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Statutory Consultations Quarterly Performance Report Q3 2025/26

(Reporting on Q3 2025/26)

This quarterly report highlights the performance of statutory consultees in the planning process. It provides details of the volume of statutory consultation that has taken place during April to December 2025 with comparative quarterly data back over the last five years. The figures contained in this report are extracted from the Planning Portals, are management information, and should not be treated or considered as official statistics.

*****THE INFORMATION IN THIS REPORT IS NOT CONSIDERED OFFICIAL
STATISTICS AND SHOULD NOT BE QUOTED AS SUCH*****



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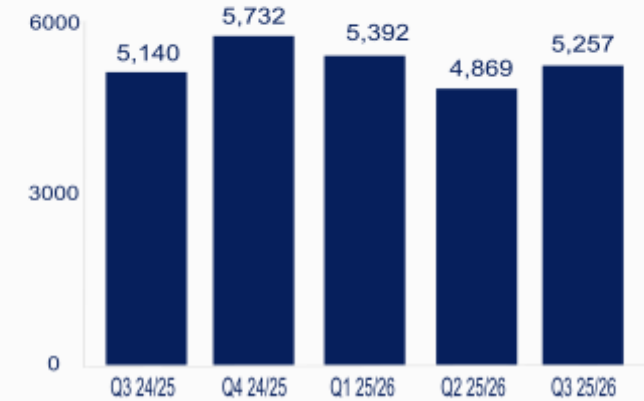
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Planning Statutory Consultations Q3 2025/26

Statutory consultations, for the purpose of this report, are consultations marked as 'Statutory' for application types 'full', 'outline' and 'reserved matters' on the planning portals

Statutory consultations raised

Number statutory consultations raised



5,257

statutory consultations were raised in Q3 2025/26. Of these:



4,950
(94%)

were on local applications



306
(6%)

were on major applications



1
(<1%)

were on regional applications

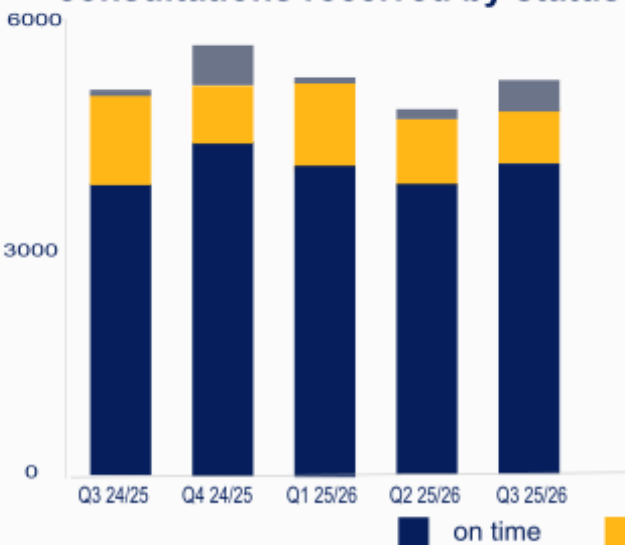
Statutory consultations response times



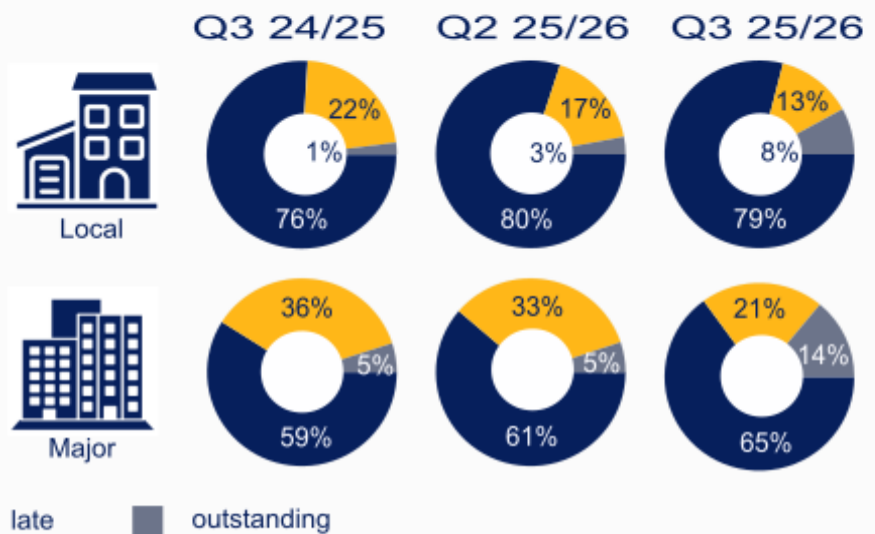
78%

of statutory consultations in Q3 2025/26 were responded to on time (i.e. within the 21-day response target or the extended target)

