

Planning Committee

29 July 2026

Performance Report 1 April to 30 June 2026

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Regeneration Culture Environment and Transformation

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Summary

This report is presented to the Planning Committee informing Members on current planning performance and the Local Plan. The report covers the period from 1 April to 30 June 2026.

1. Recommendation

- 1.1. The Planning Committee is asked to consider and note the report which is submitted to assist the committee in monitoring planning activity.

2. Budget and policy framework

- 2.1. There are no budget and policy framework decisions arising directly from this report. This is an information item for the Planning Committee.

3. Background

- 3.1. Performance relating to the processing of planning applications is collected as National Indication 157. The NI157 targets are:
 - Major developments: to determine 60% of applications within 13 weeks;
 - Minor Developments: to determine 70% of applications within 8 weeks;
 - Other Developments: to determine 70% of applications within 8 weeks.
- 3.2. Changing legislative context, including new and proposed reforms to the Planning system, will impact on the ability to manage development and will place additional demands on Planning Service resources.
- 3.3. The Government formally launched the consultation on a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) on 16 December 2025, with the consultation period running until 10 March 2026. This consultation represents one of the most extensive NPPF overhauls in over a decade, aiming to make the planning system more delivery-focused, transparent, and aligned with national priorities such as housing supply, infrastructure provision and climate

resilience. The consultation has been assessed and a response submitted. However, the key proposals detailed in the consultation relate to:

- A permanent presumption in favour of suitably located development;
- Establishing in principle support for suitable proposals that develop land around rail stations;
- Driving urban and suburban densification;
- Securing a diverse mix of homes;
- Supporting small and medium sized sites, including a new category of medium development;
- Changes to increase upfront certainty on the contributions expected from development;
- Streamlining local standards;
- Boosting local and regional economies;
- Supporting critical and growth minerals;
- Embedding a vision led approach to transport;
- Better addressing climate change;
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment;
- Taking a more positive approach to the use of heritage assets.

The Government is expected to publish the final revised NPPF in the Summer 2026.

- 3.4. The Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025 received royal Assent in December 2025. This will bring further changes including reform to Planning Committees, the potential for Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to set their own fees for planning applications, and a reform to the compulsory purchase process. Regulations have been laid for a new plan making process, but Medway will continue to progress its draft Local Plan through examination under the current system. New secondary legislation has been introduced regarding reform of Planning Committees, which will come into effect on 31 October. Fundamentally this brings in a maximum size of Committee (13) and a national scheme of delegation.
- 3.5. Part of the Planning and Infrastructure Act is the re-introduction of regional planning in the form of Spatial Development Strategies (SDS). It is anticipated that our area will be Kent and Medway and that regulations will shortly be introduced for the setting up of Strategic Planning Boards. We have received some initial funding and a recruitment process has commenced with formal work starting on the production of the SDS in the autumn. This will require close co-operation and involvement of the districts and the first SDS will reflect existing Local Plans and the evidence which supported their production.
- 3.6. Following the publication of the draft Local Plan for representations in Summer 2025, the Council formally submitted its Plan and supporting materials for examination to the Planning Inspectorate on 18 December. Two Inspectors have been appointed to examine the plan. An examination website has been set up and a Programme Officer commissioned to work with the Inspectors. Following an initial letter from the Inspectors, the Authority has undertaken a further short stage of consultation on documents that were not part of the reg 19 consultation. A new call for ites regarding Gypsy and

Travellers has been undertaken and further work completed on Green Belt. The Inspectors have confirmed a 2-stage examination process with the first stage in September looking at issues such as the spatial strategy. A second stage of examination considering things like specific site allocations, will be held later in the year. Further details on the matters and issues that the Inspectors wish to consider are awaited and expected early August.

- 3.7. Following approval from Cabinet in March 2026, the service consulted on an update to its Developer Contributions & Obligations Guide from 23 March to 5 May 2026. This is a Supplementary Planning Document, and is a material consideration in determining planning applications, and provides for mitigating the impacts of development through strengthening infrastructure and services. The updated Developer Contribution Guide was adopted by Cabinet on 30 June 2026.

4. Performance

- 4.1. See attached charts in Appendices A to I for performance concerning the processing of planning applications, benchmarking, appeals, enforcement activity, applications for Prior Approvals for Permitted Development, number of units under construction and number completed, Tree Preservation Order applications, a breakdown of complaints and compliments received and Lead Local Flood Authority Consultee Compliance.
- 4.2. During the period 1 April to 30 June 26, the Authority received 247 planning applications; this is compared to 267 for the same period in 2025. For the year 2025/26 the Authority received 1,150 applications, this compares to 1,093 in 2024/25, 1,102 in 2023/24, 1,230 in 2022/23 and 1,586 in 2021/22.
- 4.3. Performance for applications is split between those subject to an extension of time and those not. An extension of time can be in the form of a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) or a Planning Extension Agreement (PEA).
- 4.4. During the period 1 January to 31 March 2026 100% of major applications were determined within 13 weeks or within the agreed timeframe. This is against a target of 60%.
- 4.5. Performance for minor applications determined within 8 weeks or within the agreed timeframe during the period is 100%. This is against a target of 70%.
- 4.6. Performance for other applications determined within 8 weeks or within the agreed timeframe during the period is 96.83%. This is against a target of 70%.
- 4.7. Appendix A, figure 2, 3 and 4 shows performance against target (including those not subject and those subject to an extension of time) for majors, minor and other applications for the year.
- 4.8. Comparing performance against the latest data available nationally for the period January to March 2026, where applications have been determined within the statutory timeframe, Medway has exceeded the national target and the national average for all types of applications. Where applications have been determined with an extension of time (PEA), Medway has also

exceeded the national average for all types of types of applications (see Appendix B).

- 4.9. During the period 1 April to 30 June 2026, 42 applications with Planning Extension Agreements were decided with 97.61%% being determined within the agreed extended timeframe.
- 4.10. During the period, no Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) were completed but a number have been agreed in principle and are due to be completed during quarter 2.
- 4.11. Pressure on officer resources has been carefully managed in order to meet national performance targets. This pressure continues and with the added pressure of annual leave and vacancies, the workload will need to be carefully managed if performance is to continue to be maintained.
- 4.12. A number of appointments have been made to vacant posts.
- 4.13. The service continues to use a variety of consultants during the interim period, covering consideration of Tree Preservation Order (TPO) applications and planning applications. Where possible the cost of the use of consultants for planning applications is covered through PPAs.
- 4.14. As part of the reform of the planning system, the Government is focusing on planning committee decisions, with the Planning Inspectorate being asked to report to Government cases where a successful appeal is made against a planning committee decision contrary to the Officer recommendation. The overturning of a recommendation made by a professional officer should be rare and infrequent. The Government have reminded the Inspectorate that where it cannot find reasonable grounds for the committee having overturned the officer's recommendation, it should consider awarding costs to the appellant.
- 4.15. Following consultation undertaken earlier in 2024, the Government has halved the assessment period for its 'special measures' speed of decision-making from 24 to 12 months to allow earlier identification of poor performing authorities so that action can be taken sooner. However, it has dropped plans to exclude agreed time extensions from the calculation.

Authorities that decide fewer than 60% of major applications within the statutory deadline of 13 weeks or 70% of non-major applications within the eight week deadline could face sanctions.

For quality of decision-making assessment, any authority that has more than 10% of either major or non-major applications overturned at appeal over a specified two year period is at risk of designation. The assessment period for quality of decision-making continues to be 24 months as it is considered the number of relevant cases is lower than for the speed of decision-making and if measured over 12 months would represent too few cases to provide an accurate measure of performance.

The quality of decisions is reviewed by Government and the threshold for designation on applications for both major and non-major development is

10% of an authority's total number of decisions being allowed on appeal. The most up-to-date Government data, which is for the 24 months to the end of June 2025, shows the number of decisions overturned at appeal for major applications is 1.1% and 0.7% for non-major applications.

- 4.16. The percentage of appeals allowed during the period 1 April to 31 March 2026 is 33.33%. A total of nine appeal decisions were received during the period, eight were delegated decisions, one was a Committee decision which overturned the officer recommendation and one related to enforcement. Six of these appeals were dismissed. Three appeals were allowed, one with costs. (See Appendix C).
- 4.17. Government stats for applications for prior approvals for permitted developments by local planning authorities are reported in Appendix D.
- 4.18. The validation of tree preservation order applications is undertaken by the Planning Service, but the administration of tree enquiries and the making of new TPO's is undertaken by the Administration Hub. The number of TPO applications received and performance against target time is reported in Appendix G.
- 4.19. During the period 1 April to 30 June 2026 no new Tree Preservation Orders were made. Three new Tree Preservation Orders are under consideration.
- 4.20. The Four Elms Tree Planting project was a successful example of partnership working between the Planning Service Tree Team, Councillors, the Parish Council, Kent County Council (KCC), local residents and delivery partners. External grant funding was secured, enabling extensive tree planting to be delivered alongside high levels of community participation. The project has enhanced local green infrastructure, supported biodiversity and climate resilience, and strengthened community stewardship of green spaces, with the scheme widely recognised as a positive and effective outcome. The team have also been working with High Halstow Parish Council regarding tree planting that has been equally successful.
- 4.21. Medway Council in its remit as Lead Local Flood Authority was made a statutory consultee in respect of surface water for major development on 15 April 2015. Statutory consultees have a duty to respond to statutory consultations within 21 days in accordance with Article 22 of the Development Management Order. The 21-day period does not begin until the statutory consultee in question has such information to enable a substantive response.
- 4.22. The Lead Local Flood Authority also receives consultations where relevant for some minor developments, change of use applications, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping and Screening, pre-application consultations, and variation of condition applications. An internal target of 80% responses within the timeframes has been set for all consultations. There are no nationally set applicable external targets. Statutory Consultee compliance results are reported in Appendix H.
- 4.23. ISO9001:2015 external surveillance audit took place on May and a positive recommendation for continued certification was made with no non-

conformities or opportunities for improvements identified. The next assessment is scheduled for November 2026.

