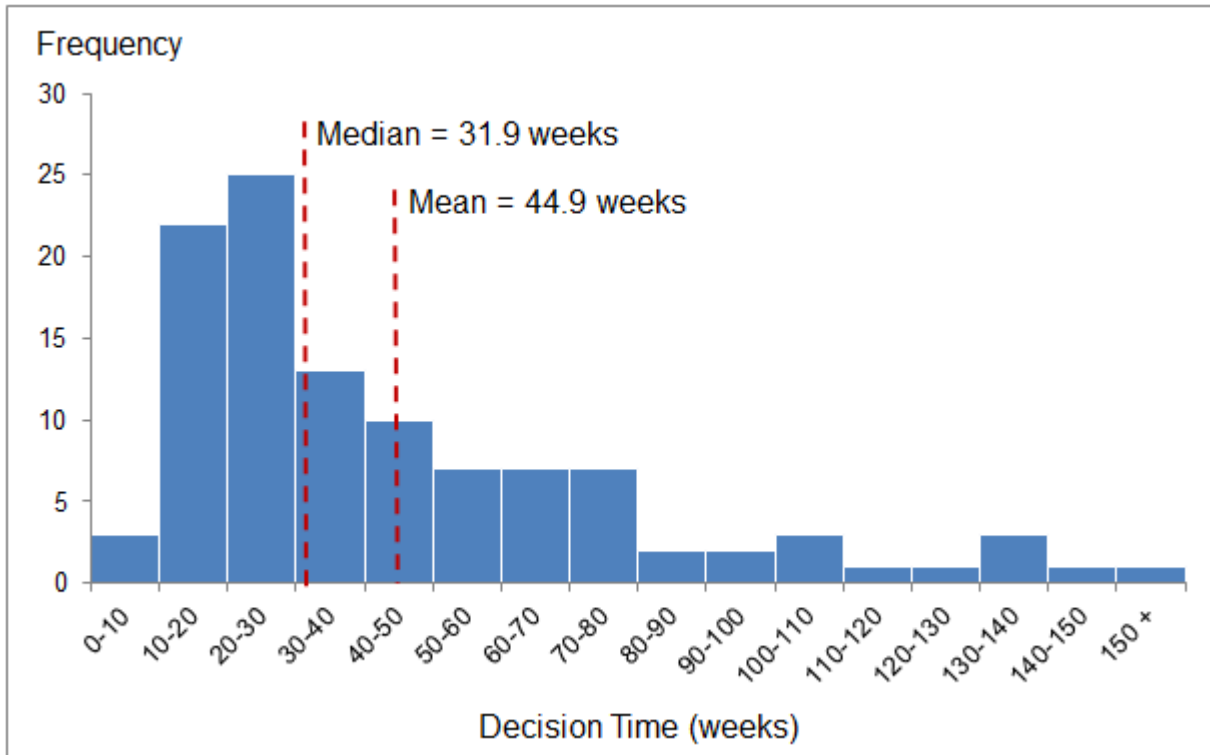
Stop the clock advice has been issued to planning authorities to help with decisions for stopping the clock and is available at;

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

14.2 Distribution of decision times for major applications.

Chart 64 shows the distribution of the decision times for major housing applications (post 3rd August 2009) that were concluded in 2016/17.

Chart 64: Distribution of decision times for major housing applications (post 3rd August 2009), 2016/17 (there were no legacy cases)

