

H.W.R. WADE
ADMINISTRATIVE
LAW
FIFTH EDITION

ADMINISTRATIVE LAW

BY

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PREFACE

After its period of explosive growth in the 1960s and 1970s administrative law may now be said to be settling down into a relatively steady state as a coherent and, for the most part, well understood subject. Even so, the rate of change is still such as to demand a new edition of this work after only five years. Any one seeking to understand the latest developments concerning error of law (p. 264) and locus standi (p. 587) will see that the courts are still prone to give a sudden twist to the kaleidoscope and so derange familiar patterns of ideas. The major source of uncertainties is no longer the neglect of fundamental doctrine but the propounding of imaginative judicial theories for improving it. These do not make it easier to up-date a book which aims to display the law as a clear and methodical structure. But they show that the creative spirit is still at work, and that is a healthy sign.

Lord Diplock recently described the progress of administrative law as 'the greatest achievement of the English courts in my judicial lifetime.'¹ Another memorable judicial lifetime, due to close almost as these words are written, is that of the Master of the Rolls, Lord Denning, whose immense contribution to the subject of this book is attested by so many quotations and references throughout its pages. Discriminatory though it is to mention particular judges, every student of administrative law will recognise what has been done for it by Lord Reid, Lord Denning and Lord Diplock, together with their colleagues.

I have tried to keep abreast of events down to the date of this preface, but the exigencies of the proof stage have compelled me to be selective with material arriving later than 12 January 1982. I owe a special debt to Mr M. W. Sayers, Secretary of the Council on Tribunals, who took much trouble to help me with the revision of the table of tribunals at the end of chapter 23.

12 July 1982

H.W.R.W.

TABLE OF STATUTES

A chronological list of statutes will be found after this alphabetical table

Acquisition of Land Act 1981	157,	Aliens Restriction Acts 1914–1919 ...	203,
158, 159, 835, 836		204, 205, 350	
s. 5(2)	859	Antarctic Treaty Act 1967	203,
s. 13	835	204, 205, 350	
s. 14(2)	541	Appellate Jurisdiction Act 1876	35, 71
s. 16	160	Arbitration Act 1889	751
ss. 17–20	160, 833	Atomic Energy Authority Act 1954	144
ss. 23, 24	161	Audit (Local Authorities) Act	
s. 25	161, 611	1927	119, 378
s. 31	160		
Pt. II	159	Backing of Warrants (Republic of Ireland)	
Sched. 1	159, 835, 852	Act 1965	208
Acquisition of Land (Authorisation		Ballot Act 1872	666
Procedure) Act 1946	157, 158	Banking Act 1979	783
Administration of Justice Act 1960	541	Bank of England Act 1694	144
Administration of Justice Act 1969	35	Bank of England Act 1946	149
Administration of Justice (Miscellaneous		Betting and Lotteries Act 1934	666
Provisions) Act 1933		Bill of Rights 1688	27, 351, 362
s. 5	568	376, 750, 756	
s. 7	531	Bill of Rights (Canadian) 1960	444
Administration of Justice (Miscellaneous		Board of Trade Inquiries Act 1872	833
Provisions) Act 1938	568	British Aerospace Act 1980	148
s. 7	540	British Airways Board Act	
s. 9	521	1977	144, 145
Administrative Decisions (Judicial Review)		British Nationality Act 1948	203
Act 1977 (Australia)		British Nationality Act 1981	205
s. 5	278	British Overseas Airways Act 1939	144
s. 13	486	British Telecommunications Act	
Administrative Justice Act 1980		1981	148, 149, 150–151
(Barbados)	293	s. 23	152
Administrative Law Act 1978		s. 70	151
(Victoria)	486, 572	Broadcasting Act 1980	143
Administrative Procedure Act 1946		Broadcasting Act 1981	144
(U.S.A.)	141, 745, 868	ss. 28, 29	150
s. 4	767	s. 54	143, 150
s. 8	869		
s. 10(e)	287, 356	Caravan Sites and Control of Development	
Agricultural Holdings Act 1948	191	Act 1960	537
Agricultural Marketing Act 1958	230,	Pt. 1	173
357, 358, 519		ss. 5, 7, 24	174
Agriculture Act 1947	224	Sched. 1	174
Agriculture (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act		Census Act 1920	770
1954	789	Charitable Trusts Act 1853	834
Agriculture (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act		Child Benefit Act 1979	196, 198
1976	191	ss. 5, 7, 22	198
Aircraft and Shipbuilding Industries Act		s. 19	201
1977	144, 145	Charles 2, ann. 12, c. 23 (1660)	777
Airports Authority Act 1965	144	Civil Aviation Act 1946	144
Aliens Act 1905	203, 206		

