

The number of applications received down 10 per cent from the same quarter last year

Latest planning performance by English districts and London boroughs: planning applications in England during January to March 2026

OVERVIEW
Between January to March 2026, district level planning authorities in England:

- received 79,600 applications for planning permission, down 10% from the same quarter a year earlier;
- decided 68,400 applications for planning permission, down 4% from the same quarter a year earlier;
- granted 59,400 decisions, down 3% from the same quarter a year earlier; this is equivalent to 87% of decisions, unchanged from the same quarter a year earlier;
- decided 91% of major applications within 13 weeks or the agreed time, unchanged from the same quarter a year earlier; and decided 19% of major applications within the statutory period of 13 weeks, unchanged from the same quarter a year earlier;
- granted 6,700 residential applications, down 5% from the same quarter a year earlier;
- granted 1,300 applications for commercial developments, down 10% from the same quarter a year earlier; and
- decided 33,500 householder development applications, down 7% from the same quarter a year earlier. This accounted for 49% of all decisions, down from 51% a year earlier. In the year ending March 2026, district level planning authorities:
- granted 259,600 decisions, down 2% from the year ending March 2025; and
- granted 28,100 residential applications, down 4% from the year ending March 2025.

To view this data in more detail please see our interactive dashboard



Planning applications received
During January to March 2026, authorities undertaking district level planning in England received 79,600 applications for planning permission, down 10% from the same quarter a year earlier. In the year ending March 2026, authorities received 315,900 planning applications, down 5% from the year ending March 2025 (Live Table P134, PS1 Dashboard). The applications in these figures include applications for outline planning permission, applications for approval of reserved matters, applications for full planning permission and applications to vary or remove a planning condition.

The figures collected by the department are the total numbers of planning applications submitted to local planning authorities, and don't include a breakdown of the type of application or, in the case of residential applications, the number of units included in each application, such as the number of homes in the case of housing developments. The department supplements this information by obtaining statistics on housing applications from a contractor, Glenigan.

The Glenigan applications data is a new addition to MHCLG's Planning Application Statistics series this quarter. Data up to December 2025 has undergone quality checks by MHCLG and is published below.

Residential units - outline applications
The latest provisional figures show that 3,110 outline residential applications were made in the year to December 2025, down 3% from the 3,200 outline residential applications made in the year to December 2024. Within these applications, 206,000 units were applied for in the year to December 2025, up 54% from the 134,000 units applied for in the year to December 2024.

Residential units - detailed applications
The latest provisional figures show that 20,430 detailed residential applications were made in the year to December 2025, down 3% from the 21,030 detailed residential applications made in the year to December 2024. Within these applications, 303,000 units were applied for in the year to December 2025, up 19% from the 254,000 units applied for in the year to December 2024.

Planning decisions
Authorities reported 68,400 decisions on planning applications in January to March 2026, down 4% from the same quarter a year earlier. In the year ending March 2026, authorities decided 298,100 planning applications, down 3% from the year ending March 2025 (Live Tables P120/P133/P134, PS1/PS2 Dashboard).

Applications granted
During January to March 2026, authorities granted 59,400 decisions, down 3% from the same quarter a year earlier. This represented 87% of all decisions, unchanged from the same quarter a year earlier. In the year ending March 2026, authorities granted 259,600 decisions, down 2% from the year ending March 2025. Authorities granted 87% of all decisions, up 1 percentage point from the year ending March 2025 (Live Tables P120/P133, PS2 Dashboard).

Applications on hand
Authorities reported that they had 107,500 applications on hand as at 1 January 2026, up 2% from the same quarter a year earlier. This is 57% above the number of decisions made during the quarter. The corresponding figure for the same quarter a year earlier was 49%. Taking account of numbers of applications received, decisions made and applications withdrawn during the quarter gives a total of 114,600 applications on hand as at the end of March 2026, down 3% from the same quarter a year earlier (Live Table P133, PS1 dashboard).

