

PRIME MINISTER

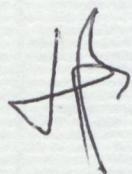
29 April 1986

SAINSBURY MEETING, 30 APRIL - SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

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Sir John telephoned me today. He enlarged on our point about delay. In many ways he says the system is worse than it has ever been, and DoE is highly selective in showing Kenneth Baker and this office a few rosy figures. I attach extracts from documents revealed to Sainsbury, showing that the overall time for appeals (from start to finish) has lengthened from 49 to 56 weeks. Since 1979, the time inspectors take has gone up from 27 to 32 weeks. It cannot be any excuse that appeals coming in to the Department are 'more difficult'.

Sir John also complains that the DoE circular (July 1985) on large stores is ineffective. He suggests that DoE officials may be pushing for total scrapping of Structure Plans for tactical reasons - he warns, be careful. He also wants more thought given to the training of planners and suggests private sector involvement.



HARTLEY BOOTH

S36 Appeals - Median Times for Decision

Weeks

Year/Quarter	Secretary of State		Inspector			OVERALL
	Inquiry	Written	Inquiry	Written	Informal Hearing	
1979	49	38	27	23	-	25)
1980	44	37	27	26	-	27)
1981	44	32	26 86	18 81	-	20) estimate
1982	46	33	27	17	-	18)
1983	48	39	26	19	20	20)
1984	53	42	28	22	25	23
1985	56	41	32	20	28	20
Sept-Dec '84	49	43	29	22	24	23
Jan-Mar '85	55	39	32	21	24	22
Apr-June '85	56	49	30	20	27	21
July-Sept '85	54	37	31	20	30	20
Oct-Dec '85	57	39	32	19	25	20

Table 2: Time Targets for Appeals dealt with by public inquiry

	50% target time (weeks)	75% target time (weeks)	90% target time (weeks)
Current Performance (1985)	32	41	54
1986 2nd quarter (reorganisation of checking and despatch)	28	38	50
1986 4th quarter (tighter targetting of acknowledgement and allocation)	25	32	44
1987 1st quarter (first stage reduction in waiting time for inquiry)	23	28	38
1987 3rd quarter (implementation of word processing complete)	21	26	34
1987 4th quarter (second stage reduction in waiting time for inquiry)	19	22	28
1988 4th quarter (further tightening of target for inquiry waiting time)	15	18	24