

2021

# Statutory Consultations Annual Performance Report 2020/21

This is the second annual performance report highlighting the performance of statutory consultees in the planning process. This report provides details of the volume of statutory consultation that has taken place during 2020/21 with comparative information for earlier years. The figures contained in this report are extracted from the NI Planning Portal, 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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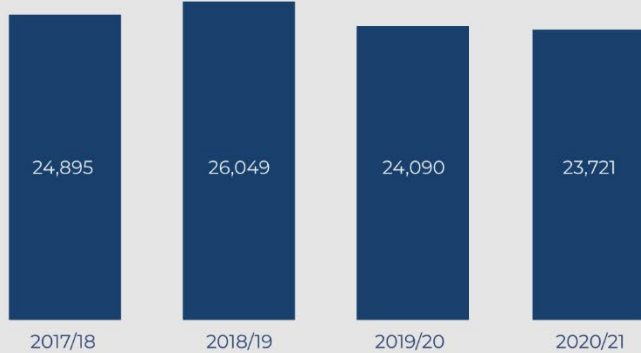
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# Planning Statutory Consultations 2020/21

**Statutory consultations**, for the purposes of this report, are 'Standard' and 'EIA Standard' consultations marked as 'Statutory' for application types 'full', 'outline' and 'reserved matters' on the NI Planning Portal

## Statutory consultations raised

### Number of statutory consultations raised



**23,721**

statutory consultations were raised in 2020/21. Of these:



**22,402**  
(94%)

were on local applications



**1,308**  
(6%)

were on major applications



**11**  
(0%)

were on regional applications

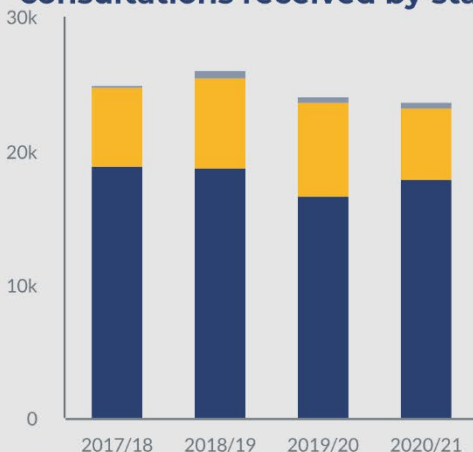
## Statutory consultations response times



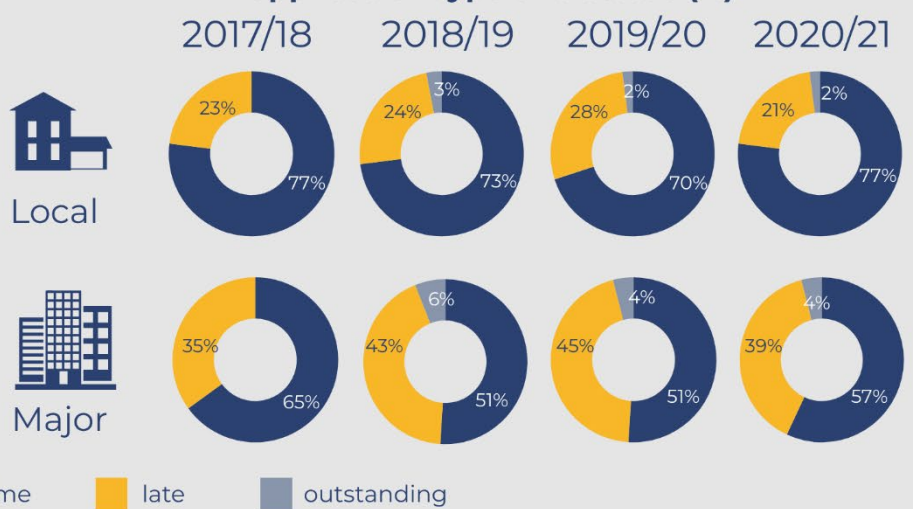
**76%**

of statutory consultations in 2020/21 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