Historical context
Figure 1 shows that, since about 2009-10, 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 (July to September quarter) and troughs in the Autumn and Winter (October to December and January to March quarters), there was a clear downward trend during the 2008 economic downturn, followed by a period of stability. There was a large dip in 2020 following the start of the pandemic and a subsequent recovery in early 2021, including a particular peak in applica-

Planning decisions by development type, speed of decision and local planning authority. All tables and figures can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/bderey77>

Source: DLUHC/ONS

tions received, but since the peak there has been a steep downward trend.

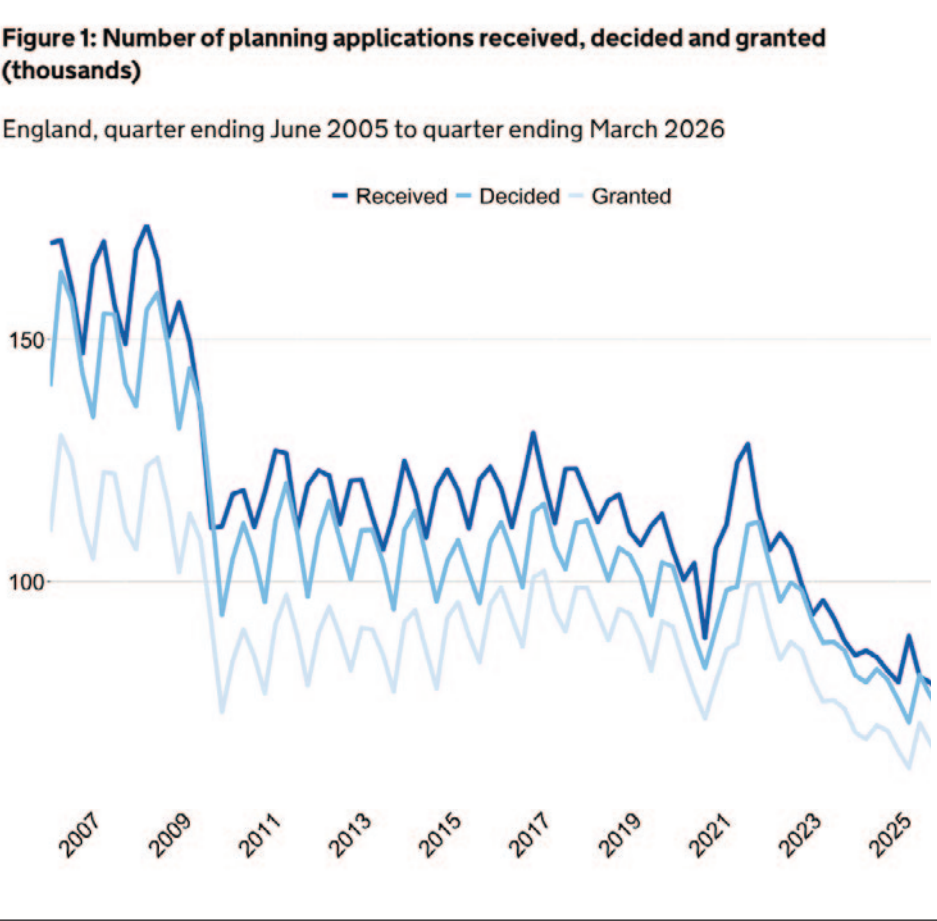
Regional breakdowns
Table 1 shows how numbers of applications received, decisions made and decisions granted varied by region. It also shows how the percentage of decisions granted varies widely by region, from 81% in London to 90% in South West (Live Table P133, PS1/PS2 Dashboard).

Speed of decisions
In January to March 2026, 91% of major applications were decided within 13 weeks or within the agreed time, unchanged from the same quarter a year earlier. 19% of major applications were decided within the statutory time period of 13 weeks, unchanged from the same quarter a year earlier.

In the same quarter, 87% of minor applications were decided within 8 weeks or within the agreed time, down 1 percentage point from the same quarter a year earlier. 38% of minor applications were decided within the statutory time period of 8 weeks, down 1 percentage point from the same quarter a year earlier.