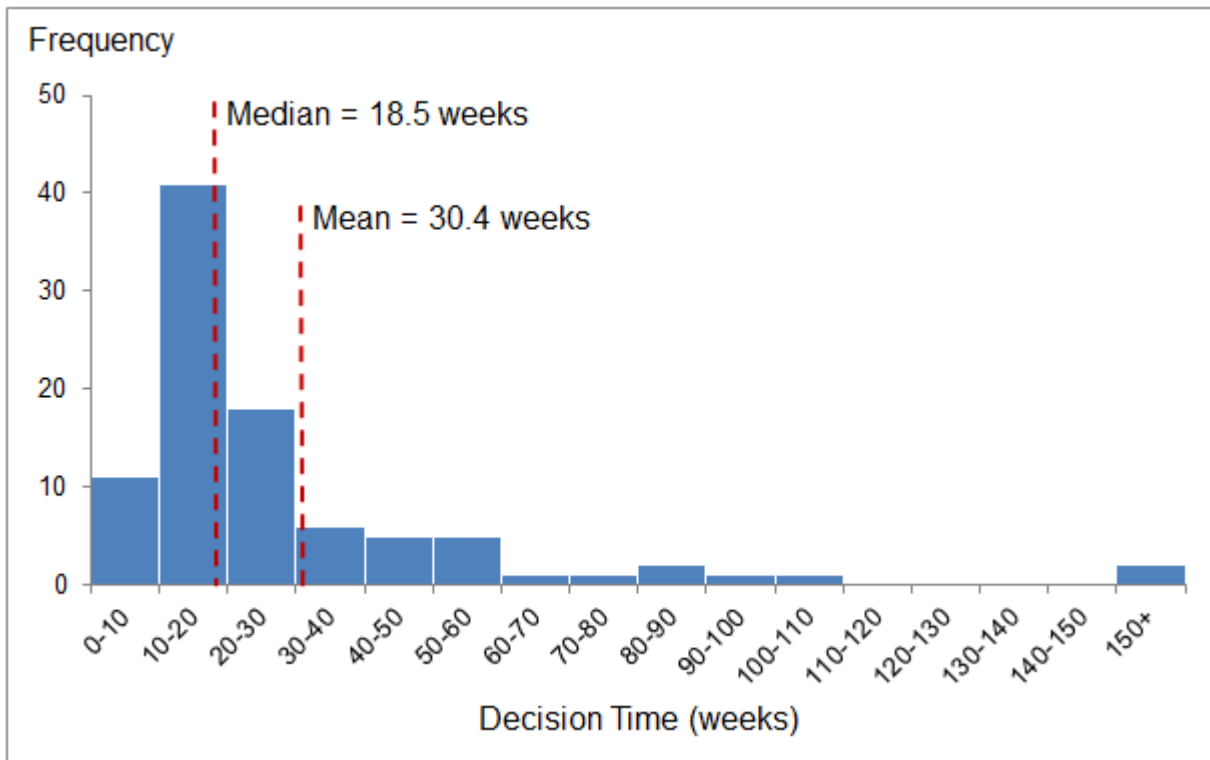


The vertical line at 44.9 weeks shows the mean (average) decision time for major housing developments. The second line at 31.9 weeks shows the median decision time. Decision times range from 7.4 weeks to 177.4 weeks. The chart shows that the mean decision time has been influenced by several lengthy decisions. Almost 64% of major housing applications were decided in a time quicker than the average of 44.9 weeks. Nearly 40% of major housing applications were decided within 6 months.

The three lengthiest decisions that all took 140 weeks or longer are one each in South Lanarkshire, North Lanarkshire and Midlothian. The South Lanarkshire application was for residential developments with associated landscaping, roads, neighbourhood centre, community facilities and infrastructure works (with Environmental Impact Analysis), the North Lanarkshire application was for a residential development of up to 450 units, access and associated works and the Midlothian application is described as an application for planning permission in principle for residential development with associated car parking and access. All three applications were approved.

Chart 65 shows the distribution of the decision times for major other developments (post 3rd August 2009) that were concluded in 2016/17. The category “other developments” includes any developments not falling wholly within any of the specific categories of development for minerals, housing, business & industry, waste management, electricity generation, fish farming. It includes, but is not limited to, retail, leisure and entertainment, education, healthcare, community facilities, transport interchanges, water and drainage developments and projects. It can also include mixed use projects.

Chart 65: Distribution of decision times for major other developments (post 3rd August 2009), 2016/17 (excludes 2 legacy cases)