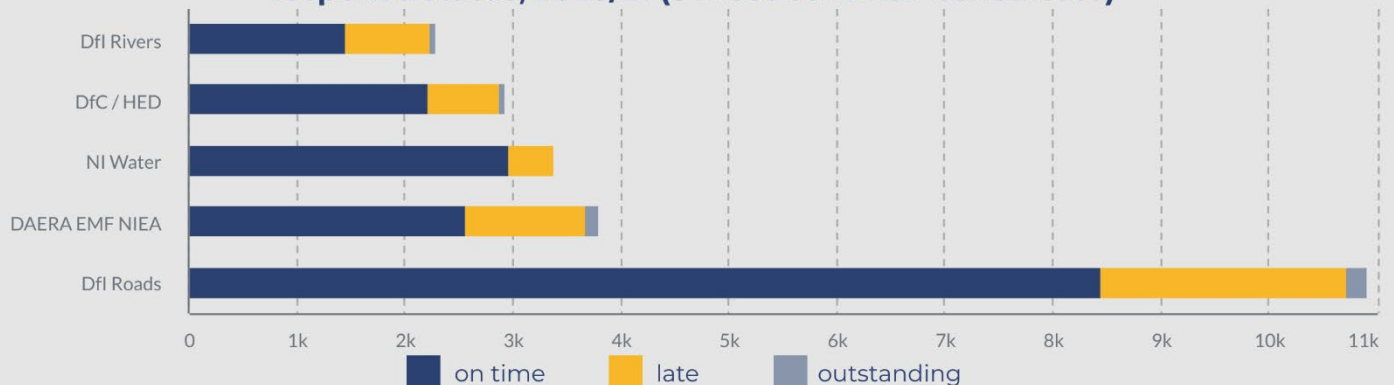
### Responses to statutory consultations received by application type and status (%)



■ on time ■ late ■ outstanding

## Statutory consultees

### Number of responses to statutory consultations received by statutory consultee and response status, 2020/21 (5 most common consultees)



■ on time ■ late ■ outstanding

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

# Statutory Consultations Annual Performance Report – 2020/21

## Introduction

This is the second annual performance report highlighting the performance of statutory consultees in the planning process. This report provides details of the volume of statutory consultation that has taken place during 2020/21 with comparative data from earlier years. **The figures contained in this report are extracted from the NI Planning Portal, are management information, and should not be treated as official statistics.**

## Statutory consultations

During 2020/21 (1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021) there were 39,192 consultations/advice queries raised. Of these, three-quarters (29,391; 75%) were sent to key statutory consultees<sup>1</sup>. Of these 29,391 consultations/advice queries raised, four-fifths (23,721; 81%) were deemed to be statutory consultations<sup>2</sup>.

The number of statutory consultations raised during 2020/21 (23,721) was down by 2% over the year from 2019/20 (24,090).

Table 1 below reports the number of statutory consultations sent to key statutory consultees annually from 2017/18. The number of statutory consultations raised was highest in 2018/19 with 26,049 sent to key statutory consultees. Over the last two years the level of statutory consultation has seen a reduction of 9%. It is likely that some of the decrease in late 2019/20 and continuing into early 2020/21 relates to the reduction in the number of planning applications received over the same period, as a consequence of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. See Table 1 and Chart 1 for further information.

Table 1: *Number of statutory consultations raised by planning application type*

Year	Local	Major	Regional	Total
2017/18	23,368	1,506	21	24,895
2018/19	24,570	1,477	2	26,049
2019/20	22,603	1,479	8	24,090
2020/21	22,402	1,308	11	23,721