- 4.24. The Government has produced a Planning Performance Dashboard that brings together performance data for individual local planning authorities for speed of decision-making. The table provides data on the percentage of applications determined within statutory timeframes and the use of Extension of Time agreements. The data is for major, non-major and householder applications and will be updated every quarter. Medway is performing well when compared against other Kent planning authorities (see Appendix B, figure 4).
- 4.25. The planning service has received further funding from Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) to continue to develop the digital planning service and remain one of the leading authorities within the Country in this area, with key members of staff presenting at conferences all over the Country.

5. Advice and analysis

- 5.1. This report is submitted for information and enables Members to monitor performance.

6. Risk management

- 6.1. The risk register for the service rates the risk against service vulnerability, triggers, consequence or risk and mitigation.
- 6.2. Performance is regularly monitored to ensure that the Council's Development Management function meets its monthly, quarterly and annual targets. In addition, comparisons are undertaken with all other authorities to assess performance against the national average.
- 6.3. Monitoring of all appeal decisions is undertaken to ensure that the Council's decisions are being defended robustly and that appropriate and defensible decisions are being made by Committee and under delegated powers. The lack of any monitoring could lead to more decisions going contrary to the Council decisions resulting in poorer quality development and also costs being awarded against the Council.
- 6.4. Within the Enforcement team measures and procedures are in place to ensure that appropriate enforcement action will be taken where necessary and that decisions taken are defensible to challenge.
- 6.5. The service has achieved accreditation to ISO 9001:2015 for its processes, which ensures a quality and consistency of decision making that enables the majority of challenges/complaints against decisions not to be upheld. Where complaints are justified then the reasons for that are reviewed and appropriate action/changes are made.
- 6.6. In negotiating Planning Performance Agreements, the Chief Planning Officer, Development Manager and Principal Planners will try to negotiate backfilling

payments with developers, which enable the developer to get an enhanced service and also enable Medway Council to use the payments to bring in additional staff/consultants to deal with the greater workload demands or cases of a specialist nature.

7. Consultation

- 7.1. The Council are looking at options to increase the number of suitable sites for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople and are currently out to consult for a call for sites running from 8 June to 20 July 2026.
- 7.2. Following approval from Cabinet in March 2026, the service consulted on an update to its Developer Contributions and Obligations Guide from 23 March to 5 May 2026. The updated Developer Contribution Guide was adopted by the Council in June 2026.
- 7.3. Liaison with major house builders within Medway and the Planning Service continues to assist them to meet commitments. This has resulted in the negotiation of payment plans to assist developers to meet their S106 developer contributions. During the period 1 April to 30 June 2026 £261,083.18 has been received via S106 contributions and £47,971.60 has been received for Habitat Regulations Agreements. This makes a total of £309,054.78. The Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) was published in December 2025, which covers the financial year 2024/2025. The IFS includes details of all Section 106 contributions received, expenditure of contributions and proposals for future infrastructure provision to be funded by Section 106 contributions.
- 7.4. Medway Council continues to meet with developers to work with them to ensure developments with planning permission start on site and developments continue. This includes considering appropriate amendments to developments and viability assessments.
- 7.5. Government published a revised Standard Method for calculating Local Housing need in April 2025. The figure for Medway is 1,636 homes a year. This is a slight increase on the previous figure of 1,594 homes a year and is a reflection of changes in affordability.
- 7.6. An updated Housing Delivery Test Action Plan (HDTAP) was approved by Cabinet and published in June 2025. This sets out the Council's work in promoting housebuilding in Medway. The latest Housing Delivery Test results were published in December 2024. Medway scored 72% of delivery compared with the defined housing requirement. The latest HDT results have not yet been published. The HDTAP will be reviewed and updated within six months of the latest published results, as set out in the NPPG.
- 7.7. The NPPF requires all authorities with a delivery of less than 95% to produce an action plan, those with less than 85% delivery to apply a buffer of 20% on the 5 year local housing need figure and those with a delivery of less than 75% have to apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development. As Medway was under 75% based on last year's HDT, Medway has to apply a buffer of 20%, produce an action plan and has the presumption in favour of sustainable development applied.

- 7.8. The Authority Monitoring Report Vol 1 (AMR) and Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) was presented to Cabinet in December 2025 and has been published. The AMR concerns monitoring information prepared by the Planning Service to meet statutory requirements for publishing data on development and infrastructure. The IFS sets out details of funding agreed, received and spent through developer contributions, and proposed spend on infrastructure.

The AMR sets out details of the delivery of 634 new homes in Medway during 2024/25, which is 1,002 dwellings below the annual requirement of 1,636. This figure is much lower than the high levels completed over the past few years, a fall which is seen regionally and nationally.

Details of housing completions are detailed in Appendix E.

- 7.9. Recognising the important role that Small/Medium Enterprises (SME's) can play in helping Medway meet its housing needs, Medway facilitated the setting up of a North Kent SME Forum, which is chaired by an SME (at present Paul Henry of Esquire Developments). This should help to build stronger partnership working and support SME's to compliment the delivery of homes from the volume house builders. The Chief Planning Officers of Medway and other North Kent Local Planning Authorities (LPA's) are invited to attend every other meeting.
- 7.10. The annual forum with major developers has been organised to take place on 22 July 2026 at the Rochester Corn Exchange.

8. Climate change implications

- 8.1. Planning officers are members of a technical group supported by the Planning Advisory Service considering best practice in planning for climate change.
- 8.2. Representatives of the Planning team attend the Climate Change Board meetings and are on the Officer Climate Change Steering group to bring forward an action plan to deal with climate change.
- 8.3. Planning officers are supporting the commissioning of a heat network study.
- 8.4. Considerations of climate change are being reflected in the draft local plan policies and development allocations.
- 8.5. All planning applications for new development must have a section on Climate Change and Energy efficiency. Validation requirements have been changed so that all applications for new development are required to include information on climate change and energy efficiency.
- 8.6. Planning policy do monitor Ultra Low Emission Vehicle Licencing numbers. This has risen steadily over the past 5 years and is now standing at 3.31% of all licensed vehicles in Medway.

- 8.7. In February 2024, the International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) announced amendments to Clauses 4.1 and 4.2 of the management system for ISO 9001:2015. The organisation now has to determine whether climate change is a relevant issue and whether relevant interested parties can have requirements related to climate change. The service satisfied this clause during its inspection in May 2026.

9. Financial implications

- 9.1. Development Management procedures are constantly being reviewed to reflect new ways of working.
- 9.2. Planning income during the period January to March is £197,205.00. Total income for the year 2025/26 is £1,615,865. This compares to a total income for the year 2024/25 of £1,476,223.50, 2023/24 of £1,027,254.50 and 2022/23 of £1,075,818. See Appendix A, Figure 6.
- 9.3. Fees and charges increased on 1 April 2026.
- 9.4. If the Local Planning Authority is designated as non-performing then applicants would have the choice of submitting applications to the Planning Inspectorate, which would include the fee. This would not only take control away from the LPA but would reduce income.
- 9.5. Changing legislative context, and signals of further reforms and flexibilities, may impact on ability to manage development and place additional demands on Planning Service resources. All changes and their implications are reviewed by the service with appropriate action taken.