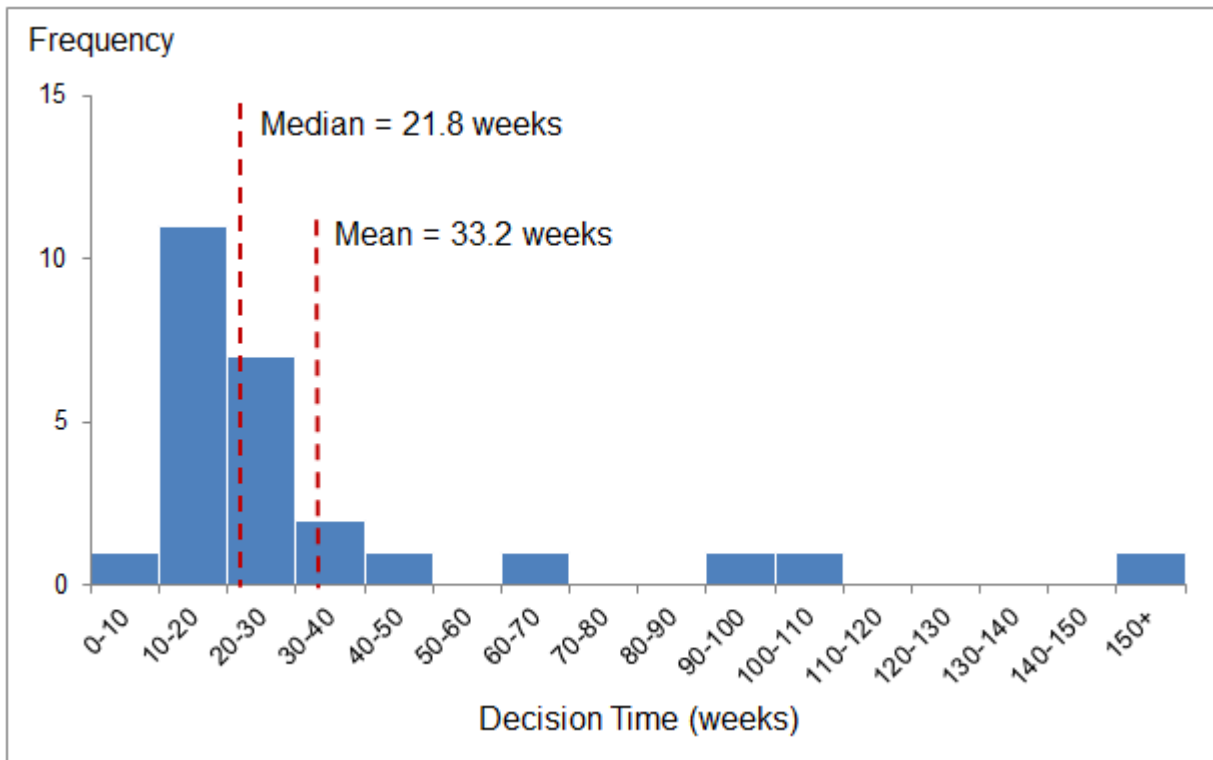


The vertical line at 30.4 weeks shows the mean (average) decision time for major other developments. The second line at 18.5 weeks shows the median decision time. Decision times range from 5.7 weeks to 284.1 weeks. The chart shows that the average decision time has been influenced by several lengthy decisions. Almost three quarters of major other developments were decided in a time quicker than the average of 30.4 weeks and 68% were decided within 6 months.

The lengthiest decision that took 284.1 weeks is in Falkirk Local Authority and is described as a development of up to 550 houses, a neighbourhood centre including retail and community uses, access junctions, new access roads, provision of a nature conservation area, associated roads and infrastructure. The application was approved.

Chart 66 shows the distribution of the decision times for major business and industry applications (post 3rd August 2009) that were concluded in 2016/17.

Chart 66: Distribution of decision times for major business and industry applications (post 3rd August 2009), 2016/17 (there were no legacy cases)