Number of responses to statutory consultations received by status

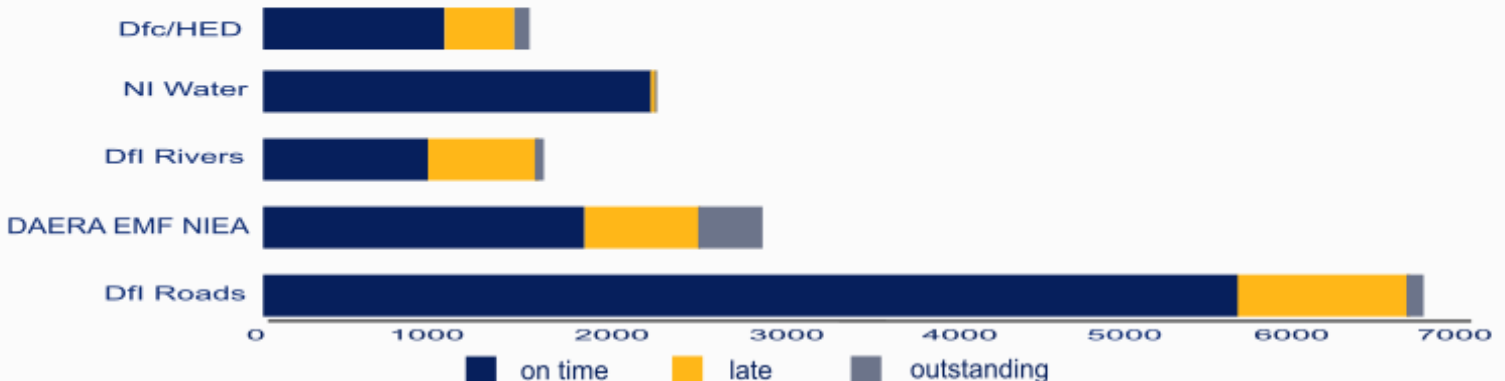


Responses to statutory consultations received by application type and status (%)



Statutory consultees

Number of responses to statutory consultations received by statutory consultee and response status, April - December 2025 (5 most common consultees)



The information in this report is not considered official statistics and should not be quoted as such

Statutory Consultations Quarterly Report Q3 2025/26

Introduction

This quarterly report highlights the performance of statutory consultees in the planning process. It provides details of the volume of statutory consultation that has taken place during April to December 2025 with comparative data from previous years. A set of [data tables](#) have been developed alongside this report.

The figures contained in this report are extracted from the Planning Portals, are management information, and should not be treated as official statistics.

Statutory consultations

During the first nine months of 2025/26 (1 April to 31 December 2025) there were 27,806 consultations/advice queries raised with 73% (20,200) of these consultations sent to key statutory consultees¹. Of the 20,200 consultations/advice queries raised with statutory consultees, 77% (15,518) were deemed to be statutory consultations², with the remainder largely made up of consultations on full applications (1,576), discharge of conditions (868), pre application discussions (808), listed building consents (371), advertising (337) and outline applications (280). [Refer to data tables: Table 1 and Table 12.](#)

The number of statutory consultations issued by application type is reported in Table 1 below. The full series is available from 2017/18 in the [data tables](#) accompanying this report.

In 2019/20 there was typically over six thousand statutory consultations raised each quarter. The consultation level fell in Q4 2019/20 (January to March 2020) when compared with earlier quarters in that year, and a further decrease was reported for Q1 2020/21 (April to June 2020). It is likely that these decreases were a consequence of the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19).

Statutory consultation returned to expected levels in Q2 2020/21 (July to September 2020) and remained stable to the end of 2020/21. Consultation then increased peaking in the first quarter of 2021/22 (April to June 2021) with 7,440 statutory consultations. From October 2021 to September 2022 quarterly consultation levels were reasonably steady.

In Q3 2022/23 (October – December 2022) there was a notable decline in consultation levels which is likely to be related to the introduction of the Planning Portal in early December 2022. Prior to the go live of the new planning system the existing system was unavailable for a period which will have contributed to lower levels of consultation. In Q2 and Q3 of 2023/24 consultations declined to some of the lowest levels reported across the series. The level of consultations received quarterly from Q1 2024/25 has been around 5,300, however in Q2 2025/26 consultations declined to the lowest level for a quarter over the past 5 years. Q3 2025/26 has seen an increase in the levels with 5,257 consultations received. See Table 1 below and [Data Table 1.](#)

¹ See [User Guidance](#) for a list of key statutory consultees.

² A statutory consultation for the purpose of this report is a consultation marked as 'Statutory' for application types 'full', 'outline' and 'reserved matters' for the statutory consultees listed in the [User Guidance](#) section.

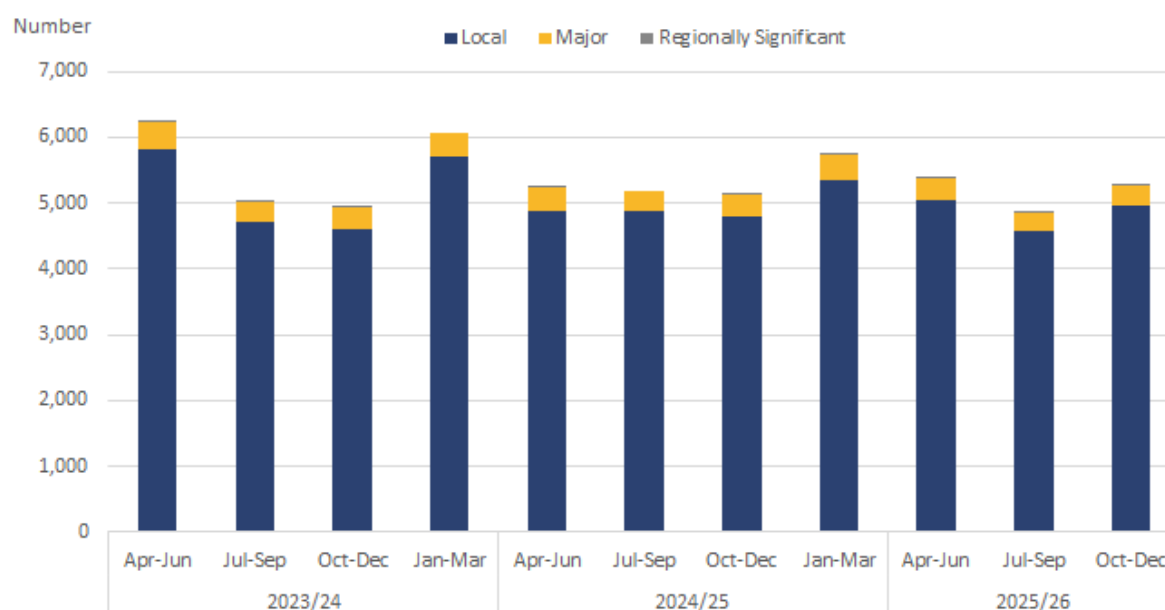
Table 1: *Number of statutory consultations raised by planning application type (Q1 2020/21 – Q3 2025/26)*