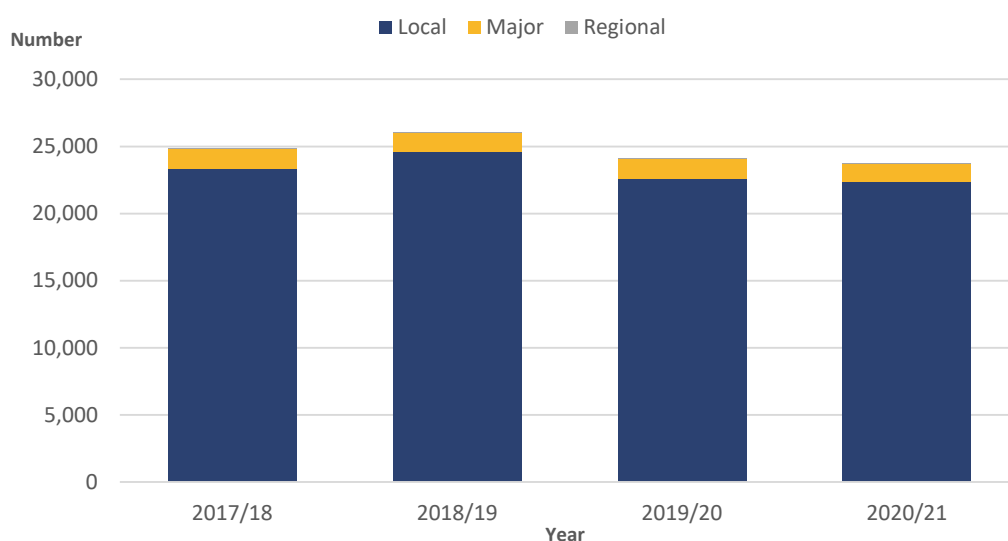
Note: figures reported represent 'Standard' and 'EIA Standard' consultations marked as 'Statutory' for application types 'full', 'outline' and 'reserved matters' for the statutory consultees listed in [User Guidance](#) section.

As in each previous year reported above, 94% of statutory consultations raised in 2020/21 related to local planning applications.

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

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

Chart 1: *Number of statutory consultations raised by planning application type*



### Planning Applications Received

Over the last four years the number of planning applications received have remained relatively stable, with 99% of all planning applications received being local applications.

Table 2: *Number of planning applications received by planning application type*

Year	Local	Major	Regional	Total
2017/18	12,770	161	2	12,933
2018/19	12,404	137	0	12,541
2019/20	12,058	149	0	12,207
2020/21	12,709	123	1	12,833

Source: DfI Northern Ireland Planning Statistics

The ratio of all planning applications received against all statutory consultations is 1 to 2. Focussing on major and regionally significant, the ratio is 1 to 10<sup>3</sup>. See Table 3 below for more detail.

Table 3: *Ratio of planning applications received against statutory consultations raised<sup>4</sup> within each financial year by planning application type*

Year	Local	Major/Regionally Significant	Combined Overall Ratio
2017/18	2	9	2
2018/19	2	11	2
2019/20	2	10	2
2020/21	2	11	2

<sup>3</sup> Ratio based on count of the four years data reported.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

## Statutory consultations response times

During 2020/21 the proportion of statutory consultations responded to on-time<sup>5</sup> was 76%, a return to performance levels last reported in 2017/18. Over the last year the proportion of responses to statutory consultations received on-time increased from 69% in 2019/20 to 76% in 2020/21. See Charts 2 & 3.

Chart 2: Number of responses to statutory consultations received by response status

