

# Good performance progress

English local planning authorities are continuing to improve their handling times for planning applications, according to the latest half-yearly performance checklist compiled by Communities and Local Government.

Average performance across England is up seven per cent for major applications, one per cent for minor applications and a similar figure for "other" types of applications in the year ending September 2006, compared to six months ago.

In total, some 77 per cent of local planning authorities met or exceeded the government's target

to decide 60 per cent of major applications within 13 weeks.

The latest performance figures also showed that 129 LPAs produced performance improvements with three – Ribble Valley, Isles of Scilly and Yorkshire Dales National Park – all deciding 100 per cent of major applications within the 13-week target. Also just published are the quarterly development control statistics for July to September 2006. These indicated that 82 per cent of all planning decisions were made within 8 weeks, 2 per cent points higher than for the same period last year.

Planning minister, Baroness

Andrews, urged the minority of authorities which have not yet reached the targets to make a real effort in the remaining months.

"Inefficiencies in the planning system can be damaging to the economy, as Kate Barker's report makes clear. And efficiency will be rewarded.

"Authorities that deliver on all three targets will be rewarded with a lump sum of £50,000 through the Planning Delivery Grant."

The performance returns showed that some 129 authorities were now designated as "improving" while 10 were classified as "declining".

## Planning decisions granted & decided in 8 weeks and percentage of decisions delegated (DCLG Table 7)

	Year ending 30 September 2006			July-September 2006			
	total decisions	percent granted	% in 8 weeks	total decisions	percent granted	% in 8 weeks	% delegated
<b>London Boroughs</b>							
.. incomplete data							
City of London	830	100	81	226	100	79	96
Barking and Dag#	762	80	90	221	78	91	83
Barnet	3,918	76	84	1,188	74	85	93
Bexley	2,128	76	90	564	75	92	95
Brent	2,880	72	83	872	73	82	95
Bromley	3,748	76	86	953	76	85	89
Camden	3,053	86	89	844	82	89	95
Croydon	3,390	64	82	905	57	90	95
Ealing	3,135	76	78	880	76	85	95
Enfield	3,011	69	91	763	69	94	97
Greenwich	1,998	65	89	484	63	90	95
Hackney#	1,747	63	78	468	63	82	96
Hammersmith Fulham	2,168	89	89	652	88	93	96
Haringey	1,950	62	88	551	66	85	98
Harrow	1,873	73	84	..	..	..	..
Havering#	2,401	74	96	633	73	95	93
Hillingdon	2,800	64	83	769	71	80	87
Hounslow	2,641	69	83	733	71	84	92
Islington	1,963	71	68	502	72	65	90
RBK&C	2,570	89	89	696	88	88	94
Kingston	2,060	74	91	525	75	91	89
Lambeth	2,829	69	81	801	66	80	93
Lewisham	1,972	81	77	474	83	74	94
Merton	2,013	82	89	536	76	88	96
Newham#	1,387	69	79	352	71	83	81
Redbridge	3,300	65	88	901	66	84	93
Richmond	3,521	78	82	919	80	81	91
Southwark	1,659	68	69	374	67	73	90
Sutton	1,625	78	86	440	79	83	90
Tower Hamlets#	1,014	87	76	255	85	80	87
Waltham Forest#	1,610	73	80	456	71	82	96
Wandsworth	3,371	88	85	920	89	87	86
City of Westminster	6,780	87	78	1,775	85	78	92

Source: Source: DCLG ([www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk))

# areas within a UDC but figures outside the UDC's scope

# iPiLLO!

### Risk Olympics

"It is typically British to question our ability to open the Olympics on time. Having secured the games for London, why, oh why, are we sacrificing this extraordinary opportunity to 'risk management'?" – Roger Zogolovitch in a letter to BD.

### No picture on the box

"The Thames Gateway is like a jigsaw puzzle. All these little pieces, very nice some of them, but most of it missing, and there's certainly no picture on the box." – Sir Terry Farrell at the Gateway Forum.

### Big plans set free

So far only one recommendation of Barker's review of planning has the endorsement of the Chancellor: the proposal for a national planning board to take major decisions. In his pre-budget report Gordon Brown said he would consult on the proposal. He said "Just as we made monetary policy independent of government, then financial services policy... it is time to adopt the same approach for planning."

### Development is sin

"Whom does the RTP1 represent? In the Institute's reaction to the latest Barker proposals we see yet again its dated view that development is some form of sin." – Phil Allmendinger of the University of Reading in a letter to *Planning*.

### Neanderthal males

"Architects on film are always neanderthal males feminised by the job they do and the urban, professional, middle-class life they lead, reaching crisis point when their sensitive side is shown to be wanting in the face of crisis: time for brawn to triumph over brain." – Tom Dyckhoff reviewing Minghella's *Breaking and Entering* in *The Times*.

### Swingers' rights

An appellant claimed 'breach of his human rights as a swinger' in appealing against an enforcement notice for using a Blackpool warehouse as a club. He lost.

iPiLLO!