Year	Quarter	Local	Major	Regionally Significant	All Consultations
2020/21	Apr-Jun	4,052	272	1	4,325
	Jul-Sep	6,007	335	0	6,342
	Oct-Dec	5,991	327	7	6,325
	Jan-Mar	6,352	374	3	6,729
	2020/21	22,402	1,308	11	23,721
2021/22	Apr-Jun	7,091	347	2	7,440
	Jul-Sep	6,837	346	0	7,183
	Oct-Dec	6,085	298	0	6,383
	Jan-Mar	5,812	373	0	6,185
	2021/22	25,825	1,364	2	27,191
2022/23	Apr-Jun	6,172	387	0	6,559
	Jul-Sep	5,697	392	10	6,099
	Oct-Dec	4,790	275	5	5,070
	Jan-Mar	6,128	434	12	6,574
	2022/23	22,787	1,488	27	24,302
2023/24	Apr-Jun	5,805	426	4	6,235
	Jul-Sep	4,703	325	3	5,031
	Oct-Dec	4,613	317	4	4,934
	Jan-Mar	5,699	370	0	6,069
	2023/24	20,820	1,438	11	22,269
2024/25	Apr-Jun	4,873	371	3	5,247
	Jul-Sep	4,881	315	0	5,196
	Oct-Dec	4,792	341	7	5,140
	Jan-Mar	5,356	370	6	5,732
	2024/25	19,902	1,397	16	21,315
2025/26	Apr-Jun	5,051	336	5	5,392
	Jul-Sep	4,578	284	7	4,869
	Oct-Dec	4,950	306	1	5,257
	2025/26 ytd	14,579	926	13	15,518

Note: figures reported represent consultations marked as 'Statutory' for application types 'full', 'outline' and 'reserved matters' for the statutory consultees listed in [User Guidance](#) section.

As in previous quarters, statutory consultations on local planning applications accounted for most of the consultations raised during the third quarter of 2025/26 (94%). See Chart 1.

Chart 1: *Number of statutory consultations raised by planning application type (Q1 2023/24 – Q3 2025/26)*



Planning applications received

The number of planning applications received remained relatively stable from 2017/18 to 2020/21; with 99% of all planning applications received being local.

During Q1 2020/21, the first full quarter impacted by the restrictions put in place due to the coronavirus pandemic, the number of applications received was 2,309. This was the lowest number received in any quarter since the series began in April 2002. The following four quarters recorded consecutive increases, peaking in Q1 2021/22. In total there was 13,600 applications received in 2021/22, the highest annual number since 2011/12.

Table 2: *Number of planning applications received by planning application type (Q1 2020/21 – Q3 2025/26)*

Year	Quarter	Local	Major	Regionally Significant	All Applications
2020/21	Apr-Jun	2,284	24	1	2,309
	Jul-Sep	3,231	34	0	3,265
	Oct-Dec	3,557	30	0	3,587
	Jan-Mar	3,637	35	0	3,672
	2020/21	12,709	123	1	12,833
2021/22	Apr-Jun	3,928	33	0	3,961
	Jul-Sep	3,282	40	0	3,322
	Oct-Dec	3,116	33	1	3,150
	Jan-Mar	3,128	39	0	3,167
	2021/22	13,454	145	1	13,600
2022/23	Apr-Jun	3,015	36	0	3,051
	Jul-Sep	2,636	36	0	2,672
	Oct-Dec	2,623	37	0	2,660
	Jan-Mar	2,798	35	1	2,834
	2022/23	11,072	144	1	11,217
2023/24	Apr-Jun	2,594	41	0	2,635
	Jul-Sep	2,328	34	1	2,363
	Oct-Dec	2,465	41	0	2,506

	Jan-Mar	2,483	38	0	2,521
	2023/24	9,870	154	1	10,025
2024/25	Apr-Jun	2,491	41	0	2,532
	Jul-Sep	2,328	41	0	2,369
	Oct-Dec	2,307	49	1	2,357
	Jan-Mar	2,428	30	0	2,458
	2024/25	9,554	161	1	9,716
2025/26	Apr-Jun	2,370	29	1	2,400
	Jul-Sep	2,322	24	1	2,347
	Oct-Dec	2,426	61	2	2,489
	2025/26 ytd	7,118	114	4	7,236

Source: DfI Planning Statistics

In contrast, there was 9,716 planning applications received during 2024/25, the lowest number of applications received in any year since records began in 2002/03.

