

17 per cent more residential permissions than a year ago

Latest planning performance by London boroughs and English districts

OVERVIEW

Between January and March 2015, district level planning authorities in England:

- received 121,100 applications for planning permission, up one per cent from 119,400 in the corresponding quarter of 2014;

- granted 83,300 out of 95,600 decisions, up seven per cent from the same quarter in 2014; this is equivalent to 87 per cent of decisions, down one percentage point from the same quarter of 2014;

- decided 75 per cent of major applications within 13 weeks or within the agreed time, down from 76 per cent a year earlier; and

- made seventeen per cent more residential decisions than in the March quarter 2014.

In the year ending March 2015, district level planning authorities:

- granted 360,200 decisions, up three per cent from the figure for the year ending March 2014; and

- granted 88 per cent of decisions, unchanged from the previous year.

- 43,800 of these were for residential developments: 5,500 for major developments and 38,300 for minors.

Of 8,500 applications reported for prior approval for permitted development rights during January to March 2015:

- prior approval was not required for 4,900, with permission being granted for 2,000 applications and refused for 1,700;

- 72 per cent of applications related to larger householder extensions, with 10 per cent relating to applications for office to residential changes and 9 per cent relating to agricultural to residential changes.

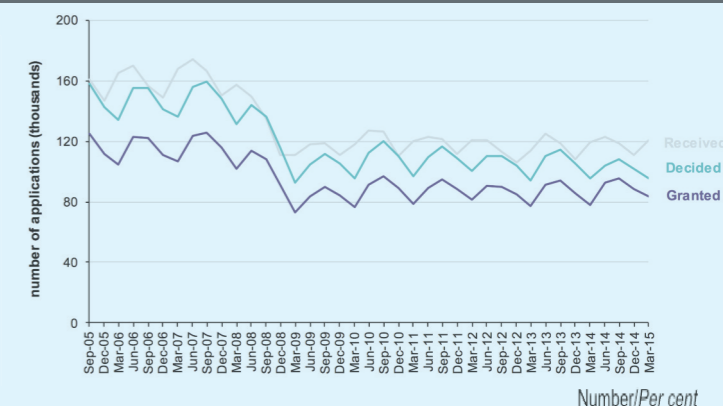
Planning applications

In January to March 2015, authorities undertaking district level planning in England received 121,100 applications for planning permission, up one per cent from the corresponding quarter in 2014. In the year ending March 2015, authorities received 473,900 planning applications, an increase of one

Planning decisions by development type, speed of decision and local planning authority: London, JANUARY - MARCH 2015