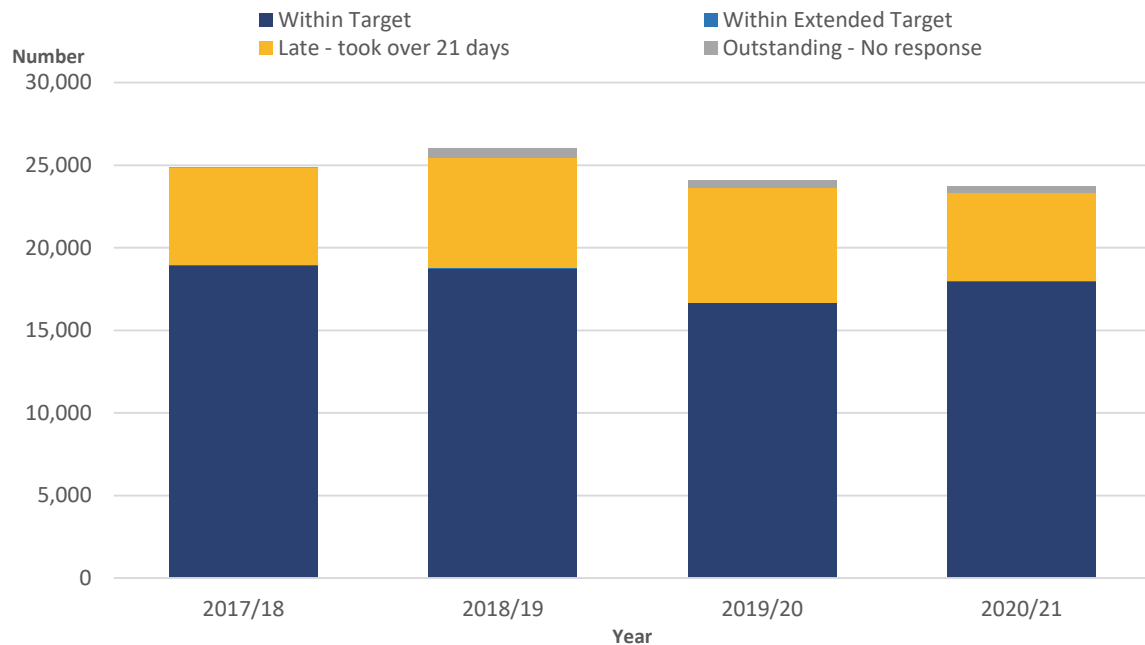
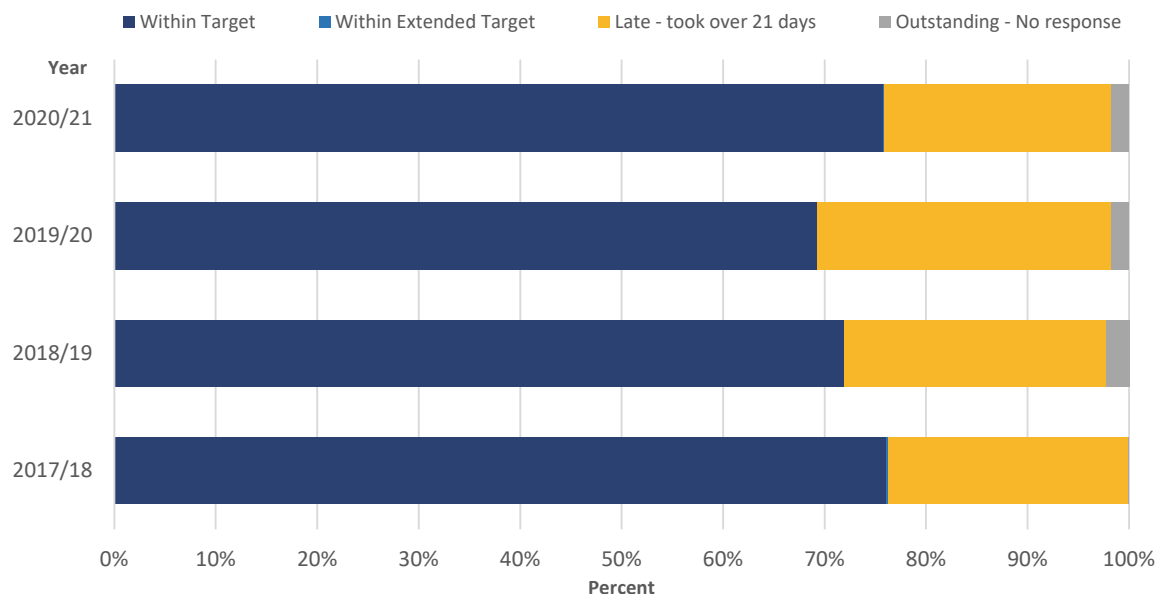


Chart 3: Responses to statutory consultations received by response status (proportions)



During 2020/21, 77% of all statutory consultations for local planning applications were responded to on-time,<sup>6</sup> an increase over the year from the 70% reported for 2019/20. For major planning

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

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

applications (including regionally significant) nearly three-fifths (57%) were responded to on-time over the same period, also up over the year from the 51% reported in 2019/20.

