



The Planning Inspectorate
Yr Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

PINS NOTE 06/2015

To: All Inspectors, England

Relevancy: Planning appeals and Secretary of State casework; and local plans examinations

Date of Issue: 3 March 2015

Currency: review on 3 September 2015

2012-BASED HOUSEHOLD PROJECTIONS IN ENGLAND, 2012 TO 2037

Action

1. Inspectors should be aware that the [2012-based household projections for England 2012-2037](#) have been released (on 27 February 2015). These update the figures previously released in April 2013. The figures in this release are based on the [2012-based sub-national population projections](#), published by the Office for National Statistics in May 2014.
2. Depending on the relevance of the new household projections to the case they are dealing with, Inspectors dealing with planning appeals will need to consider the need to refer back to the parties, giving a deadline of 10 working days to reply. Any unissued decisions should be reviewed by the Inspector on this basis, since it should **not** be necessary to refer back in all cases; if there is any doubt about the need to refer back, Inspectors should discuss the matter with their sub-group leader or Group Manager. Despatch teams will review any decisions currently with them for despatch and will contact Inspectors where it appears that it may be necessary to refer back to the parties.
3. For new casework and casework that has not yet reached the Inspector, we would expect the parties to either include what they regard as its impact in their cases or to contact PINS and ask that the Inspector takes it into account. Casework staff will not reject the latter requests, even where 'out of time', without the Inspector having been asked whether the documents should be accepted.
4. Similarly, Inspectors dealing with local plan examinations should consider whether the new household projection figures show a significantly different picture from the previous projections. Where this is the case, Inspectors should go back to the parties to allow them to make further comment before reaching their final conclusions. If there is any

doubt about the need to refer back, Inspectors should discuss the matter with their sub-group leaders or Group Manager, or the local plans team.

Background

5. The methodology for the household projections can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/2012-based-household-projections-methodology>.

6. The Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) has been updated to refer to the new household projections, and the update can be found at: <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/revisions/2a/016/>

This confirms that wherever possible, local needs assessments should be informed by the latest available information. The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that Local Plans should be kept up-to-date. A meaningful change in the housing situation should be considered in this context, but this does not automatically mean that housing assessments are rendered outdated every time new projections are issued.

7. The National Planning Policy Framework requires local authorities to make an assessment of housing needs that meet household and population projections. These household projections are produced for all local authority district areas on a consistent basis and therefore provide a key coherent evidence base around which local authorities can develop their local plans.

8. Local authorities should consider these new projections as part of their ongoing evidence base for local plan development, judging how to interpret the new projections in line with local circumstances, including how the new evidence differs from previous available evidence. Local authorities should take a proportionate approach, making changes to their plan where the new projections have significant implications

9. In terms of examinations in progress, clearly these figures should not in the main be a reason for interrupting progress towards completing examinations. However, where an examination is ongoing and the figures show a significantly different picture from the previous projections, then Inspectors will need to go back to the parties to allow them to make further comment before reaching their final conclusions.

10. In the first instance Inspectors will need to ask LPAs how the up-to-date information compares with the plan figures:

- Do the latest figures show a different level of need?
- If so, how big is the difference?
- Does the difference call for a revised/ amended strategy in the local plan?
- Can the plan be amended to address the issue or does it need to be withdrawn and substantially revised? (The withdrawn option should be very much the exception.)

11. In most cases any suggested changes in household growth from previous projections will be within the margins that will allow authorities to take them into account in future reviews of their plans.

12. Please contact XXXX if you have any queries on this Note. Case-specific queries should be addressed to XXXX for Planning Appeals, or to XXXX for Local Plans.

XXXX

Acting Chief Planning Inspector