In the first nine months of 2025/26 there were 7,236 planning applications received. While the number of planning applications received quarterly has been stable over the last three years, there has been a gradual decline in the series over time. [Refer to NI Planning Statistics Table 1.1.](#)

The ratio of all planning applications received against all statutory consultations issued in the first nine months of 2025/26 was 1 to 2. For major and regionally significant, the ratio is 1 to 9³. [Refer to data tables: Table 2, Table 3, and Table 4 for more detail.](#)

Table 3: *Ratio of planning applications received against statutory consultations raised⁴ within each quarter by planning application type (Q1 2020/21 – Q3 2025/26)*

Year	Quarter	Local	Major & Regionally Significant	All Applications
2020/21	Apr-Jun	2	11	2
	Jul-Sep	2	10	2
	Oct-Dec	2	11	2
	Jan-Mar	2	11	2
	2020/21	2	11	2
2021/22	Apr-Jun	2	11	2
	Jul-Sep	2	9	2
	Oct-Dec	2	9	2
	Jan-Mar	2	10	2
	2021/22	2	9	2
2022/23	Apr-Jun	2	11	2
	Jul-Sep	2	11	2
	Oct-Dec	2	8	2
	Jan-Mar	2	12	2
	2022/23	2	10	2
2023/24	Apr-Jun	2	10	2
	Jul-Sep	2	9	2
	Oct-Dec	2	8	2
	Jan-Mar	2	10	2
	2023/24	2	9	2
2024/25	Apr-Jun	2	9	2
	Jul-Sep	2	8	2
	Oct-Dec	2	7	2

³ Ratio is based on count of the five years data reported.

⁴ Some consultations within each financial year will relate to planning applications that have been received in an earlier financial year. Although the counts of planning applications received and statutory consultations raised within a given period are not directly related, it provides an indicative picture of the level of statutory consultation taking place on planning applications.

	Jan-Mar	2	13	2
	2024/25	2	9	2
2025/26	Apr-Jun	2	11	2
	Jul-Sep	2	12	2
	Oct-Dec	2	5	2
	2025/26 ytd	2	8	2

Statutory consultations response times

From 2020/21 to 2024/25 the proportion of statutory consultations responded to on time⁵ has ranged from 69% (2021/22) to 77% (2024/25). It is noteworthy that a much higher level of statutory consultation was carried out in 2021/22 (27,191) when compared to other years in the series. The response rate for the first nine months of 2025/26 was 78%.

Table 4 provides a breakdown of responses to statutory consultations raised each quarter from 2020/21, a full breakdown of the series is available in [Data Table 5](#).

Table 4: *Number of responses to statutory consultations received within each quarter (Q1 2020-21 – Q3 2025/26)*

Year	Quarter	On-time	Total	% On-time
2020/21	Apr-Jun	3,418	4,325	79%
	Jul-Sep	4,778	6,342	75%
	Oct-Dec	4,659	6,325	74%
	Jan-Mar	5,143	6,729	76%
	2020/21	17,998	23,721	76%
2021/22	Apr-Jun	5,314	7,440	71%
	Jul-Sep	4,595	7,183	64%
	Oct-Dec	4,288	6,383	67%
	Jan-Mar	4,564	6,185	74%
	2021/22	18,761	27,191	69%
2022/23	Apr-Jun	4,966	6,559	76%
	Jul-Sep	4,512	6,099	74%
	Oct-Dec	3,475	5,070	69%
	Jan-Mar	4,540	6,574	69%
	2022/23	17,493	24,302	72%
2023/24	Apr-Jun	4,582	6,235	73%
	Jul-Sep	3,827	5,031	76%
	Oct-Dec	3,697	4,934	75%
	Jan-Mar	4,471	6,069	73%
	2023/24	16,577	22,269	74%
2024/25	Apr-Jun	4,199	5,247	80%
	Jul-Sep	4,024	5,196	77%
	Oct-Dec	3,859	5,140	75%
	Jan-Mar	4,437	5,732	77%
	2024/25	16,519	21,315	77%
2025/26	Apr-Jun	4,128	5,392	77%
	Jul-Sep	3,851	4,869	79%
	Oct-Dec	4,110	5,257	78%
	2025/26 ytd	12,089	15,518	78%

Chart 2 illustrates the number of responses to statutory consultations quarterly by response status from Q1 2020/21. As with previous reports, the number of outstanding statutory consultations is highest in the most recent quarter, primarily a result of lifting the information at a point in time. Quarter four in each year has a higher proportion of outstanding than any other quarter within that

⁵ Includes those responded to within the 21-day target and the extended target, where applicable.

year due to the annual position becoming fixed shortly after the year end, with no further revisions being made. Chart 3 provides a proportionate breakdown of these responses.

Chart 2: *Number of responses to statutory consultations received by response status (Q1 2023-24 – Q3 2025/26)*