10. Legal implications

- 10.1. There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

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Appendices

- A) Applications
- B) Benchmarking
- C) Appeals
- D) Applications for Prior Approvals for Permitted Development
- E) Number of Units Under Construction
- F) Enforcement
- G) Tree Preservation Order Applications
- H) Lead Local Flood Authority Consultation Compliance
- I) Complaints and Compliments

Background papers

General Development Control Return PS1

General Development Control Return PS2

MHCLG Live tables on planning applications statistics

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-planning-application-statistics>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants>

MHCLG Planning Performance Dashboard

https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fassets.publishing.service.gov.uk%2Fmedia%2F67da9b02b1857deda3da01ea%2FPlanning_Performance_Dashboard_Table_Final.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK

Appendix A : Applications

Figure 1 ***Number of applications received and determined 2024/25 to June 2026***

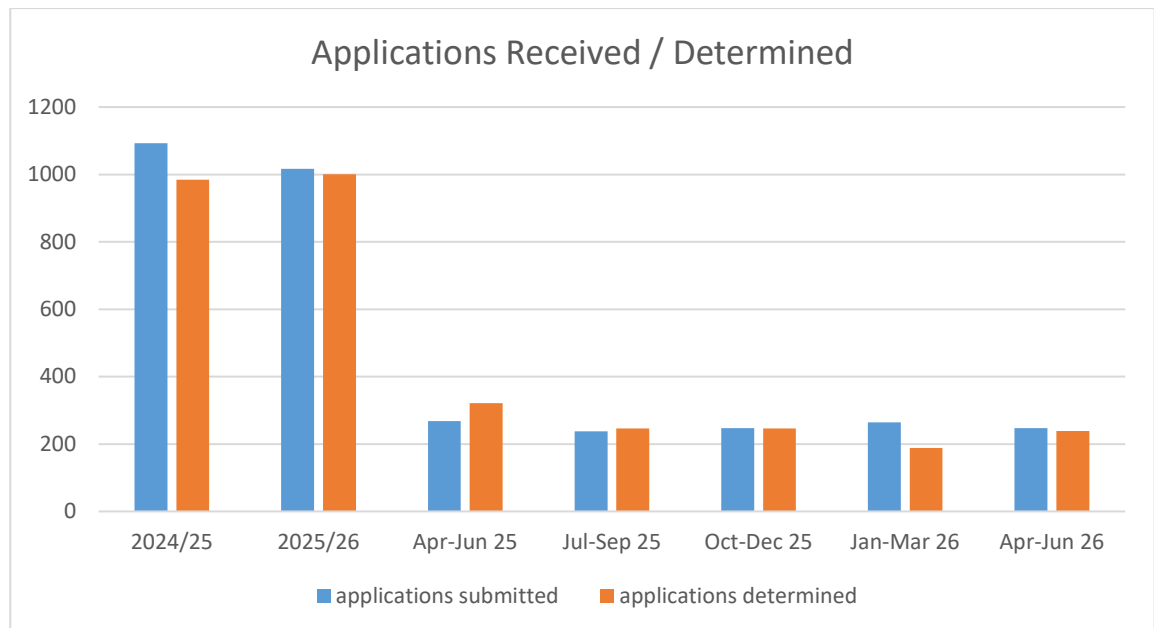


Figure 2 **Percentage of “Major” applications determined against performance target July 2025 to June 2026**

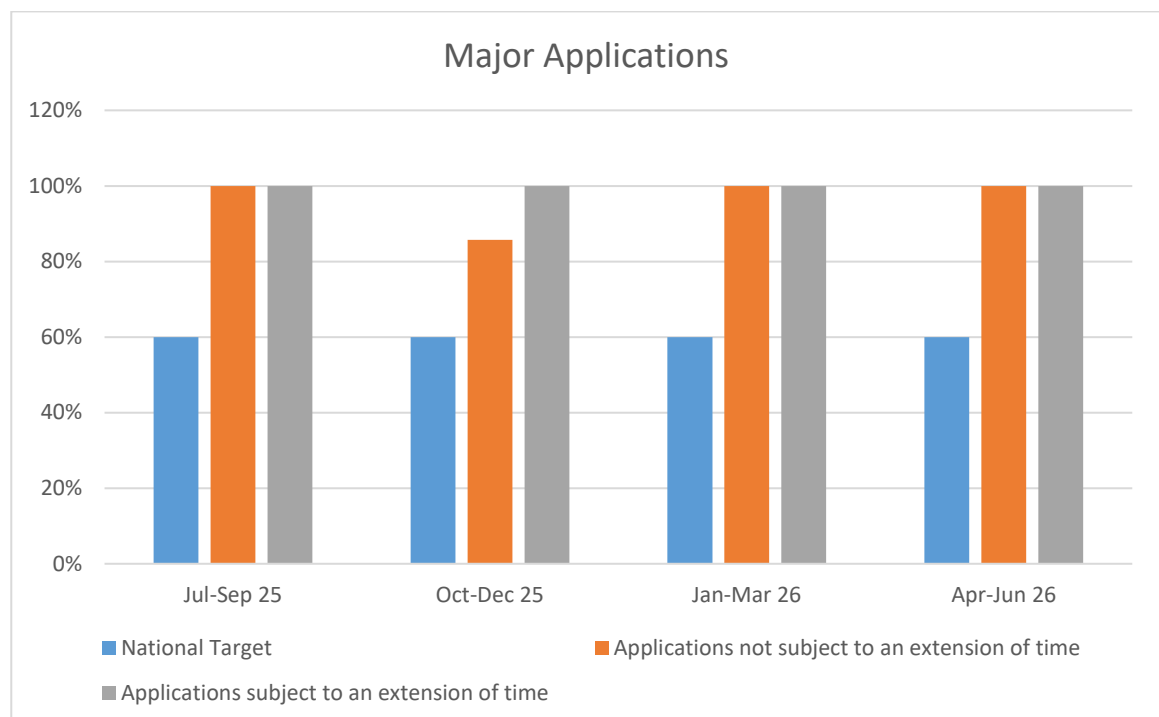


Figure 3 **Percentage of “Minor” applications determined against performance target July 2025 to June 2026**

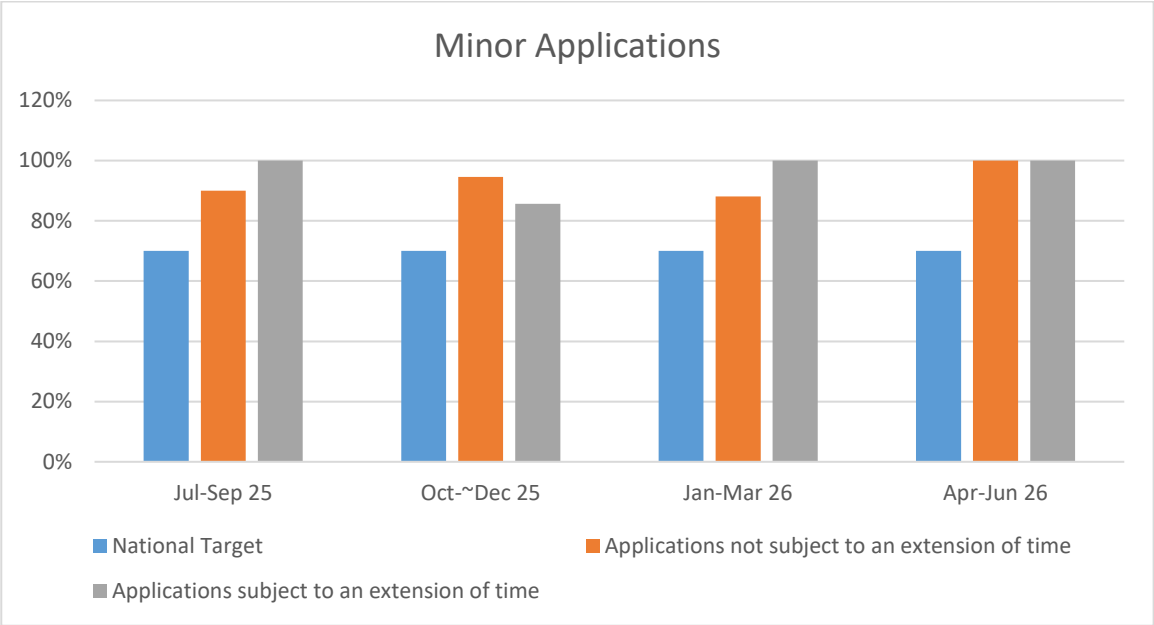


Figure 4 **Percentage of “Other” applications determined against performance target July 2025 to June 2026**

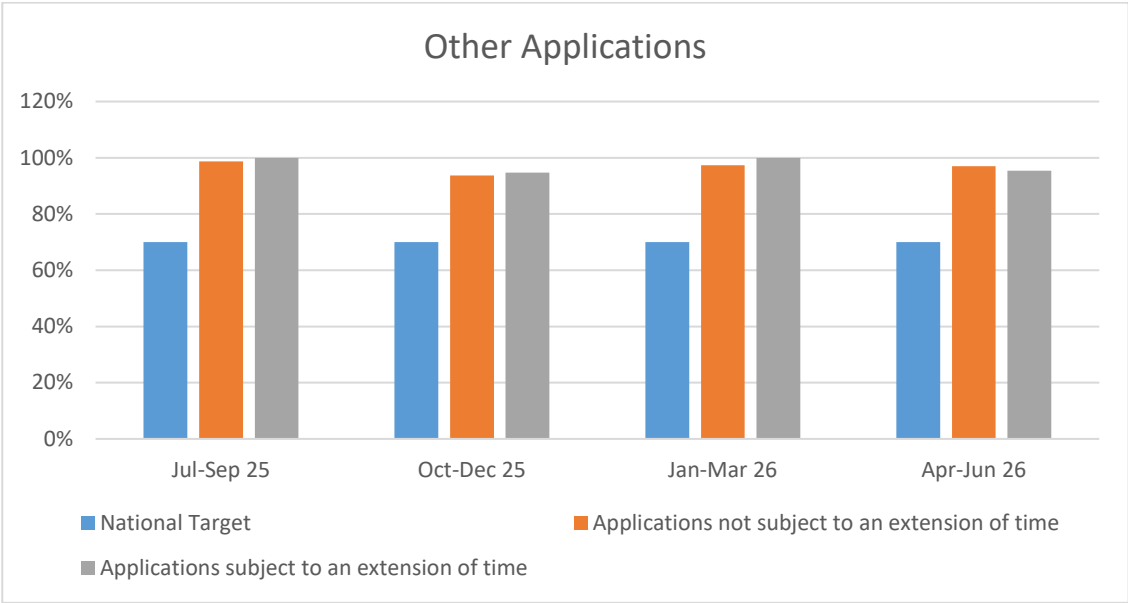


Figure 5 **Percentage of decisions on time for the period April to June 2026, including conditions, non-material amendments, Pre-Application, Screening and Trees**