Also in the same quarter, 90% of other applications were decided within 8 weeks or within the agreed time, down 1 percentage point from the same quarter a year earlier. 56% of other applications were decided within the statutory time period of 8 weeks, down 2 percentage points from the same quarter a year earlier.

Use of performance agreements
'Performance agreement' (PA) is an umbrella term used here to refer to Planning Performance Agreements, Extensions of Time and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs). The EIA process is undertaken to assess whether a project will have a substantial impact on the environment, with applications having an accompanying Environmental Statement^[footnote 3] (see Technical Notes for further definitions of PAs). Between January to March 2026, 43% of all planning application decisions involved a performance agreement. Major developments were more likely to involve a performance agreement compared to minor and other develop-



ments with 77% of major decisions involving a performance agreement, compared with 54% of minor decisions and 37% of other decisions (Reference Table 2, PS2 Dashboard).

Figure 4 shows, from April 2010, the numbers of decisions on major, minor and other developments made involving a performance agreement, compared with numbers without a performance agreement. Notwithstanding definition changes, there has been a marked increase in the use of agreements since early 2013 (see Technical Notes for more information). This longer upward trend has been driven by both the additional scope for recording them and their additional use (Live Table P120, PS2 Dashboard).

Performance of individual district level local planning authorities
The existing approach to measuring the performance of authorities was introduced by the Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013 and is based on assessing local planning authorities' performance on the speed and quality of their decisions on applications for major and non-major development (minor, change of use and householder developments). Where an authority is formally designated by the Secretary of State as underperforming, applicants have had the option of submitting their applications for the category or categories for which the authority has been designated

(and connected applications) directly to the Planning Inspectorate (who act on behalf of the Secretary of State) for determination. See Improving planning performance: criteria for designation for more information. Further details of designated authorities, including of applications submitted to the Planning Inspectorate, are available at Planning Applications (s62A).

Speed of decisions
The designation thresholds, below which a local planning authority is eligible for designation are:

For applications for major development: less than 60% of an authority's decisions made within the statutory determination period or such extended period as has been agreed in writing with the applicant;

For applications for non-major development: less than 70% of an authority's decisions made within the statutory determination period or such extended period as has been agreed in writing with the applicant.

Quality of decisions
The threshold for designation on applications for both major and non-major development, above which a local planning authority is at risk of designation, is 10% of an authority's total number of decisions on applications made during the assessment period being overturned at appeal.

>>> Once the figures for the relevant period have been published in Live Table P152 or P154, which identify local planning authorities are at risk of designation by exceeding the threshold, they are invited to contact departmental officials with any data corrections, and information on any exceptional circumstances applying to the authority that might be used as reasons why the Secretary of State should not designate them. The Secretary of State then takes this evidence into account when making decisions on which authorities should be designated. See Live Tables P152/P154

Ten local planning authorities are currently designated by the Secretary of State in relation to the quality of decision-making for major applications. These are:

- Cherwell District Council
 - Dacorum Borough Council
 - Epping Forest District Council
 - Hertsmere Borough Council
 - Lewes District Council
 - Malvern Hills District Council
 - Rossendale Borough Council
 - South Tyneside Council
 - Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
 - Wychavon District Council
- Lewes District Council was designated on 8th May 2024, while the rest were designated on 15 June 2026.

Residential decisions

In January to March 2026, 8,900 decisions were made on applications for residential developments[footnote 4], of which 6,700 (76%) were granted. The number of residential decisions made was down 3% from the same quarter a year earlier, with the number granted down 5% from the same quarter a year earlier. 900 major residential decisions were granted, down 2% from the same quarter a year earlier and 5,800 minor residential decisions were granted, down 5% from the same quarter a year earlier (Live Table P120A, PS2 Dashboard). In the year ending March 2026, 37,200 decisions were made on applications for residential developments, of which 28,100 (76%) were granted. The number of residential decisions made was down 6% from the previous year, with the number granted down 4% from the year ending March 2025. 3,600 major residential decisions were granted, down 3% from the previous year and 24,500 minor residential decisions were granted, down 4% from the previous year.