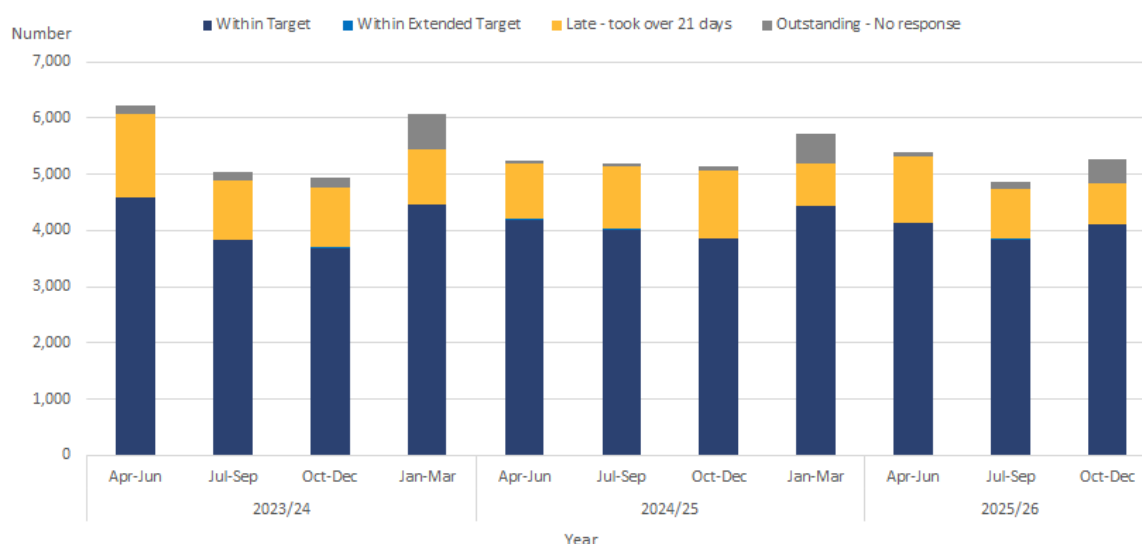
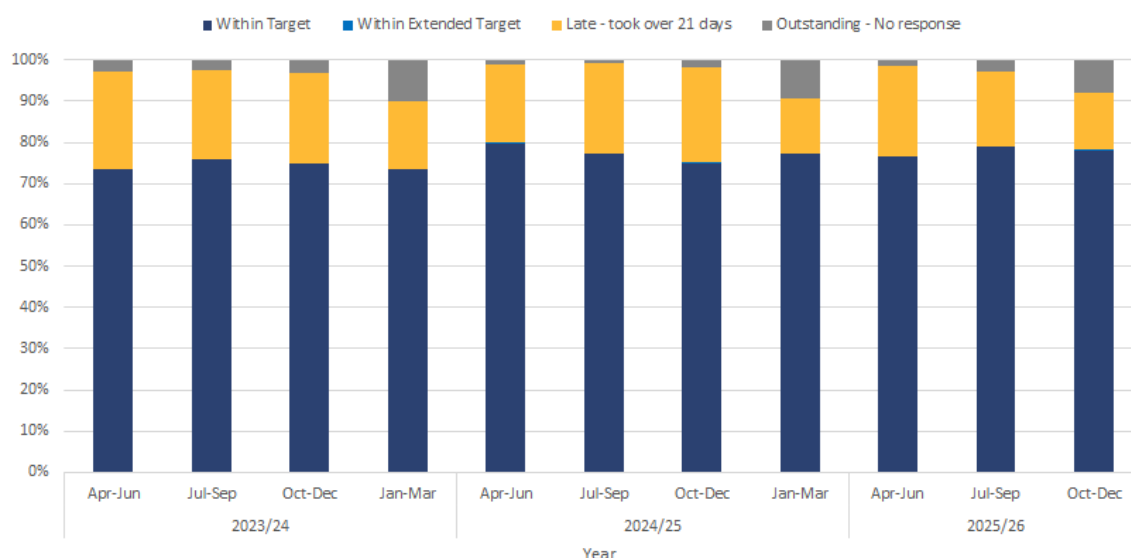


Chart 3: *Responses to statutory consultations received by response status (proportions) (Q1 2023-24 – Q3 2025/26)*



The response rate for statutory consultations responded to on time⁶ varies from quarter to quarter and year to year. In broad terms the quarterly response rate on-time over the last five years has ranged between 64-80% for all statutory consultations. For consultations related to local planning applications the response rate on-time has ranged between 64-81%, and for consultations related to major planning applications ranging between 43-66%.

In the first nine months of 2025/26 78% of responses to statutory consultations were on time. Response to statutory consultations on locals is reported at 79%, majors at 63% and regionally significant at 62% (thirteen consultations). [Refer to data tables: Table 5 for more detail](#). Charts 4a, 4b

⁶ Includes those responded to within the 21-day target and the extended target, where applicable.

and 4c provide detail of quarterly performance for local, major and regionally significant applications.

Chart 4a: Responses to statutory consultations received for **local** planning applications by response status (proportions) (Q1 2023-24 – Q3 2025/26)

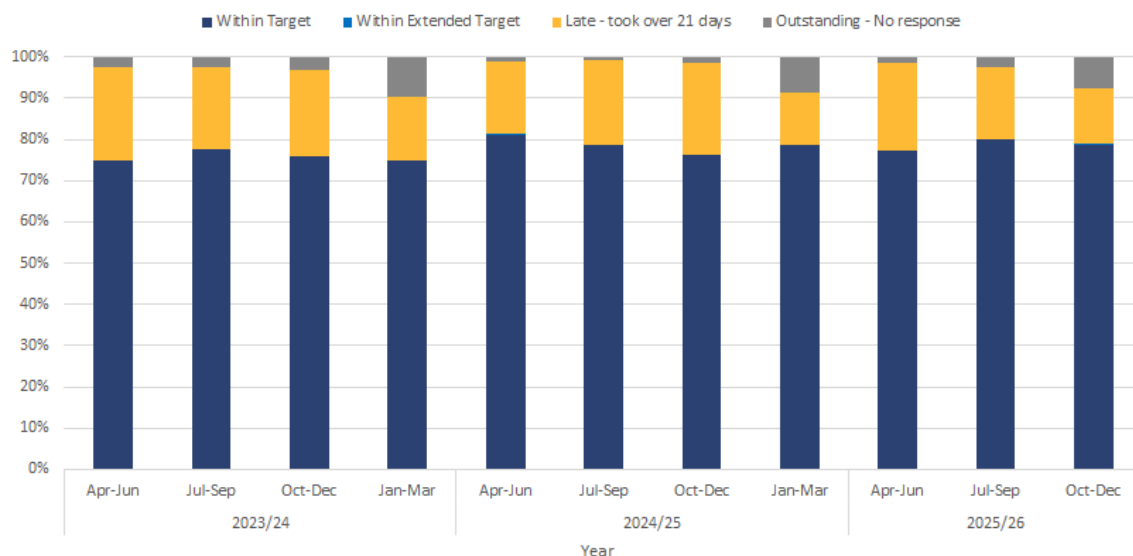


Chart 4b: Responses to statutory consultations received for **major** planning applications by response status (proportions) (Q1 2023-24 – Q3 2025/26)