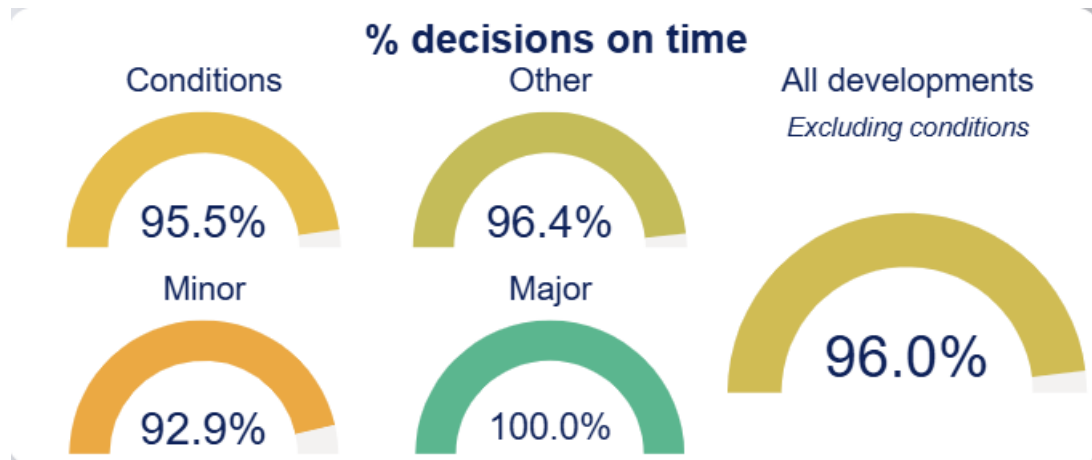
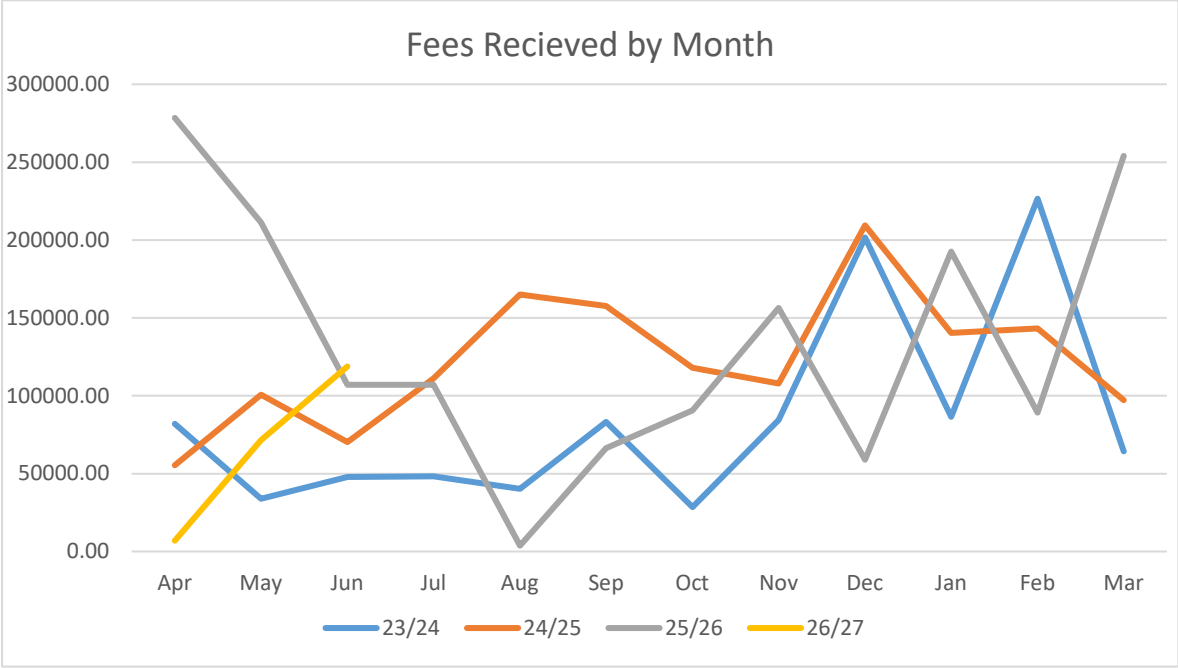


Figure 6 Planning application fees received for the year 2026/27, 2025/26, 2024/25 and 2023/24



Appendix B : Benchmarking

Figure 1 Planning applications determined within the statutory timeframe

Government produced statistics and league tables compares performance to the national average. The chart below compares Medway's performance with the latest data available for other local planning authorities for the period 1 January to 31 March 2026.

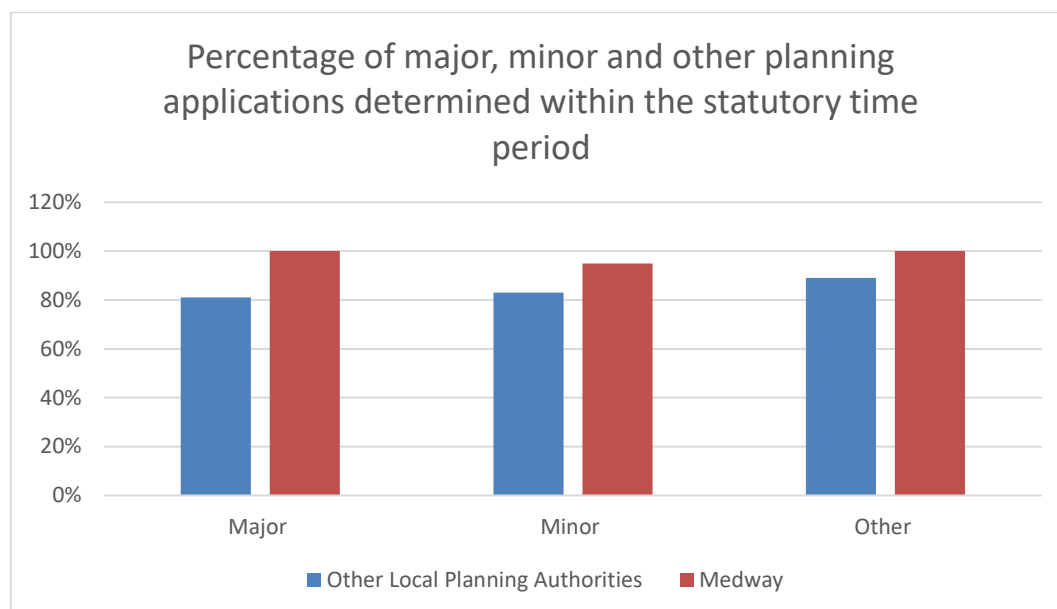


Figure 2 Applications within the agreed Planning Extension Agreement

Government produced statistics and league tables compares performance to the national average. The chart below compares the performance with the latest data available for other local authorities for applications with a Planning Extension Agreement for the period 1 January to 31 March 2026

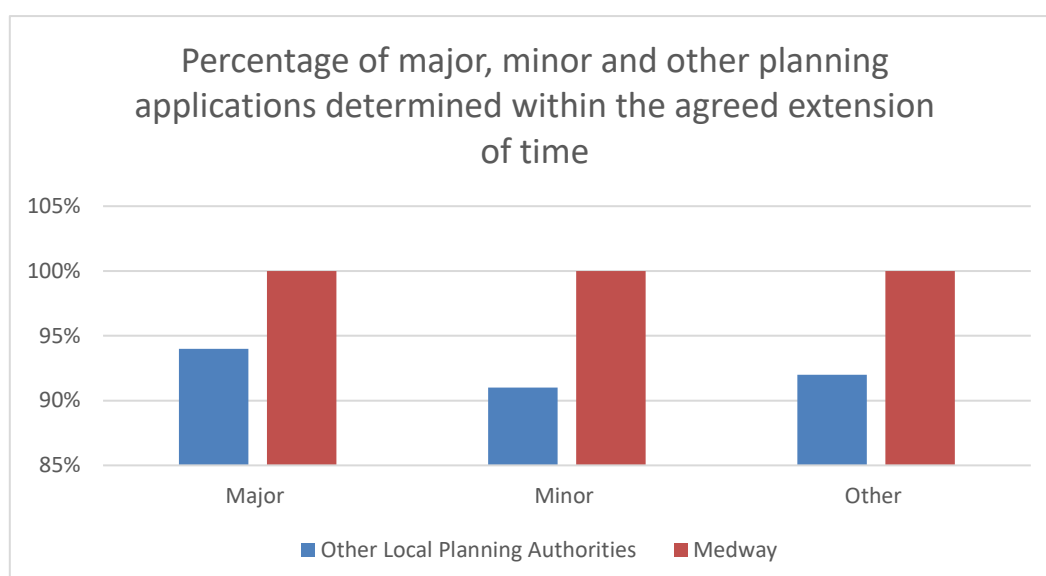


Figure 3 Total planning applications decided in time

Government produced statistics and league tables compares performance to the national average. The chart below compares performance with the latest data available for other local authorities for the total percentage of applications determined within the statutory timeframe and/or the agreed time for the period 1 January to 31 March 2026.