Civil Aviation Act 1949	374	Court of Chancery, England, Act	
s. 10	871	1850	523
ss. 40, 41	691	Court of Chancery Procedure Act	
Civil Aviation Act 1971	144	1852	523
s. 1(4)	155	Courts Act 1971	675
s. 3(2)	742, 783	s. 4(1)	675
s. 14	141	s. 10(5)	675
ss. 21, 24(6)	783	ss. 17, 21	71
Civil Aviation Act 1980	148, 742, 783	Sched. 11, Part IV	541
Civil Aviation (Licensing) Act 1960	745	Courts-Martial (Appeals) Act 1968	565
Chequers Estate Act 1917	50	Criminal Law Act 1967	133, 135, 144
Cheneveng Estate Act 1959	50	Crown Proceedings, Act 1947	32, 67,
Coal Industry Nationalisation Act		135, 517, 519, 646, 648, 665, 667, 678,	
1946	144, 625	697, 701, 702, 718, 720, 722, 758	
Coast Protection Act 1949	107, 612	s. 1	681, 709, 710
Commissioner for Complaints Act		s. 2(1)	703, 707
(Northern Ireland) 1969	92, 93	s. 2(2)	704
Common Law Procedure Act 1854	624	s. 2(3)	704
Commonwealth Immigrants Act		s. 2(4)	703
1962	203–204, 206	s. 2(5)	706
Commonwealth Immigrants Act		s. 2(6)	705
1968	203–204	s. 4	714
Community Land Act		s. 8	709
1975	163, 179, 181, 689, 695, 737	s. 9	151, 707
s. 3(2)	180	s. 10	708
s. 7	180	Part II (ss. 13–23)	704
s. 8	180	s. 17	712
s. 15	180	s. 19(3)	526
s. 25	689	s. 21(1)	713
s. 47	688	s. 21(2)	518, 714
Sched. 1	689	s. 23	714
Sched. 4	180	s. 23(3)	532
Sched. 4, para 2	852, 861	s. 23(3)(f)	704
Sched. 5	181	s. 25(3), (4)	713
Companies Act 1948		s. 28	714
s. 32	681	s. 31(1)	717
s. 441(3)	604	s. 37	713
Companies Clauses Consolidation Act		s. 38(2)	705, 714
1845	681	s. 40(5)	710
Compulsory Purchase Act 1965	159	s. 40(2)	714
s. 4	161, 231	s. 40(2)(b), (c)	709
s. 5	161	s. 40(2)(f)	704, 715
s. 7	690, 691	s. 40(5)	644
ss. 8, 9	162	s. 41	714
s. 10	690, 691	s. 250	715
s. 10(2)	161, 691	Sched. 1	710, 714
2nd Sched.	161		
Compulsory Purchase (Vesting		Defence Act 1842	157, 158, 687
Declarations) Act 1981	158, 162	Defence of the Realm Act	
Constables Protection Act 1751	33	1914	736, 740, 757
Contempt of Court Act 1981	809	Deposit of Poisonous Waste Act	
Contracts of Employment Act 1972	716	1972	664
Control of Office Development Act		Development Land Tax Act	
1977	174	1976	688, 689, 695
Corporate Bodies Contracts Act 1960 ..	681	Docks and Harbours Act 1966	802
Countryside Act 1968	176		
County Courts Act 1959	604		
s. 8(2)	71	Education Act 1870	834
s. 107	601	Education Act 1902	99