Chart 4: Number of responses to statutory consultations received by planning application type and response status

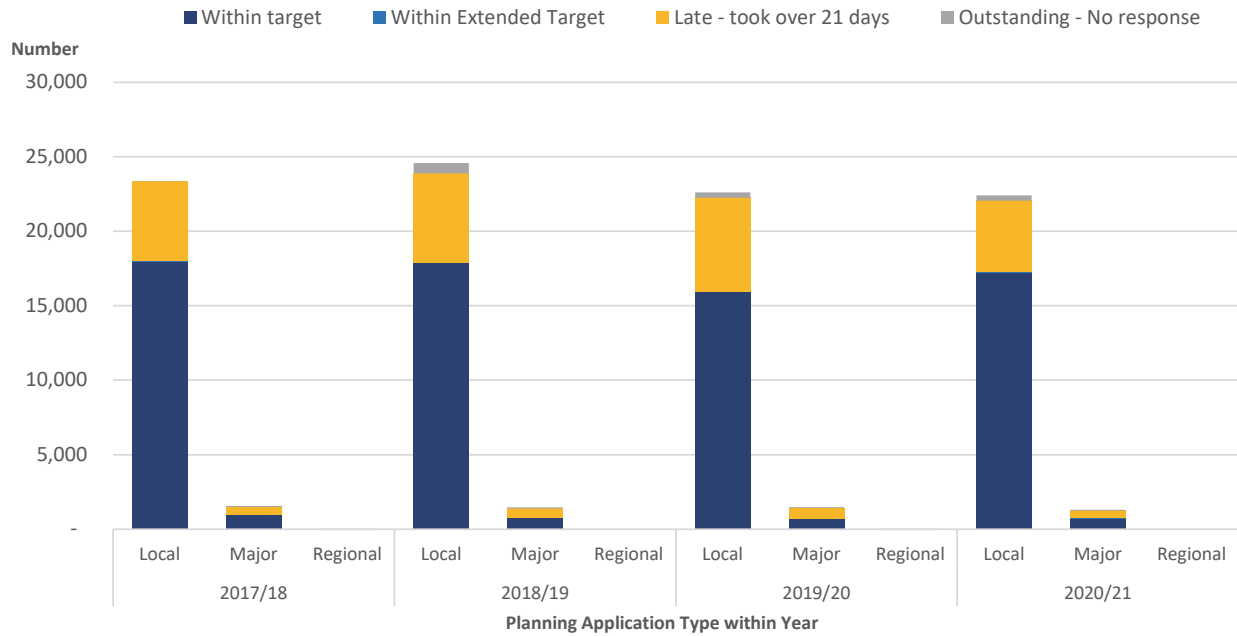
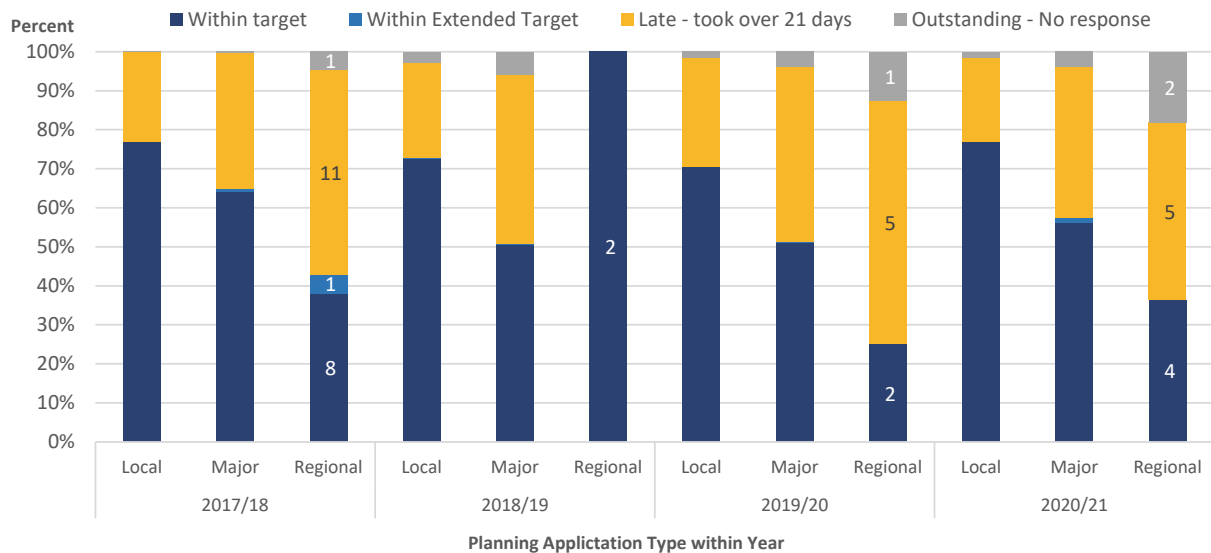