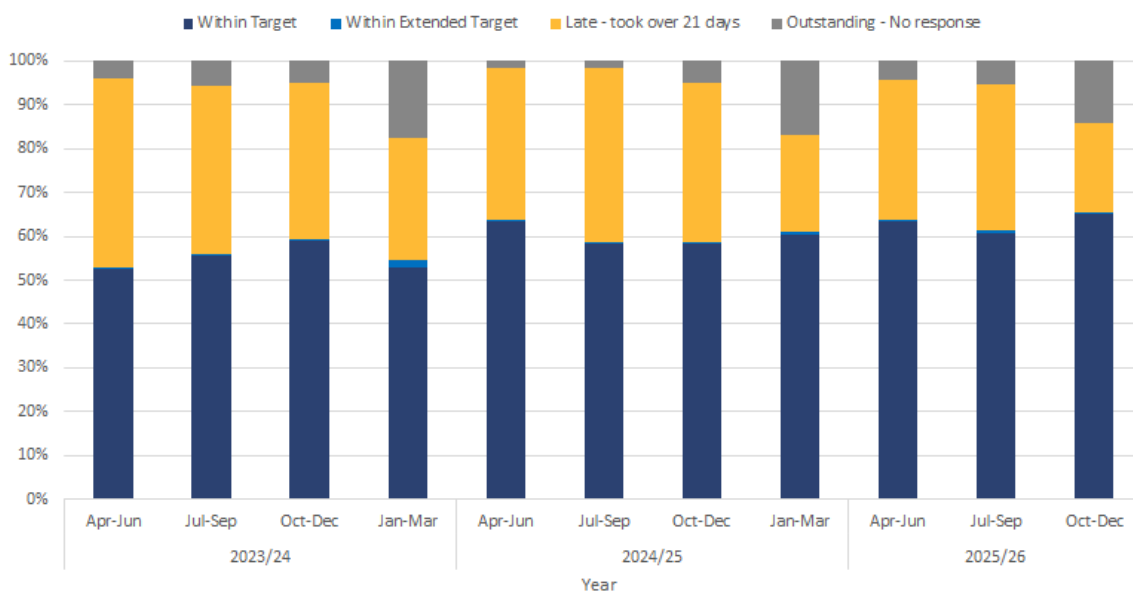
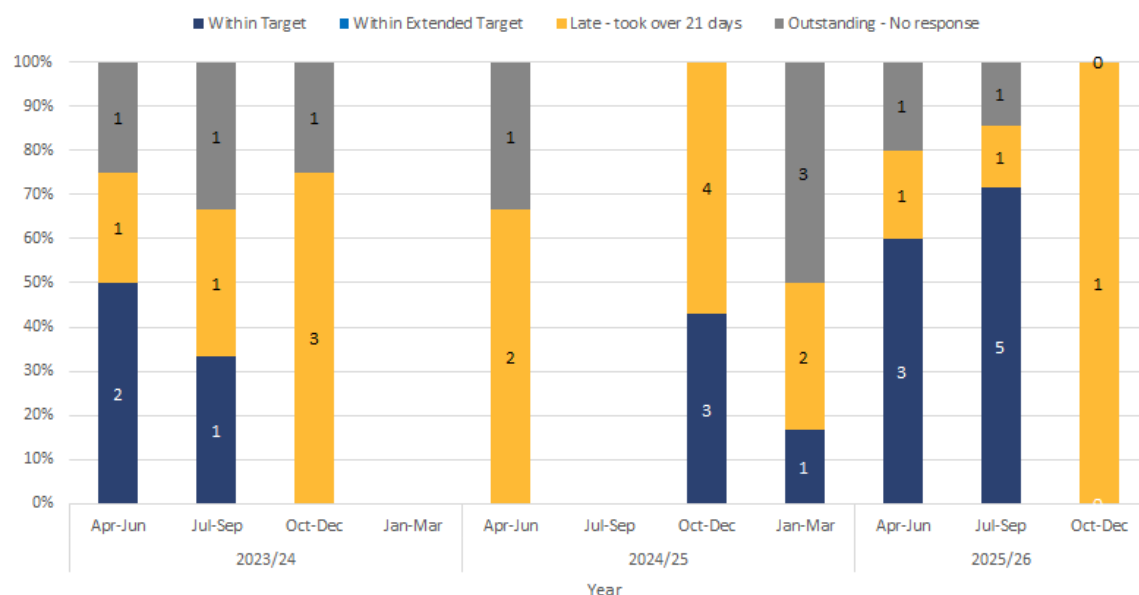


Chart 4c: *Responses to statutory consultations received for regionally significant planning applications by response status (proportions) (Q1 2023-24 – Q3 2025/26)*



Note: due to the small numbers of responses to statutory consultations on regionally significant ('regional') applications, associated proportions reported in the above chart should be treated with caution; the numbers of such responses have been included as data labels.

Tables 4 (a-c) below provides a breakdown for the first nine months of 2025/26 by statutory consultee and planning application type. For each statutory consultee the tables 4(a-c) report the number of statutory consultations received by statutory consultees for regionally significant, major and local planning applications respectively and the percentage responded to on-time alongside response status counts.