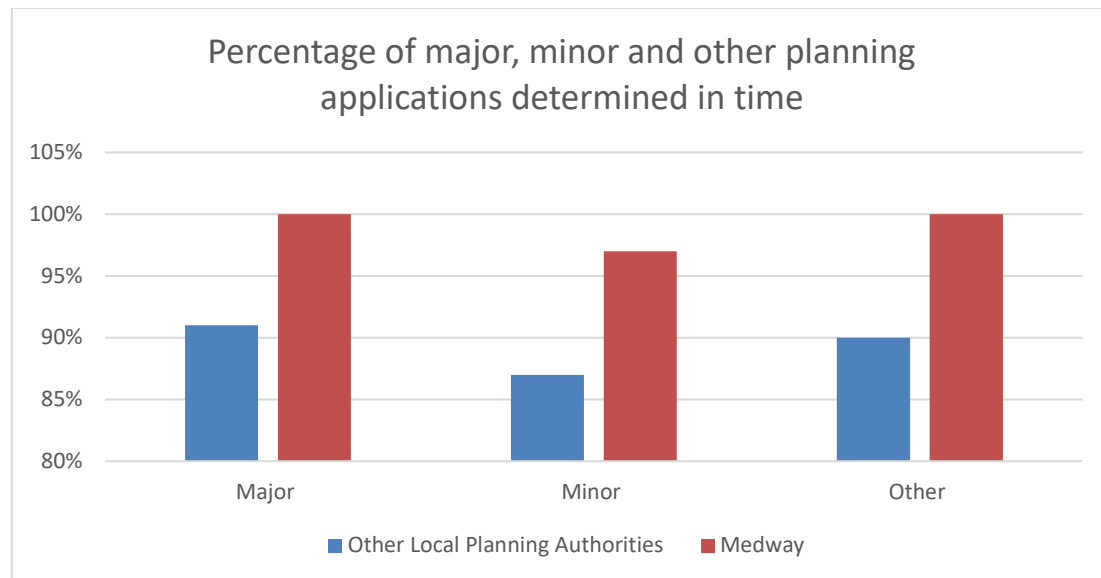


Figure 4 Medway performance compared with other Kent Planning Authorities for the year ending March 2026

Local Planning Authority	Percentage of decisions granted	% with an Extension of Time	Major dev % decided within 13wks	Non-major devt % decided within 8 wks	Householder devt % decided within 8 wks
Medway	91%	18%	31%	82%	94%
Ashford	88%	40%	32%	61%	75%
Canterbury	95%	44%	3%	37%	43%
Dartford	79%	33%	48%	64%	73%
Dover	88%	31%	14%	67%	83%
Folkestone and Hythe	82%	12%	33%	89%	96%
Gravesham	75%	36%	21%	63%	72%
Maidstone	84%	29%	40%	69%	81%
Sevenoaks	87%	34%	23%	62%	72%
Swale	89%	70%	23%	27%	37%
Thanet	91%	45%	13%	51%	62%
Tonbridge and Malling	95%	54%	26%	41%	49%
Tunbridge Wells	93%	25%	55%	75%	84%

Appendix C : Appeals

Figure 1 **Number of appeal decisions received from July 2025 to June 2026**

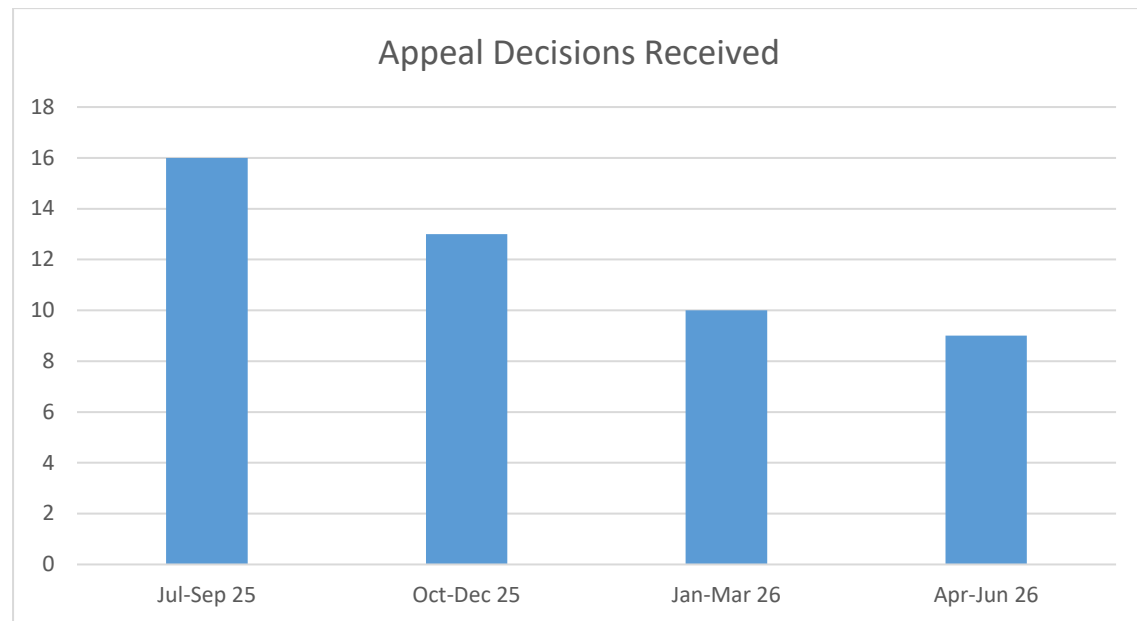
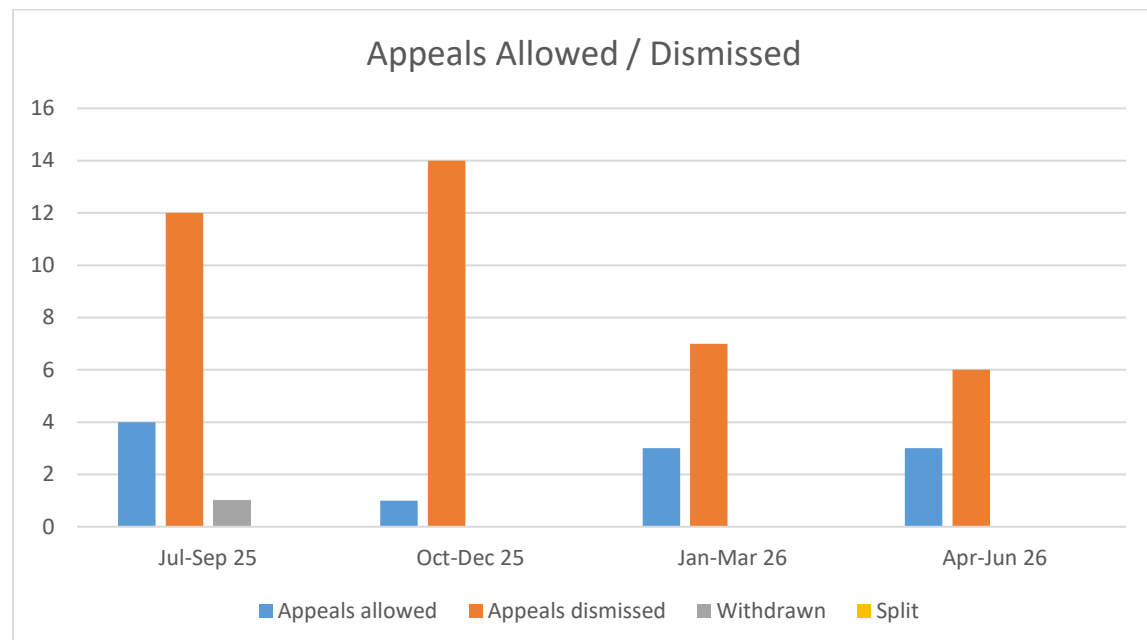
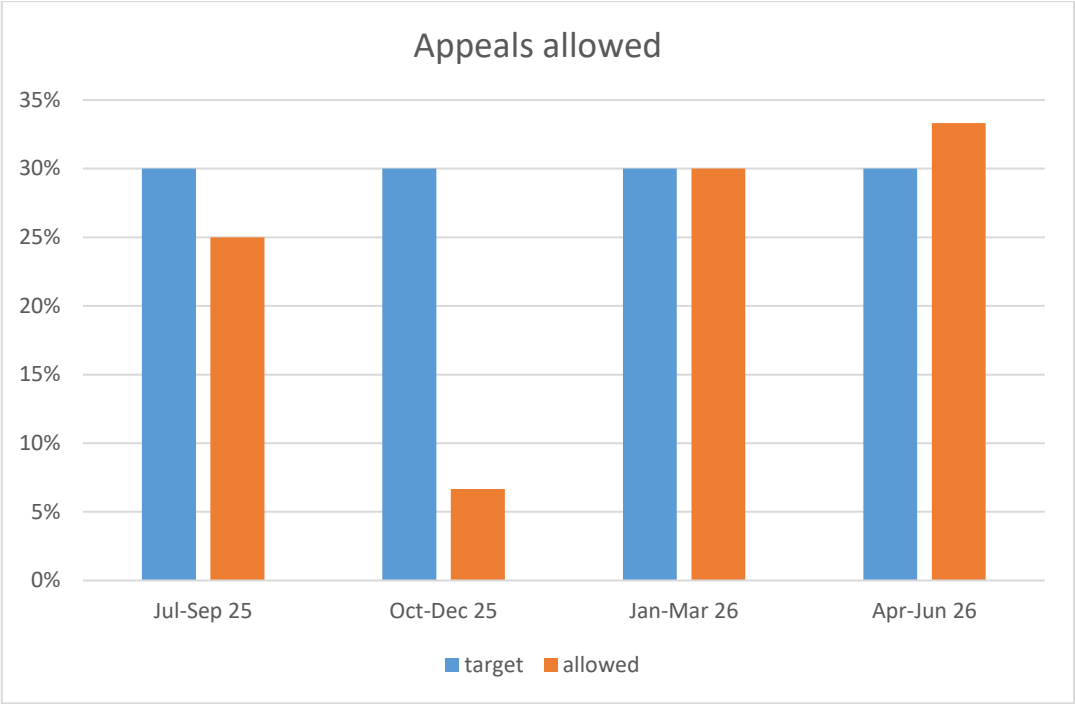