Planning authority	Major developments					Minor developments					Other developments											
	Total major decisions	Number granted	Percentage granted	Percentage within 13 weeks or agreed time	Percentage over 13 weeks or agreed time	Performance agreements, extension of time or Environmental Impact Assessments		Total minor decisions	Number granted	Percentage granted	Percentage within 8 weeks or agreed time	Percentage over 8 weeks or agreed time	Performance agreements, extension of time or Environmental Impact Assessments		Percentage of major and minor decisions granted	Total other decisions	Number granted	Percentage granted	Percentage within 8 weeks or agreed time	Percentage over 8 weeks or agreed time	Performance agreements, extension of time or Environmental Impact Assessments	
						Total decisions ¹	Decisions made within agreed time limit						Total decisions ²	Decisions made within agreed time limit							Total decisions ³	Decisions made within agreed time limit
England	3,868	3,267	84	75	25	1,527	1,265	29,991	24,830	83	70	30	3,595	2,884	83	61,703	55,238	90	82	18	3,815	3,080
London boroughs	395	342	87	69	31	181	137	5,954	4,644	78	67	33	235	205	79	10,818	8,626	80	78			
Barking and Dagenham	10	10	100	90	10	6	6	37	24	65	54	46	1	-	72	104	88	85	70			
Barnet	13	12	92	54	46	11	6	268	192	72	74	26	-	-	73	518	423	82	78			
Bexley	4	4	100	100	-	-	-	97	67	69	81	19	-	-	70	298	256	86	92			
Brent	8	8	100	63	38	5	3	205	149	73	54	46	-	-	74	351	274	78	77			
Bromley	11	8	73	9	91	1	-	175	124	71	54	46	-	-	71	499	389	78	79			
Camden	29	28	97	59	41	12	12	329	305	93	30	70	-	-	93	383	361	94	37			
City of London	4	4	100	25	75	3	1	43	43	100	79	21	-	-	100	65	64	98	75			
Croydon	6	3	50	67	33	-	-	190	97	51	62	38	18	12	51	296	214	72	76			
Ealing	22	17	77	59	41	6	5	221	178	81	90	10	53	51	80	416	335	81	96			
Enfield	15	13	87	80	20	6	6	158	107	68	72	28	30	30	69	260	192	74	85			
Greenwich	15	15	100	53	47	9	2	115	85	74	53	47	1	-	77	197	143	73	66			
Hackney	13	12	92	69	31	9	8	184	164	89	67	33	-	-	89	173	142	82	72			
Hammersmith and Fulham	7	6	86	14	86	5	-	122	99	81	84	16	-	-	81	448	380	85	94			
Haringey	5	5	100	100	-	4	4	79	57	72	84	16	16	16	74	363	298	82	74			
Harrow	9	8	89	78	22	-	-	110	77	70	80	20	1	-	71	332	222	67	88			
Havering	15	7	47	53	47	3	3	106	77	73	48	52	-	-	69	246	210	85	86			
Hillingdon	17	15	88	94	6	9	9	131	77	59	64	36	2	2	62	411	254	62	92			
Hounslow	16	13	81	69	31	1	-	94	70	74	61	39	-	-	75	295	216	73	74			
Islington	12	9	75	75	25	6	5	216	168	78	75	25	-	-	78	275	206	75	87			
Kensington and Chelsea	13	7	54	77	23	2	1	295	222	75	80	20	-	-	74	509	341	67	76			
Kingston upon Thames	11	8	73	-	100	11	-	93	68	73	60	40	5	-	73	297	210	71	78			
Lambeth	16	13	81	81	19	10	8	176	120	68	70	30	9	8	69	336	240	71	74			
Lewisham	13	12	92	100	-	10	10	220	188	85	64	36	29	29	86	185	142	77	59			
Lewisham	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	119	85	71	61	39	-	-	71	282	249	88	89			
Merton	8	7	88	88	13	-	-	122	73	60	71	29	-	-	62	145	104	72	85			
Newham	5	4	80	60	40	2	2	114	69	61	74	26	-	-	61	328	260	79	83			
Redbridge	4	3	75	75	25	-	-	267	219	82	61	39	-	-	82	508	398	78	78			
Richmond upon Thames	23	23	100	78	22	17	16	224	190	85	82	18	61	48	86	260	227	87	82			
Southwark	8	8	100	100	-	-	-	85	67	79	72	28	6	6	81	194	161	83	87			
Sutton	25	25	100	92	8	21	21	171	145	85	78	22	3	3	87	169	135	80	76			
Tower Hamlets	6	6	100	100	-	3	3	104	75	72	55	45	-	-	74	129	79	61	53			
Waltham Forest*	19	19	100	53	47	3	-	352	303	86	69	31	-	-	87	464	439	95	78			
Wandsworth	13	13	100	8	92	5	-	390	354	91	71	29	-	-	91	477	446	94	78	22	-	-
Westminster	32	32	100	75	25	23	18	778	689	89	69	31	-	-	89	1,154	1,017	88	74	26	-	-

RIGHT: Number of planning applications received, decided and granted by district level planning authorities



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SOURCE: CLG Table P131 ... Not applicable or LA did not submit Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-planning-application-statistics>. Latest update: March 2015 Next update: June 2015

>>> per cent compared to the year ending March 2014.

Planning decisions

Authorities reported 95,600 decisions on planning applications in January to March 2015, compared to 95,800 decisions in the same quarter of the previous year. In the year ending March 2015, authorities decided 409,800 planning applications, a decrease of four per cent compared to the year ending March 2014. This decrease was, however, largely due to a change in definition following a review of the statistical return, with applications that can neither be granted nor refused (e.g. for certificates of lawful development) no longer being counted as decisions with effect from 1 April 2014.

Applications granted

In January to March 2015, authorities granted 83,300 permissions, up seven per cent from the same quarter in 2014. Authorities granted 87 per cent of all decisions, excluding those which could neither be granted nor refused, one percentage point lower than in the March quarter 2014. Overall, 83 per cent of major and minor decisions were granted. (Tables P120/P131)

Over the 12 months to March 2015, 360,200 applications were granted, up three per cent from the year to March 2014. Authorities granted 88 per cent of all decisions in the year to March 2015, unchanged from the year to March 2014.