Table 4a: *Statutory consultation on local planning applications Apr-Dec 2025*

Statutory Consultee ⁷	Within Target	Within Extended Target	Late - took over 21 days	Outstanding - No response	Total	% on-time ³
DfI Roads	5,471	1	931	81	6,484	84%
DAERA EMF NIEA	1,770	0	591	339	2,700	66%
DfI Rivers	873	12	581	39	1,505	59%
NI Water	2,141	1	26	10	2,178	98%
DfC/HED	1,009	5	385	85	1,484	68%
HSENI	47	0	2	0	49	96%
GSNI	46	0	7	0	53	87%
DFE Energy	1	0	2	1	4	25%
Belfast International Airport	36	0	3	0	39	92%
Belfast City Airport	24	0	0	0	24	100%
City of Derry Airport	7	0	0	0	7	100%
NIHE	49	0	2	1	52	94%
Local Total	11,474	19	2,530	556	14,579	79%

Table 4b: *Statutory consultation on major planning applications Apr-Dec 2025*

⁷See [User Guidance](#) for a full list of key statutory consultees.

Statutory Consultee ⁵	Within Target	Within Extended Target	Late - took over 21 days	Outstanding - No response	Total	% on-time ³
DfI Roads	195	0	78	19	292	67%
DAERA EMF NIEA	96	0	85	35	216	44%
DfI Rivers	86	2	67	14	169	52%
NI Water	116	0	5	2	123	94%
DfC/HED	47	2	21	2	72	68%
HSENI	12	0	1	0	13	92%
GSNI	13	0	2	0	15	87%
DFE Energy	0	0	3	1	4	0%
Belfast International Airport	5	0	0	0	5	100%
Belfast City Airport	3	0	0	0	3	100%
City of Derry Airport	1	0	0	0	1	100%
NIHE	10	0	3	0	13	77%
Major Total	584	4	265	73	926	63%

Table 4c: *Statutory consultation on regionally significant planning applications Apr-Dec 2025*

Statutory Consultee ⁵	Within Target	Within Extended Target	Late - took over 21 days	Outstanding - No response	Total	% on-time ³
DfI Roads	3	0	0	0	3	100%
DAERA EMF NIEA	2	0	1	1	4	50%
DfI Rivers	0	0	2	0	2	0%
NI Water	2	0	0	0	2	100%
DfC/HED	0	0	0	1	1	0
HSENI	0	0	0	0	0	.
GSNI	0	0	0	0	0	.
DFE Energy	0	0	0	0	0	.
Belfast International Airport	0	0	0	0	0	.
Belfast City Airport	0	0	0	0	0	.
City of Derry Airport	1	0	0	0	1	1
NIHE	0	0	0	0	0	.
Regionally Significant Total	8	0	3	2	13	62%

Tables 4 (d-f) below provides a breakdown for the first nine months of 2025/26 on statutory consultations issued (by application type) from each planning authority to the statutory consultee and reports both the consultation percentage returned on-time to the planning authority and response status counts.

Table 4d: *Planning Authority statutory consultations issued on local planning applications Apr-Dec 2025*

Planning Authority	Within Target	Within Extended Target	Late - took over 21 days	Outstanding - No response	Total	% on-time ³
LA01 - Causeway Coast and Glens	1,484	3	191	54	1,732	86%
LA02 - Mid and East Antrim	607	1	108	20	736	83%
LA03 - Antrim and Newtownabbey	649	2	117	25	793	82%
LA04 - Belfast	422	1	119	44	586	72%
LA05 - Lisburn and Castlereagh	675	1	202	44	922	73%
LA06 - Ards and North Down	628	2	221	36	887	71%
LA07 - Newry, Mourne and Down	1,700	4	629	82	2,415	71%
LA08 - Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon	2,008	2	277	82	2,369	85%
LA09 - Mid Ulster	1,309	0	287	81	1,677	78%

LA10 - Fermanagh and Omagh	1,077	1	170	58	1,306	83%
LA11 - Derry and Strabane	912	2	209	30	1,153	79%
LA12 - DFI Strategic Planning Division	3	0	0	0	3	100%
Local Total	11,474	19	2,530	556	14,579	79%

Table 4e: *Planning Authority statutory consultations issued on major planning applications Apr-Dec 2025*

Planning Authority	Within Target	Within Extended Target	Late - took over 21 days	Outstanding - No response	Total	% on-time ³
LA01 - Causeway Coast and Glens	39	0	12	5	56	70%
LA02 - Mid and East Antrim	58	1	31	6	96	61%
LA03 - Antrim and Newtownabbey	44	1	18	1	64	70%
LA04 - Belfast	48	2	22	9	81	62%
LA05 - Lisburn and Castlereagh	33	0	27	10	70	47%
LA06 - Ards and North Down	28	0	12	6	46	61%
LA07 - Newry, Mourne and Down	41	0	39	6	86	48%
LA08 - Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon	86	0	14	3	103	83%
LA09 - Mid Ulster	74	0	33	15	122	61%
LA10 - Fermanagh and Omagh	51	0	15	2	68	75%
LA11 - Derry and Strabane	82	0	41	10	133	62%
LA12 - DFI Strategic Planning Division	0	0	1	0	1	0%
Major Total	584	4	265	73	926	63%

Table 4f: *Planning Authority statutory consultations issued on regionally significant planning applications Apr-Dec 2025*

Planning Authority	Within Target	Within Extended Target	Late - took over 21 days	Outstanding - No response	Total	% on-time ³
LA12 - DFI Strategic Planning Division	8	0	3	2	13	62%
Regionally Significant Total	8	0	3	2	13	62%