Figure 2 **Number of Appeals allowed / dismissed from July 2025 to June 2026**

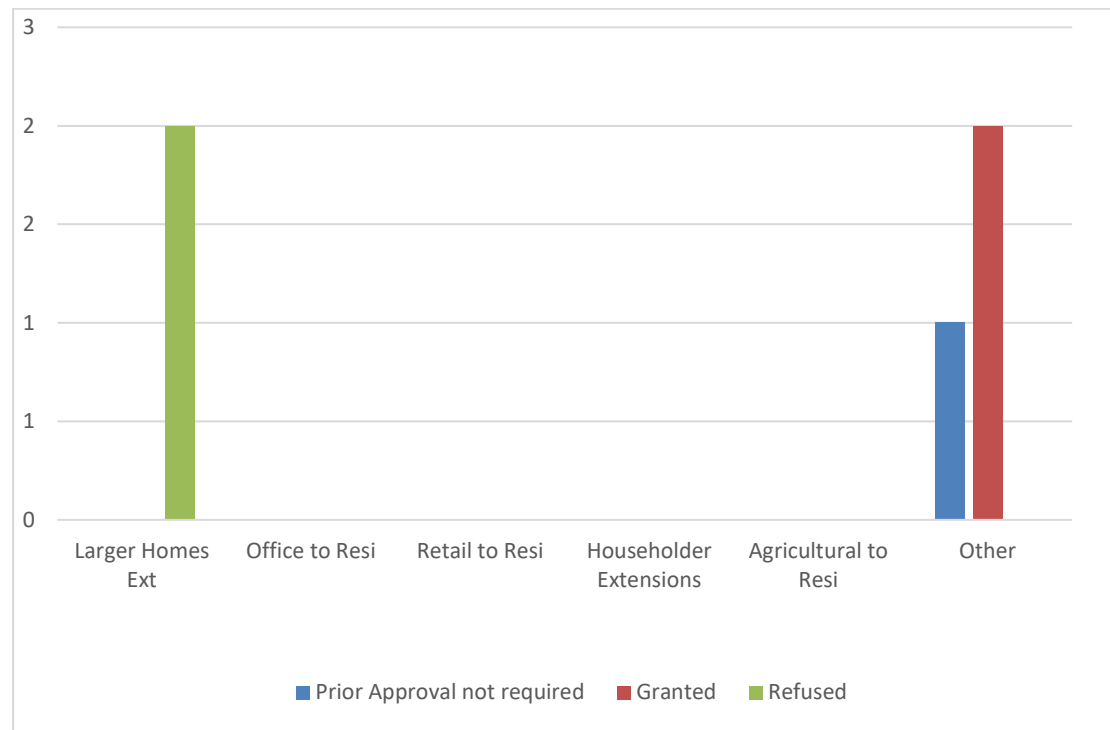


**Figure 3 Percentage of appeals allowed against target of 30%
from July 2025 to April 2026**



Appendix D : Applications for Prior Approvals for Permitted Developments

Figure 1 Number of prior approvals for permitted developments for the period 1 April to 30 June 2026



Appendix E : Number of Units under Construction

Figure 1

Number of units under construction

Year	No of units under construction as at 31 March (net)
2017	805
2018	1202
2019	1486
2020	1629
2021	1925
2022	1752
2023	2,061
2024	1,328
2025	1,382

Figure 2

Number of units completed

	Year 2020/21	Year 2021/22	Year 2022/23	Year 2023/24	Year 2024/25
Completions	1082	1102	950	1300	634
Requirement	1586	1675	1667	1685	1636
Surplus/Deficit	-504	-573	-717	-358	-1,002

Figure 3

Housing completions comparison with other authorities in Kent

This data includes mobile and temporary dwellings (such as houseboats) so varies from the data published in the AMR

Authority	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25 <i>Provisional</i>
Ashford	1,144	627	1,001	471	604
Canterbury	319	692	644	660	1,235
Dartford	553	540	738	637	817
Dover	411	625	543	718	633
Gravesham	250	421	419	293	546
Maidstone	1,446	1,627	1,064	1,066	654
Medway	1,087	1,103	960	1,305	647
Sevenoaks	260	267	261	114	146
Folkestone and Hythe	478	454	454	373	326
Swale	892	989	818	757	610
Thanet	596	548	617	844	848
Tonbridge and Malling	380	467	492	377	689
Tunbridge Wells	533	518	636	611	616

Appendix F : Enforcement

Figure 1 **Number of enforcement notices served and prosecutions from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026**

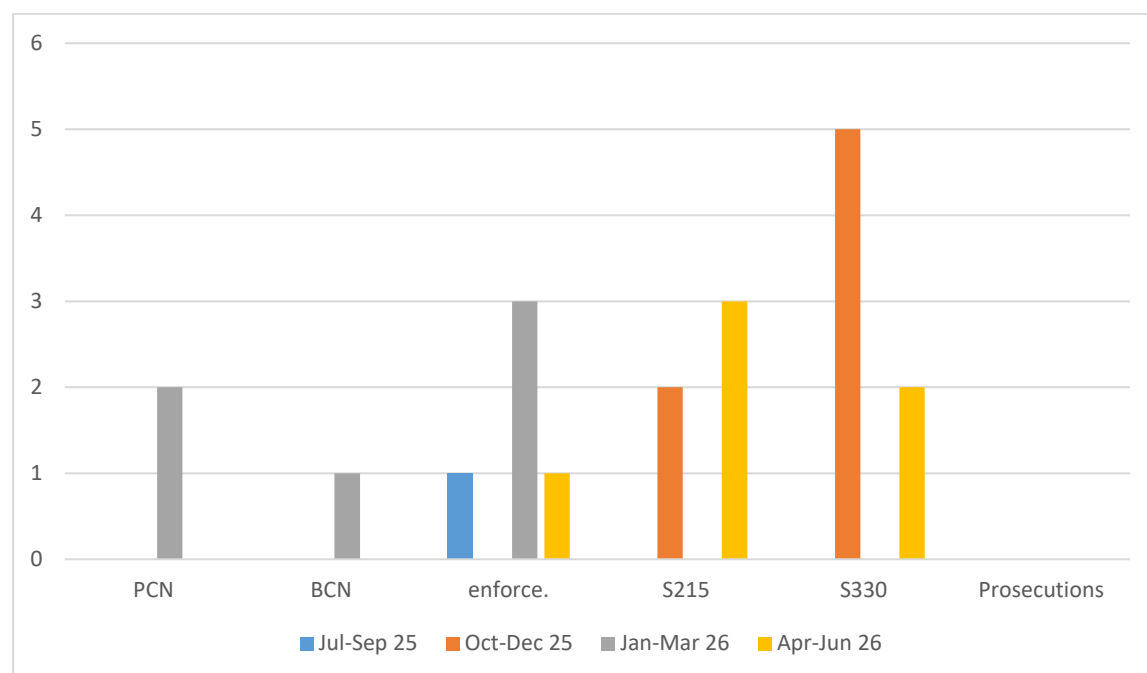
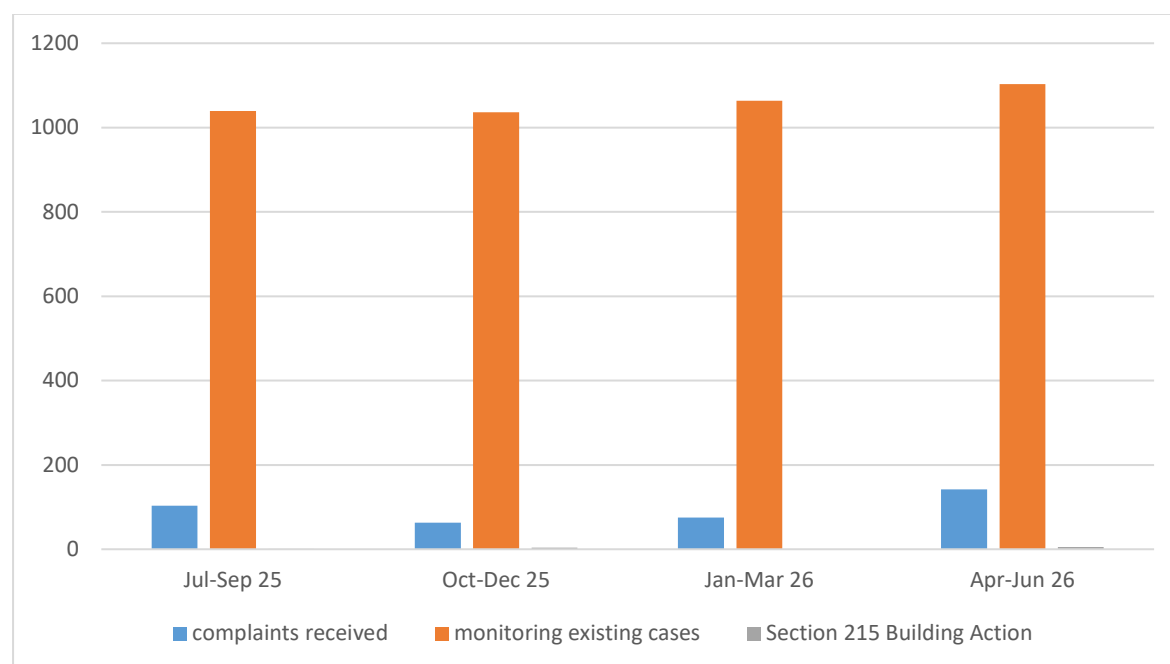