Chart 5: Responses to statutory consultations received by planning application type and response status (proportions)

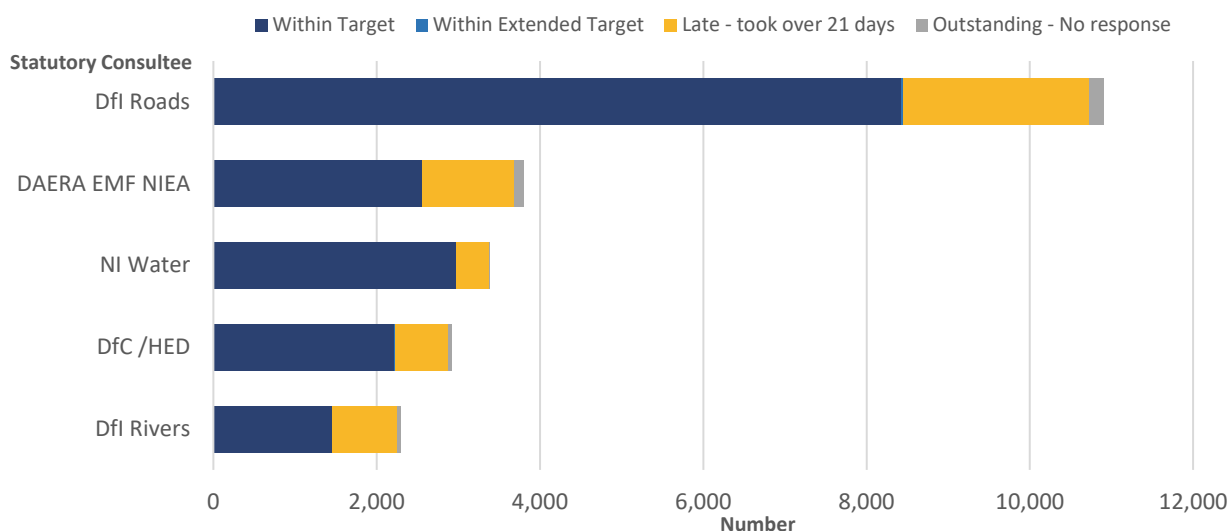


Note: due to the small numbers of responses to statutory consultations on regionally significant ('regional') applications, associated proportions reported in the above chart should be treated with caution; the numbers of such responses have been included as data labels, where relevant.

## 2020/21 in more detail – statutory consultee analysis

Statutory consultations received by statutory consultees for the last four years are presented in Table 1 above<sup>7</sup>. During 2020/21 there were 23,721 statutory consultations received by statutory consultees, down slightly on the year before (24,090).