2025/26 in more detail – statutory consultee analysis

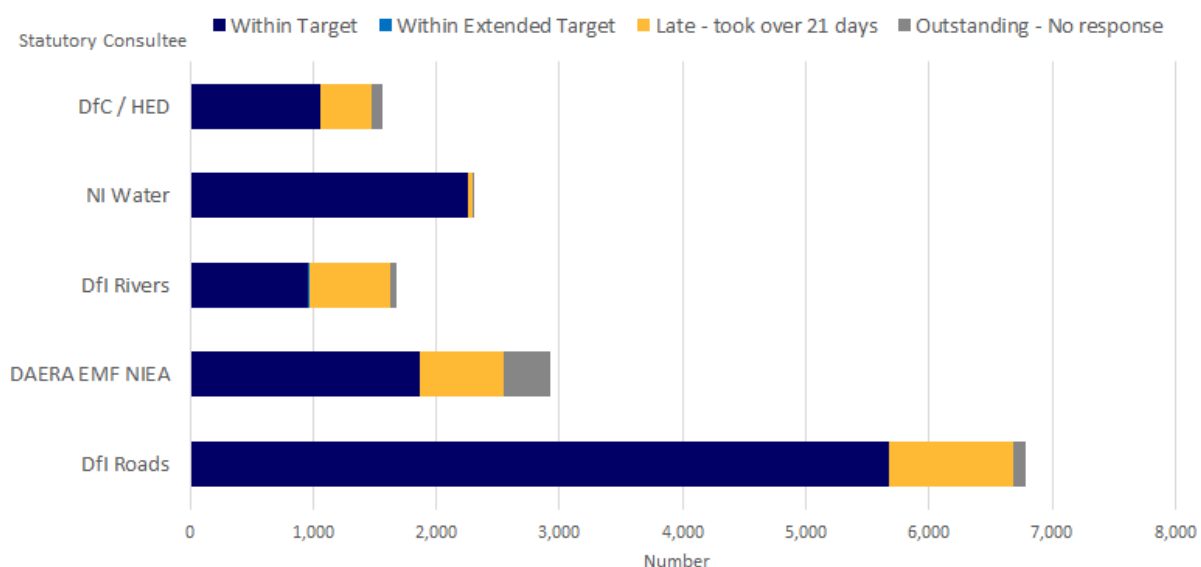
Statutory consultations received by statutory consultees during the first nine months of 2025/26 are presented in Table 5 below⁸.

Table 5: *Number of statutory consultations received by planning application type, Apr-Dec 2025*

Quarter	Local	Major	Regionally Significant	Total
Apr-Jun	5,051	336	5	5,392
Jul-Sep	4,578	284	7	4,869
Oct-Dec	4,950	306	1	5,257
2025/26 ytd	14,579	926	13	15,518

Of the 15,518 statutory consultations received in the first nine months of 2025/26, DfI Roads received 44%, DAERA EMF NIEA 19%, NI Water 15%, DfI Rivers 11% and DfC / HED 10%. Together these five consultees accounted for 98% of the statutory consultations raised during the first nine months of 2025/26 (Chart 5).⁹ This is like the position recorded in previous quarters. [Refer to data tables: Table 6 and Table 9 for more information.](#)

Chart 5: *Number of responses to statutory consultations received by statutory consultee and response status, 2025/26 Q3 (5 most common consultees)*



During the first nine months of the year across all statutory consultees the proportion of responses received on time¹⁰ ranged from 13% – 100%. In all, 78% of statutory consultations were responded on time during the first nine months of 2025/26.

⁸ Note: the number of statutory consultations raised by planning authorities in each period will equal the number of statutory consultations received by statutory consultees in the same period. In effect, these terms are interchangeable.

⁹ See [User Guidance](#) for a full list of key statutory consultees.

¹⁰ Includes those responded to within the 21-day target and the extended target, where applicable.

Table 6 reports the percentage of statutory consultations received that were responded to on-time by statutory consultees over the last five years. [The full series is available in data tables: See Table 8.](#)

Table 6 *Statutory consultee responses to statutory consultations – proportion of response on-time 2020/21 to Q3 2025/26*

Statutory Consultee ¹	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26 ytd
DfI Roads	77%	69%	78%	81%	82%	84%
DAERA EMF NIEA	68%	63%	59%	72%	66%	64%
DfI Rivers	64%	40%	56%	61%	54%	58%
NI Water	88%	97%	92%	97%	99%	98%
DfC /HED	76%	65%	54%	37%	73%	68%
HSENI	70%	86%	69%	64%	78%	95%
DfE GSNI	90%	95%	83%	80%	89%	87%
DfE Energy	33%	67%	40%	20%	40%	13%
Belfast International Airport	79%	99%	88%	87%	70%	93%
Belfast City Airport	100%	100%	98%	98%	100%	100%
City of Derry Airport	94%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
NIHE	84%	79%	68%	83%	95%	91%
Overall Total	76%	69%	72%	74%	77%	78%

User guidance

Data source

An extract of all consultations/advice queries raised from 1 April 2025 to 31 December 2025 were transferred on 4 February 2025 from the Planning Portals. The data were then validated. The relevant data is lifted at least one month after the end of the reference period to allow for the 21-day target response date, which applies to most statutory consultations, to have elapsed.

Reporting

The Planning Portals were introduced in June (Mid Ulster) and December 2022 (all other planning authorities) and will have had some impact on the quality of the data for level of consultation and the management of consultation responses. This impact, whilst considered to be minimal, may cause some changes at lower levels of data disaggregation. For this reason, caution should be taken when using data from 2022/23.

The figures contained in this report are extracted from the Planning Portals, are management information, and should not be treated as official statistics.

List of key statutory consultees

- Belfast City Airport
- Belfast International Airport
- City of Derry Airport
- Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) Environment, Marine and Fisheries (EMF) and Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA)
- Department for Communities (DfC) / Historic Environment Division (HED)
- Department for the Economy (DfE) / Geological Survey of Northern Ireland (GSNI)
- DfI Rivers
- DfI Roads
- Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI)
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE)
- Northern Ireland Water.