

News story: Inquiries Review

Following publication on 12 February 2018 of the [Report and Recommendations into the Independent Review of Planning Appeal Inquiries](#), we have started looking into ways of implementing some of the recommendations, pending the Secretary of State's consideration of the full Report. We have therefore begun a trial of accelerating a small number of inquiry appeals as part of a pilot of holding inquiries much earlier than at present, and we are starting to work with those appellants and the local planning authorities involved with the appeals. This moves away from our "bespoke" process whereby we invite the parties to agree a programme, including an inquiry date.

Because this is a pilot, and is very much in its infancy, we can only conduct a small number of cases in this way, and most will continue to follow our bespoke process. Also, it involves only inquiry appeals where we are satisfied at the outset that an inquiry is the most appropriate procedure. We will therefore be selecting candidate appeals from those received and will liaise with the parties. In the meantime, should prospective appellants wish to be involved, they are free to get in touch with us through our general enquiry line, but the final decision on which appeals to run within the pilot will be ours.

This is the first step in implementing a significant change in the way planning appeal inquiries are conducted and the process cannot be changed overnight, nor can we "bring forward" inquiries already arranged. We hope all parties will understand this and continue to work with us, whether or not "their" appeal is part of the pilot.