Figure 2 **Number of enforcement related complaints and activities from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026**



Appendix G : Tree Preservation Order Applications

Figure 1 TPO applications received from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026

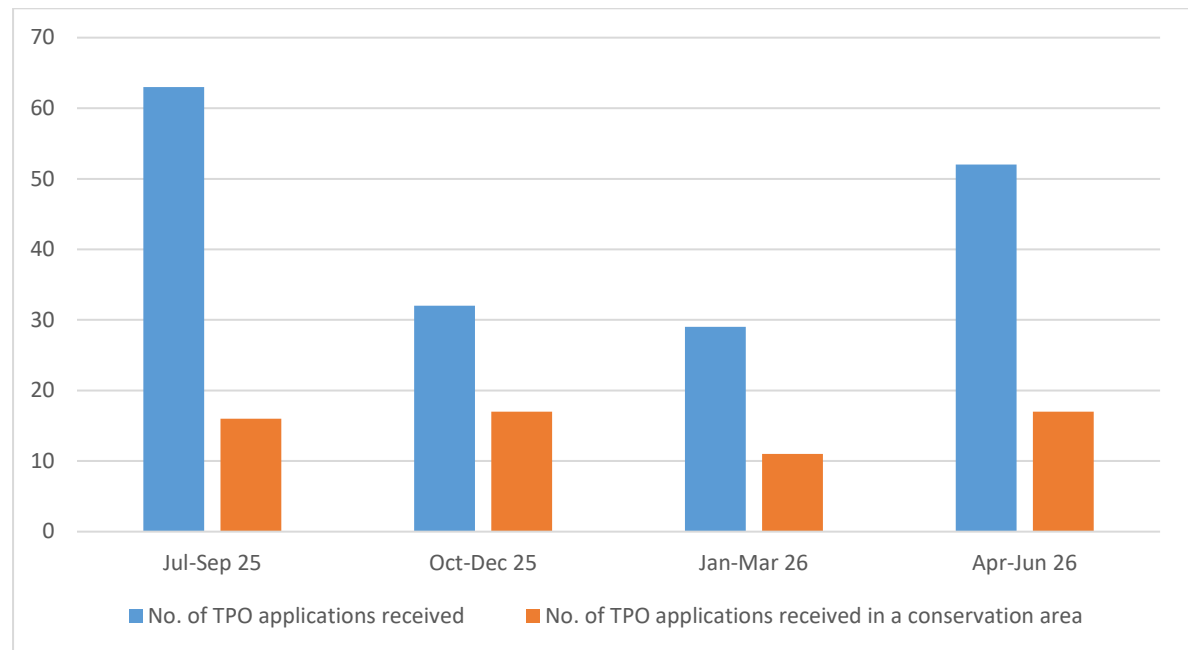
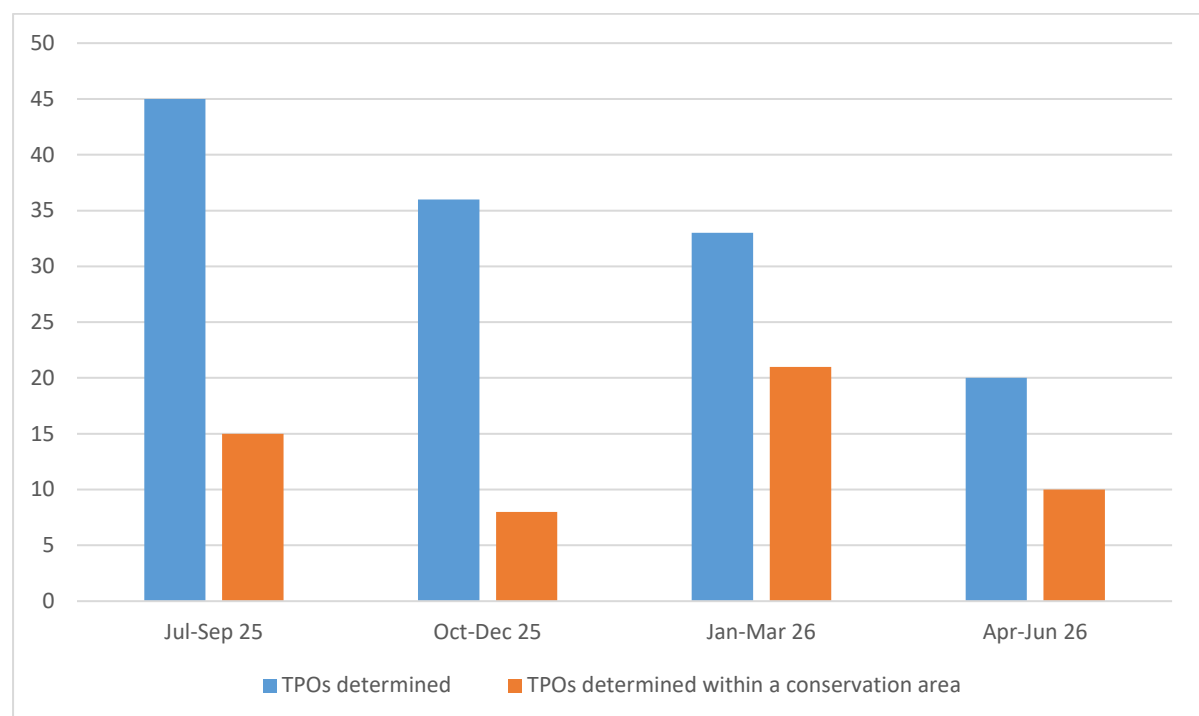
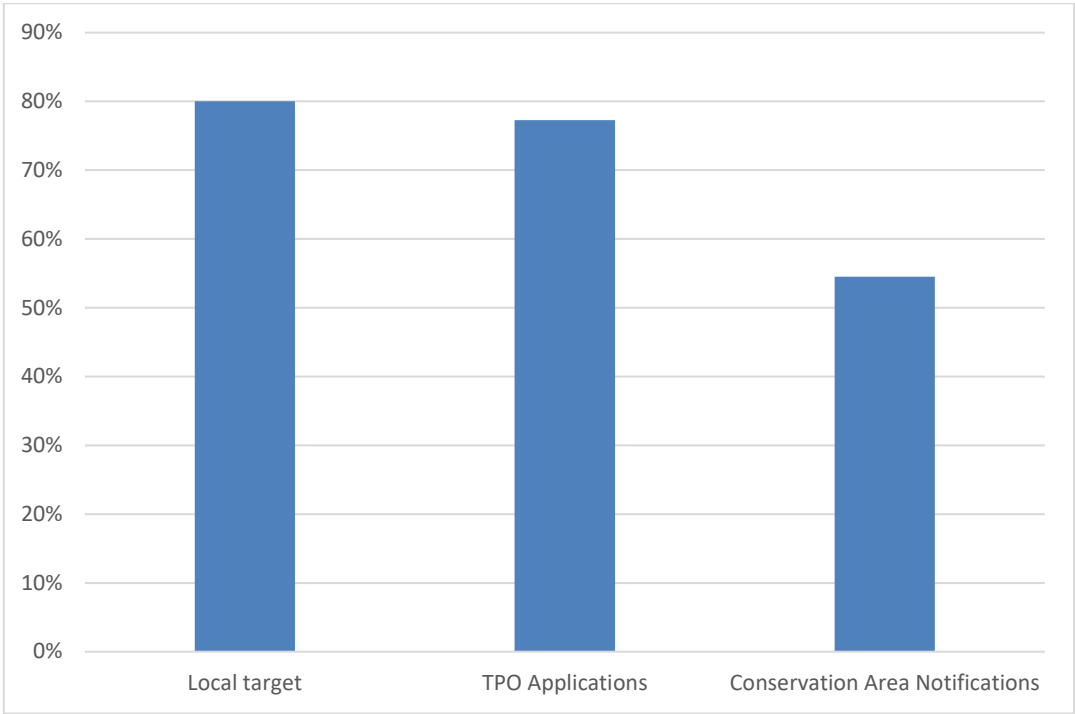


