

Planning Performance Technical Notes

1. 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 Analytical Services 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.
2. 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 validated¹ 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. Analysis in the published statistics bulletin focuses on the current planning system, post 3rd August 2009. A few pre-3rd August 2009 legacy cases badly skew results and by separating out legacy cases the analysis gives a truer reflection of recent planning performance as it focuses on the current development management system.
3. 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:

www.scotland.gov.uk/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.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/06/3539>).

National Developments are not included in planning performance statistics.

¹ 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.

4. The **average decision time** is calculated in days from the date of validation to the date the decision is issued. Weeks are then calculated by dividing the number of days by 7.
5. Detailed excel tables of results are available on the Planning Statistics page of the Scottish Government's web site at:
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning>
Figures are also published on a planning authority (PA) basis alongside the original tables. This makes it easier to investigate performance for each PA at a glance.
6. **Planning Performance Guidance**
Detailed guidance is available to planning authorities to help with submission of quarterly data. This can be found here:
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning/DataSupplierArea>
7. **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.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning/DataSupplierArea>.
8. **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.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning/Revisions>
9. **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 new 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.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Planning/DataUses>
10. **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/publications/planning-applications-in-england-january-to-march-2014>
Wales: <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/planning/planningstats/?lang=en>
Northern Ireland: <http://www.planningni.gov.uk/index/tools/about-statistics.htm>