Residential units

The figures collected by the department are the numbers of decisions on planning applications submitted to local planning authorities, rather than the number of units included in each application, such as the number of homes in the case of housing

developments. The department supplements this information by obtaining statistics on housing permissions from a contractor, Glenigan.

The latest figures on the number of residential units permitted provided by Glenigan have been removed from this publication while MHCLG and Glenigan undertake further quality assurance. We will publish the estimate as soon as possible, once data quality has been further assured.

Commercial decisions

In January to March 2026, 1,500 decisions were made on applications for commercial developments[footnote 6], of which 1,300 (90%) were granted. The number of commercial decisions made was down 12% from the same quarter a year earlier, with the number granted down 10% from the same quarter a year earlier. 300 major commercial decisions were granted, down 22% from the same quarter a year earlier and 1,100 minor commercial decisions were granted, down 7% from the same quarter a year earlier (Live Table P120B, PS2 Dashboard).

In the year ending March 2026, 6,300 decisions were made on applications for commercial developments, of which 5,700 (90%) were granted. The number of commercial decisions made was down 8% from the previous year, with the number granted down 7% from the year ending March 2025. 1,200 major commercial decisions were granted, down 9% from the previous year and 4,500 minor commercial decisions were granted, down 6% from the previous year.

Trends in the percentage of residential and commercial decisions granted
SEE Fig 6 BELOW

Householder developments

Householder developments are those developments to a residence which require planning permission such as extensions, loft conversions and conservatories (see Definitions section of the Technical Notes).

The number of decisions made on householder developments was 33,500 in the quarter ending

March 2026, accounting for 49% of all decisions, down from 51% of all decisions made in the quarter ending March 2025. Authorities granted 91% of these applications and decided 93% within eight weeks or the agreed time (Reference Table 2, PS2 Dashboard).

In the year ending March 2026, 151,900 decisions were made on applications for householder developments, accounting for 51% of all decisions, unchanged from 51% of all decisions made in the year ending March 2025. Authorities granted 90% of these applications and decided 93% within eight weeks or the agreed time.

Permission in Principle/Technical Details consent decisions

Since April 2017, local planning authorities have had the ability to grant permission in principle (PiP) to sites which have been entered on their brownfield land registers. Where sites have a grant of permission in principle, applicants have been able to submit an application for Technical Details Consent (TDC) for development on these sites. In addition, since June 2018, it has also been possible to make an application for PiP for minor housing-led development as a separate application, independently of the brownfield register. Where a site has been granted PiP following an application, it is possible to apply for a TDC.

Figures on PiP/TDC decisions have been collected on the quarterly PS2 return from January 2020. During January to March 2026, local planning authorities reported 429 PiP (minor housing-led developments) decisions, 35 TDC (minor housing-led developments) decisions and 1 TDC (major developments) decisions. The number of PiP decisions has increased notably since 2020, when there were about 60 decisions per quarter. The figure of 429 in January to March 2026 is up 137% from the same quarter a year earlier. (Live Table PiP/TDC1, PS2 dashboard).