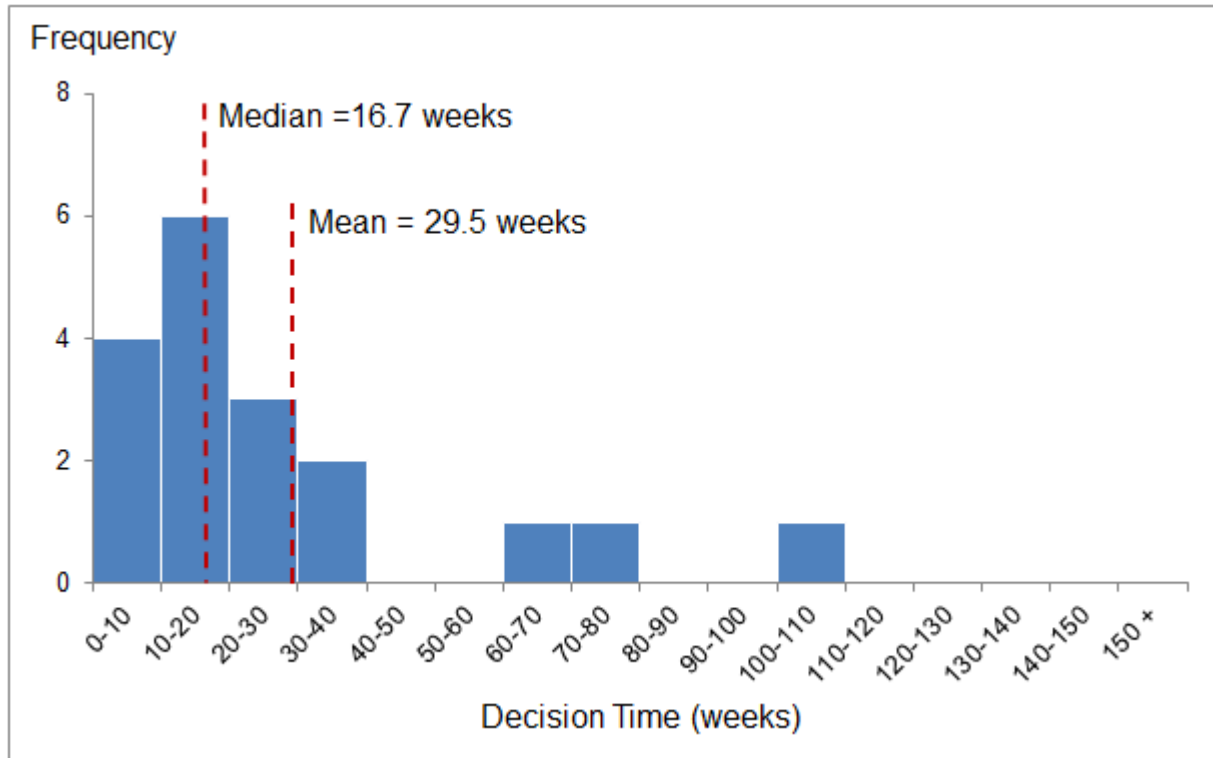


The vertical line at 33.2 weeks shows the mean (average) decision time for major business and industry developments. The second line at 21.8 weeks shows the median decision time. Decision times range from 9.1 weeks to 159.6 weeks. The average decision time has been influenced by a few lengthy decisions. Almost 77% of major business and industry applications were decided in a time quicker than the average of 33.2 weeks and more than 69% were decided within 6 months.

The lengthiest decision that took 159.6 weeks is in Aberdeenshire and is described as the change of use of land from agricultural to business, general industrial storage and distribution and formation of access. The application was approved.

Chart 67 shows the distribution of the decision times for the remaining major applications (post 3rd August 2009) that were concluded in 2016/17. These include applications for minerals, waste management and electricity generation.

Chart 67: Distribution of decision times for remaining major applications (post 3rd August 2009), 2016/17 (excludes 1 legacy case)



The vertical line at 29.5 weeks shows the mean (average) decision time for the remaining major developments. The second line at 16.7 weeks shows the median decision time. Decision times range from 5.3 weeks to 109.0 weeks. The chart shows that the average decision time has been skewed by a few lengthy decisions. Two thirds of the remaining major applications were decided in a time quicker than the average of 29.5 weeks and 61% were decided within 6 months.

The lengthiest decision that took 109.0 weeks is in Aberdeenshire and is described as continued mineral extraction and proposed extension including recycling of imported waste and site restoration. 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 2016/17 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 2016/17 Quarter 4](#)

14.6 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>

An Official Statistics publication for Scotland

Official and National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Both undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs and are produced free from any political interference.

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For general enquiries about Scottish Government statistics please contact:

Office of the Chief Statistician, Telephone: 0131 244 0442,
e-mail: statistics.enquiries@gov.scot

How to access background or source data

The data collected for this statistical bulletin

- are available in more detail through statistics.gov.uk
- 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.

Complaints and suggestions

If you are not satisfied with our service or have any comments or suggestions, please write to the Chief Statistician, 3WR, St Andrew's House, Edinburgh, EH1 3DG, Telephone: (0131) 244 0302, e-mail statistics.enquiries@gov.scot.

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ISBN 978-1-78851-117-9 (web only)

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