Figure 2 TPO applications determined from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026

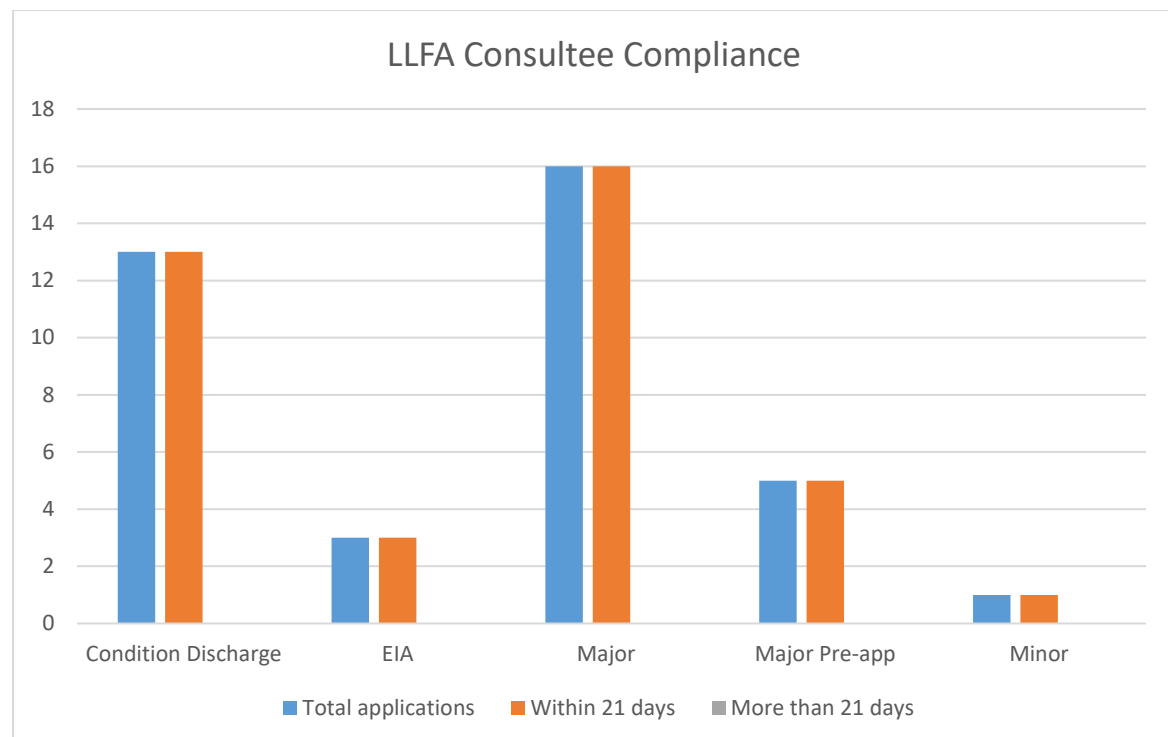


**Figure 3 TPO and Conservation Area Notification applications
determined within target time from 1 April 2026 to 30 June
2026**



Appendix H : Lead Local Flood Authority Consultee Compliance

Statutory Consultee compliance results from 1 January 2026 to 31 March 2026



Statutory Consultee compliance results for the year 2025/26

Consultation Type	Number responded to within 21 days	Total	% compliance
Appeal	7	7	100%
Change of Use	5	5	100%
Condition Discharge - Standard	35	35	100%
Condition Discharge - Verification Report	14	14	100%
Condition Discharge - CSWMP	12	12	100%
EIA	7	7	100%
Listed Building App Minor	2	2	100%
Listed Building App Major	1	1	100%
Major	43	43	100%
Major Outline	6	6	100%
Major Pre-app	24	24	100%
Minor	11	11	100%
Reserved Matters	12	12	100%
Variation of Condition	9	9	100%
Total	188	188	100%

Overall compliance for all types of consultations received is 100%. The internally set target is 80%.

Appendix I : Complaints and Compliments

Complaints can be submitted online, in writing, in person at a local community hub and by phone. We aim to reply with a full written response within 10 working days. The chart below shows number of complaints received.

The corporate complaints procedure involves 2 stages:

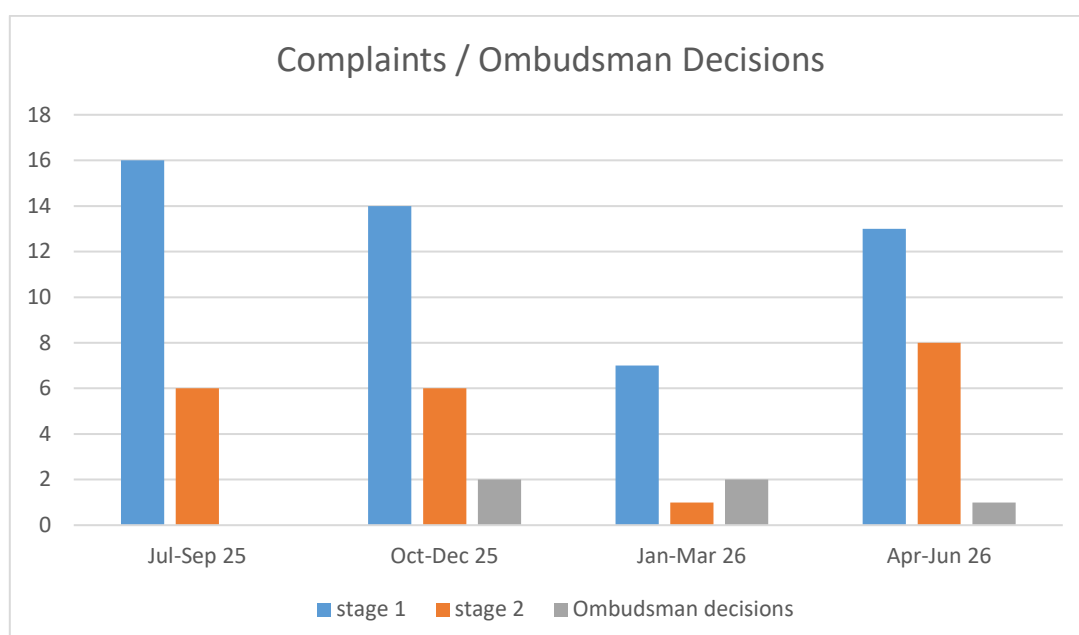
Stage 1: The complaint is investigated within service and a draft response is provided to the Customer Relations Team who then writes to the complainant. The response letter also includes a final paragraph providing information on how to take the matter further if the complainant remains dissatisfied.

Stage 2: The complainant receives a response from the Customer Relations Officer giving details on how to contact the Ombudsman should the complainant remain dissatisfied.

Stage 1 corporate complaints are now categorised into generic and service specific categories. Complaints for planning are expected to fall mainly into the category whereby customers disagree or are unhappy with the Council's decision.

For the period 1 April to 30 June 2026, 21 corporate complaints were responded to; 4 related to communication not satisfactory; 11 disagreed with the council decision; 4 were due to poor timeliness; and 2 where inaccurate or inadequate information was provided.

Of the 21 complaints which were responded to, 85.71% were answered within the target time. 8 Stage 2 complaints were responded to within the period. 18 complaints were not upheld where no fault was found, and 3 were upheld. 2 of the complaints upheld related to the same complaint at Stage 1 and Stage, which was due to a lack of progress with enforcement action. 1 related to incorrect advice provided in relation to an HMO LDC.



Ombudsman

- The Ombudsman will not investigate the complaint as they are unlikely to find fault by the Council.

Following consultation, the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) launched The Complaint Handling Code in February 2024. Local councils are encouraged to adopt the Code as soon as they are able to do so. The LGSCO intend to start considering the Code as part of its processes from April 2026. This gives local councils the opportunity to adopt the Code successfully into working practices.

Compliments

The Planning Service has received a number of compliments during the period from both internal and external customers. Comments include:

- Thank you for all of your help and guidance through our recent planning application. This was a very difficult process for us and you were supportive, whilst being completely professional throughout. You are a credit to the planning department.
- We wanted to pass on our praise for the planning officer we met earlier today during a site visit. I feel his contribution is worth highlighting to you.
- You are all brilliant and many thanks for getting the information across.
- I would like to express my gratitude for all the very helpful and excellent customer service/care for us in relation to the applications. It has been a pleasure to work with you.
- The planning officer not only dealt with the initial submission including a meeting promptly but has since engaged extremely quickly to provide some follow up commentary on alternative proposals. I cannot praise the officer highly enough in the speed and ease to engage with.
- I am writing to extend my heartfelt thanks for your invaluable support and assistance. Your contributions have been incredibly beneficial, and I truly appreciate the time and effort you have invested.
- I wanted to express my sincere gratitude for your support and guidance throughout the application process. I truly appreciate the time, patience, and professionalism you demonstrated. I am particularly grateful for the collaborative approach you took. Your assistance and expertise were invaluable. It has been a pleasure working with you.