Permitted development rights

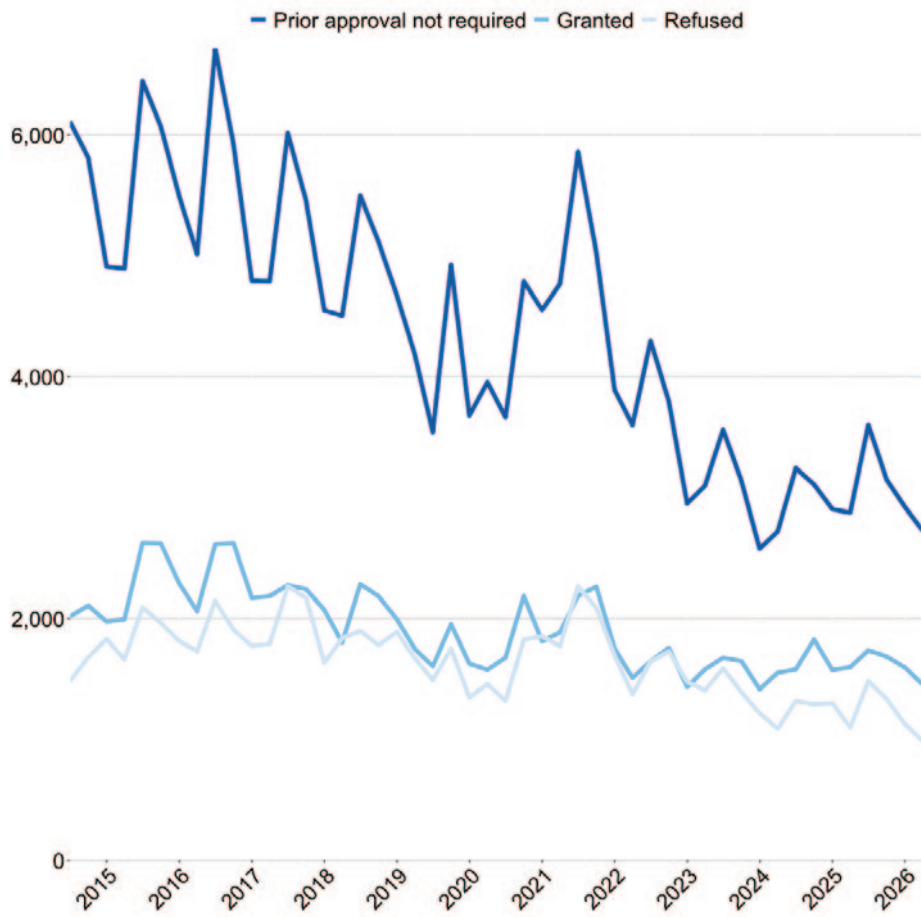
Planning permission for some types of development has been granted nationally through legislation, and the resulting rights are known as 'permitted development rights' (PDRs). For certain permitted development rights, if the legislation is complied with, developments can go ahead without the requirement to notify the local planning authority.

Hence no way of capturing this data exists and these are not accounted for in this report. In other cases, the permitted development right legislation requires an application to the local planning authority to determine whether or not prior approval is required and to determine as appropriate (see the Definitions section of the Technical Notes).

Between January to March 2026, 5,200 applications were reported, of which prior approval was not

Figure 7: Permitted development rights decided by district planning authorities

England, quarter ending June 2014 to year ending March 2026



Please note, different rights have come to into force and ceased to have effect since 2014, and therefore the annual figures are not directly comparable. See Live Table PDR1 and PDR2 for more information.

required for 2,700, permission was granted for 1,500, and 1,000 were refused. This resulted in an overall acceptance rate[footnote 7] of 81%. Large householder extension accounted for 53% of all PDR applications reported, with 32% relating to All others, 6% relating to Agricultural to residential, and 6% relating to Commercial Business and service to residential (Live Tables PDR1/PDR2).

In the quarter to March 2026, 700 permitted development right applications were made for changes to residential use, of which 500 (69%) were given the go-ahead without having to go through the full planning process.

Overall during the 48 quarters from April 2014 to March 2026, district planning authorities reported 380,300 applications for prior approvals for permitted developments. For 209,900 of them prior approval was not required, 91,700 were granted and 78,700 were refused (Live Table PDR2).

Delegated decisions

Of the 68,400 decisions made during the quarter, 65,900 (96%) were delegated to officers. This percentage has been stable since 2014, having previously increased from around 75% in 2000 (Live Table P133).

Enforcement activity

During the quarter, authorities issued 1,435 enforcement notices and served 1,411 planning contravention notices, 180 breach of condition notices, 18 stop notices and 73 temporary stop notices, while 9 enforcement injunctions were granted by the High/County Court and 0 injunctive applications were refused. In recent years, this level of activity has remained broadly proportionate to the number of planning decisions made (Live Table P127). ■