Chart 6: *Number of responses to statutory consultations received by statutory consultee and response status, 2020/21 (5 most common consultees)*



Of the 23,721 statutory consultations received in 2020/21, DfI Roads received 46%, DAERA EMF NIEA 16%, NI Water 14%, DfC / HED 12% and DfI Rivers 10%; together these five consultees accounted for 98% of the statutory consultations received during the year (Chart 6).<sup>8</sup> This is similar to the position recorded in previous years.

During 2020/21 across all statutory consultees the proportion of responses received on-time<sup>9</sup> ranged from 64 - 100% (compared to a range of 30 - 99% the previous year). In all, 76% of statutory consultation were responded on-time during 2020/21; an increase from the 69% reported for 2019/20.

Table 4 below reports the percentage of statutory consultations received that were responded to on-time by statutory consultees over the last four years.

<sup>7</sup> Note: the number of statutory consultations raised by planning authorities in a given period will equal the number of statutory consultations received by statutory consultees in the same period. In effect, these terms are interchangeable.

<sup>8</sup> See [User guidance](#) for a full list of key statutory consultees.

<sup>9</sup> Includes those responded to within the 21-day target and the extended target, where applicable.



*Table 4: Proportion of responses on-time<sup>10</sup> 2017/18 to 2020/21*

<b>Statutory Consultee</b>	<b>2017/18 % on-time</b>	<b>2018/19 % on-time</b>	<b>2019/20 % on-time</b>	<b>2020/21 % on-time</b>
DfI Roads	70%	76%	72%	77%
DAERA EMF NIEA	87%	72%	70%	68%
NI Water	87%	79%	85%	88%
DfC /HED	78%	74%	72%	76%
DfI Rivers	65%	30%	30%	64%
HSENI	68%	69%	60%	70%
DfE / GSNI	73%	79%	81%	88%
NIHE	93%	63%	59%	84%
Belfast International Airport	83%	60%	77%	79%
Belfast City Airport	96%	100%	99%	100%
City of Derry Airport	86%	73%	93%	94%
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>76%</b>

Over the last year the majority of statutory consultees have recorded improved performance. A fuller breakdown of individual statutory consultee responses and proportion returned on-time over the past four years (2017/18 – 2020/21) has been presented in Table 5 below.

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

*Table 5: Number of responses to statutory consultations received by statutory consultee, 2017/18 - 2020-21*

Statutory Consultee	Year	On-time <sup>11</sup>	Total	% on-time
DfI Roads	2017/18	8,248	11,724	70%
	2018/19	9,067	11,880	76%
	2019/20	7,952	11,063	72%
	2020/21	8,442	10,907	77%
DAERA EMF NIEA	2017/18	3,935	4,504	87%
	2018/19	3,541	4,911	72%
	2019/20	2,984	4,279	70%
	2020/21	2,563	3,795	68%
NI Water	2017/18	3,021	3,487	87%
	2018/19	2,648	3,340	79%
	2019/20	2,651	3,118	85%
	2020/21	2,967	3,388	88%
DfC /HED	2017/18	2,226	2,866	78%
	2018/19	2,426	3,269	74%
	2019/20	2,089	2,912	72%
	2020/21	2,223	2,925	76%
DfI Rivers	2017/18	1,295	1,981	65%
	2018/19	681	2,291	30%
	2019/20	696	2,300	30%
	2020/21	1,460	2,293	64%
HSENI	2017/18	72	106	68%
	2018/19	61	89	69%
	2019/20	55	92	60%
	2020/21	78	111	70%
DfE / GSNI	2017/18	68	93	73%
	2018/19	81	103	79%
	2019/20	87	107	81%
	2020/21	71	81	88%
NIHE	2017/18	13	14	93%
	2018/19	20	32	63%
	2019/20	16	27	59%
	2020/21	26	31	84%
Belfast International Airport	2017/18	74	89	83%
	2018/19	55	92	60%
	2019/20	82	107	77%
	2020/21	81	102	79%
Belfast City Airport	2017/18	23	24	96%
	2018/19	31	31	100%
	2019/20	69	70	99%
	2020/21	72	72	100%
City of Derry Airport	2017/18	6	7	86%
	2018/19	8	11	73%
	2019/20	14	15	93%
	2020/21	15	16	94%
<b>Overall Totals</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>18,981</b>	<b>24,895</b>	<b>76%</b>
	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>18,619</b>	<b>26,049</b>	<b>71%</b>
	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>16,695</b>	<b>24,090</b>	<b>69%</b>
	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>17,998</b>	<b>23,721</b>	<b>76%</b>