Historical context

Since 2005, the numbers of applications received, decisions made and applications granted have each followed a similar pattern. As well as the usual within-year pattern of peaks in the Summer and troughs in the Winter, there was a clear downward trend during the 2008 economic downturn, with figures remaining broadly level since then.

Looked at another way, the number of applications received in the year to March 2015 was 473,900, as stated above, up one per cent on the year to March 2014. This was still below the peak of 689,400 in 2004/05.

Speed of decisions

In January to March 2015, 75 per cent of major applications were decided within 13 weeks or within the agreed time for Planning Performance Agreements, Extensions of Time and Environmental Impact Assessments, compared with 76 per cent in the March quarter 2014. In the March quarter 2015, 70 per cent of minor applications and 82 per cent of other applications were decided within 8 weeks or the agreed time. These figures include applications involving Planning Performance Agreements, Extensions of Time and

Environmental Impact Assessments made for minor developments and some 'other' developments that were collected for the first time for the June quarter 2014, and so are not directly comparable with figures before then.

Section 1 of the Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013 amended the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to allow planning applications to be submitted directly to the Secretary of State if a local planning authority has been designated on the basis of under-performance. One of two criteria used relates to the speed of decision-making. Because deciding an application on time can include the use of a performance agreement, the calculation of the proportion of decisions made within the agreed time was changed to include planning performance agreements (PPAs) from April 2008 for major and some 'other' developments, and to also include agreed extensions of time and environmental impact assessments from April 2013. Applications since April 2014 for minor developments and for changes of use, householder developments and advertisements can now also be recorded as having included a performance agreement.

Because the most consistent reporting of agreements is for major applications, numbers of decisions on major developments made involving a performance agreement, both in absolute terms and as a percentage of all decisions on major developments. Notwithstanding these definitional changes, there has been a marked increase in the use of agreements from 2013/14: in reality this has been driven by both the additional scope for recording them and their additional use. The proportion of major decisions subject to an agreement increased to 39 per cent during the March 2015 quarter, from 6 per cent in the April to June quarter of 2013 (Table 131 above).

Residential decisions

The figures collected by the Department are numbers of planning applications submitted to local planning authorities rather than the number of units included in each application. The Department supplements this information by purchasing numbers of housing approvals from a contractor. The figures show that approval for 261,000 homes was given in the year to 31 March 2015, compared to 252,000 homes approved in the year to 31 December 2014. The number of homes granted permission during the year to 31 March 2015 was around 13 per cent higher than in the year to 31 March 2014. These figures are provided to give contextual information, and have not been desig-

RIGHT: Applications for prior approvals for permitted development rights reported by district planning authorities – England, year ending March 2015

nated as a National Statistic.

Householder developments

The number of decisions on householder developments increased by nine per cent from 41,300 decisions in the March quarter 2014 to 45,000 decisions in the corresponding quarter in 2015 when they accounted for 47 per cent of all decisions. Authorities granted 89 per cent of these applications and decided 85 per cent within 8 weeks or the agreed time.

Prior approvals for permitted developments

Following the creation of some additional permitted development right categories in May 2013 and consultation with local authorities, the Department increased the level of detailed information on prior approvals for permitted developments with effect from 1 April 2014. The results for the fourth quarter for which they have been collected (January to March 2015) show that of the 8,500 applications reported in the January to March quarter of 2015, prior approval was not required for 4,900 applications, and that permission was granted for 2,000 applications and refused for 1,700, with the difference being due to rounding. The resulted in an overall acceptance rate of 81 per cent. 72 per cent of applications (6,200) related to larger householder extensions, with 10 per cent relating to applications for office to residential changes, and 9 per cent relating to agricultural to residential changes.

The total number of applications reported during January to March 2015 decreased by two per cent from the previous quarter. Within this total, the number of refusals decreased by ten per cent, the number of granted applications increased by two per cent and the number of cases where prior approval was not required remained unchanged.

The overall acceptance rate for the year ending March 2015 was 82 per cent, with figures for the individual quarters dropping between the first and last quarters of the year, from 85 to 81 per cent. In the year ending March 2015, district planning authorities reported 36,400 applications for prior approvals for permitted developments. For 21,700 of them prior approval was not required, 8,100 were granted and 6,700 were refused.