## Decisions by type and speed of decision year ending 30 Sept 2006 / July-Sept 2006 (DCLG Table 8)

London Boroughs	Total major decisions	% within 13 weeks	Total minor decisions	% within 8 weeks	Total other decisions	% within 8 weeks	Total major decisions	% within 13 weeks	Total minor decisions	% within 8 weeks	Total other decisions	% within 8 weeks
City of London	124	73	296	87	410	82	35	74	84	83	107	81
Barking and Dag#	31	81	199	85	532	96	5	80	45	87	171	95
Barnet	77	87	756	77	3,085	87	12	83	247	81	929	87
Bexley	29	93	437	86	1,662	93	6	100	100	93	458	93
Brent	63	62	487	75	2,330	87	10	70	133	73	729	85
Bromley	113	67	870	77	2,765	91	38	58	205	78	710	90
Camden	50	84	943	86	2,060	93	6	67	267	86	571	91
Croydon	147	65	920	78	2,323	88	36	58	260	89	609	95
Ealing	74	69	464	70	2,597	82	14	86	153	76	713	88
Enfield	73	77	788	89	2,150	94	6	100	203	91	554	96
Greenwich	82	72	550	87	1,366	93	11	82	111	86	362	93
Hackney#	100	68	848	79	799	86	25	68	224	82	219	89
Hammersmith	35	77	483	83	1,650	92	8	75	145	90	499	95
Haringey	29	72	532	85	1,389	91	3	67	132	83	416	86
Harrow	32	50	393	71	1,448	89	..	..	..	..	..	..
Havering#	44	89	534	96	1,823	98	12	92	162	94	459	98
Hillingdon	96	69	549	74	2,155	88	27	63	147	71	595	86
Hounslow	70	71	490	77	2,081	86	14	64	119	79	600	86
Islington	90	61	685	66	1,188	73	14	50	180	58	308	71
RBK&C	37	81	522	87	2,011	91	11	82	129	86	556	90
Kingston	33	70	461	86	1,566	94	5	100	114	87	406	94
Lambeth	85	56	749	71	1,995	87	20	70	198	73	583	85
Lewisham	45	49	815	72	1,112	83	8	50	198	70	268	79
Merton	47	62	476	82	1,490	94	10	60	119	82	407	92
Newham#	123	67	483	74	781	87	23	65	125	79	204	91
Redbridge	126	83	789	85	2,385	91	47	85	163	80	691	89
Richmond	17	71	753	72	2,751	85	3	67	181	68	735	84
Southwark	87	54	666	66	906	77	16	38	145	71	213	79
Sutton	75	79	435	87	1,115	92	18	78	116	78	306	89
Tower Hamlets#	54	31	447	76	513	83	14	64	110	85	131	83
Waltham Forest#	34	59	629	74	947	86	8	63	188	81	260	85
Wandsworth	68	69	749	78	2,554	89	17	47	209	83	694	90
City of Westminster	68	75	2,466	73	4,246	82	15	87	705	73	1,055	82

Source: Source: DCLG ([www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk))

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\* incomplete data

## LGA annual planning conference

## Local Development Frameworks: success at the examination!

Wednesday 31 January 2007, London Call LGconnect on 020 7664 3131 or email [info@lga.gov.uk](mailto:info@lga.gov.uk) for details

- Covering experience from the first round of examinations, with workshops reviewing the experience to date and how to manage the examination for success
- The rejection of the Stafford and Lichfield core strategies sent shock waves through the ranks of officers and councillors: find out more about what happened, ask questions and have your say
- By the end of January, more Inspector's reports will have been published. We anticipate that several Development Plan Documents will have been judged to be sound, and that will provide more positive messages and lessons for delegates to consider.



## Red capitalists

"What is most troubling about campaigns such as Product Red is that they represent an accommodation with groups who think the business of capitalism is fundamentally evil. By appeasing people who regard globalisation as a process of exploitation, companies such as Gap are making the world worse for all of us. They are explicitly acknowledging that their main business – selling things that people want for a profit – is inherently immoral and needs to be expiated by an occasional show of real goodness. Rather than resisting it, they are nurturing and feeding an anti-business sentiment that will impoverish us all." – Gerard Baker in *The Times*.

## Planned ascent

Design for London under Camden's former head of planning Peter Bishop has now been established. On his appointment Bishop said "It is a real opportunity to implement the Mayor's vision and help shape the city over the next few years. DfL will work across the GLA group to help make London a better place to live."

Apparently he almost succumbed to the other passion in his life and might never have become a planner at all. "I could have been a full time rock climber and mountaineer... Climbing makes life very simple. Whatever is happening in your life, you focus on the essentials, like 'Do not fall off!', he says. Not so very different then.

## A form for saving

Launching APP 1, the new 'standard' national planning application form last month, the Government claimed it would save around £124m. Together with a more efficient electronic system, around £38m will be saved 'through enabling and encouraging businesses to submit applications electronically' and £27m will be saved by using 'more consistent criteria for planning applications'. Will readers who can show they have saved their share of this please let us know when it happens!