<sup>11</sup> Includes those responded to within the 21-day target and the extended target, where applicable.

Table 6 below gives a quarterly breakdown by statutory consultee for 2020/21.

*Table 6: Number of responses to statutory consultations received by statutory consultee, 2020-21 Q1-Q4*

Statutory Consultee	Year	On-time <sup>12</sup>	Total	% on-time
DfI Roads	Apr-Jun	1,680	1,954	86%
	Jul-Sep	2,485	2,966	84%
	Oct-Dec	2,056	2,946	70%
	Jan-Mar	2,221	3,041	73%
	2020/21	8,442	10,907	77%
DAERA EMF NIEA	Apr-Jun	414	740	56%
	Jul-Sep	580	1,004	58%
	Oct-Dec	728	992	73%
	Jan-Mar	841	1,059	79%
	2020/21	2,563	3,795	68%
NI Water	Apr-Jun	550	630	87%
	Jul-Sep	630	883	71%
	Oct-Dec	858	926	93%
	Jan-Mar	929	949	98%
	2020/21	2,967	3,388	88%
DfC /HED	Apr-Jun	407	521	78%
	Jul-Sep	606	807	75%
	Oct-Dec	550	763	72%
	Jan-Mar	660	834	79%
	2020/21	2,223	2,925	76%
DfI Rivers	Apr-Jun	327	425	77%
	Jul-Sep	402	592	68%
	Oct-Dec	365	578	63%
	Jan-Mar	366	698	52%
	2020/21	1,460	2,293	64%
HSENI	Apr-Jun	5	9	56%
	Jul-Sep	13	22	59%
	Oct-Dec	31	46	67%
	Jan-Mar	29	34	85%
	2020/21	78	111	70%
DfE / GSNI	Apr-Jun	13	14	93%
	Jul-Sep	21	22	95%
	Oct-Dec	15	18	83%
	Jan-Mar	22	27	81%
	2020/21	71	81	88%
NIHE	Apr-Jun	4	5	80%
	Jul-Sep	2	4	50%
	Oct-Dec	5	5	100%
	Jan-Mar	15	17	88%
	2020/21	26	31	84%
Belfast International Airport	Apr-Jun	4	12	33%
	Jul-Sep	19	22	86%
	Oct-Dec	25	25	100%
	Jan-Mar	33	43	77%
	2020/21	81	102	79%
Belfast City Airport	Apr-Jun	14	14	100%
	Jul-Sep	18	18	100%
	Oct-Dec	20	20	100%
	Jan-Mar	20	20	100%
	2020/21	72	72	100%
City of Derry Airport	Apr-Jun	0	1	0%
	Jul-Sep	2	2	100%
	Oct-Dec	6	6	100%
	Jan-Mar	7	7	100%
	2020/21	15	16	94%
Overall Totals	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%

<sup>12</sup> Includes those responded to within the 21-day target and the extended target, where applicable.

## **User guidance**

### Notes on data source

An extract of all consultations/advice queries raised from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 was transferred on 5 May 2021 from the Northern Ireland Planning Portal. 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.

### 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

### Future developments

As work progresses in this area it is intended to widen the list of key statutory consultees to include local planning authorities. Work is currently ongoing to quality review and ensure that all statutory planning consultations issued are fully captured. Future reports will include an update of any quality improvements introduced. As a result figures may be revised, however, the scale of any such change is envisaged to be small.