Education Act 1944	99, 106, 220, 369, 668	s. 7	784
s. 6	122	European Communities Act 1972	27, 443, 737, 774-5
s. 11	121	s. 2(2)	739
s. 68	398-399	s. 2(4)	15, 29, 739, 774
s. 88	112	s. 5	738
s. 93	860	s. 9	216
s. 99	121, 626	Sched. 2	739
Sched. 1	122	Sched. 2, para. (2)	770
Sched. 6	784	Evidence Act 1851	451, 806, 859
Education Act 1976	398	Export Credits Guarantees Act	
Edward 4, ann. 1, c. 1 (1461)	301	1975	371-2
Electric Lighting Act 1882	833	Extradition Acts 1870-1935	208, 209
Electricity Act 1947	144	Factories Act 1961	704, 739, 767
s. 7	141, 143	Fair Rents Act (N.Z.)	244
s. 66	861	Family Allowances Act 1945	198
Electricity Act 1957	144, 155	Family Allowances Act 1959	788, 801
Emergency laws (Re-enactments and Repeals) Act 1964	740	Family Allowances Act 1965	198
Emergency Powers Act 1920	740, 741, 759	Family Income Supplements Act	
Emergency Powers Act 1964	740	1970	196, 202
Emergency Powers (Defence) Act		Federal Court Act 1970 (Canada)	278
1939	214, 326, 394, 740, 757	Federal Court Act 1971 (Canada)	293
Employment Act 1980		Finance Act 1920	695
s. 4	790, 802	Finance Act 1972	738, 786
ss. 6-8	68, 743	Finance Act 1974	695
s. 7	743	Finance (1909-1910) Act 1910	695
s. 12	69	Fire Services (Emergency Provisions) Act 1941	756
Employment Protection Act 1975		Fishing Vessels (Safety Provisions) Act 1970	742
s. 6	69, 743	Food and Drugs Act 1955	422
Employment Protection (Consolidation) Act 1978	55, 68, 112	Foreign Compensation Act 1950	798
s. 11	802	Foreign Compensation Act 1969	607, 798
s. 12	69	s. 3(2)	606
s. 19	69	s. 3(10)	417, 606
s. 23	55	s. 3(3), (9)	606
ss. 27-30	69	s. 4(4)	603
ss. 34, 35	69	Foreign Compensation Acts	
ss. 55-62	68	1950-1969	720
s. 58	55	Foreign Marriage Act 1892	759
s. 65	69	Forestry Act 1967	158
s. 67	802	Freedom of Information Act 1967 (U.S.A.)	60, 61
s. 71	69	Fugitive Offenders Act 1881	209, 544
ss. 73-76	68	1967	208, 209, 544
s. 91	802	Furnished Houses (Rent Control) Act 1946	191, 770
s. 111	68	Gaming Act 1968	496, 727
s. 128	781	Gas Act 1948	144, 654
s. 130	80, 806	Gas Act 1965	664
s. 135	770, 799	Gas Act 1972	143, 144
s. 136	790	General Inclosure Act 1845	832
Part V	68	General Rate Act 1967	113, 738
Part VIII	68	s. 39	808
Sched. 9	806	s. 48	114
Sched. 11	770	s. 49	114
Equal Pay Act 1970		Genocide Act 1969	208
s. 1(8)	69, 716		
s. 2	802		
Estate Agents Act 1979	789		

Geo. 2, ann. 13, c. 18, (1740)	568	s. 56	623
Government of Ireland Act 1920	687	s. 58	663
		ss. 59–63	190
Habeas Corpus Act 1679	27, 541	s. 52	191, 802
Habeas Corpus Act 1816	307, 541	Part VI	183
Habeas Corpus Act 1862	541	Sched. 3	188
Health Services Act 1976	194	Housing and Town Planning Act	
Health Services Act 1980	194	1909	99, 158, 163
Highway Act 1835		Housing and Town Planning Act	
s. 72	619	1919	163
s. 107	601, 663	Housing Finance Act 1972	119,
Highways Act 1959	367, 368, 663		182, 627
Highways Act 1980	367, 368	s. 18	188
s. 56	623	s. 51	798
s. 58	663	s. 64	191
s. 59	623	s. 95	121, 627
s. 186	119	Housing Finance (Special Provisions)	
s. 302	861	Act 1975	119, 627
Sched. 1	7, 14, 835, 852	Housing (Financial Provisions) Act	
Part III	852	1958	120
Highways (Miscellaneous Provisions)		Housing (Homeless Persons) Act	
Act 1961	663, 664	1977	187, 188, 668, 743
House of Commons Disqualification		Housing of the Working Classes Act	
Act 1976	58	1890	182
Housing Act 1925	601, 760	Housing Rents and Subsidies Act	
Housing Act 1930	183, 608–9	1975	183
Housing Act 1935	183	Immigration Act 1971	203, 204, 205,
Housing Act 1949	183		206, 790
Housing Act 1957	106, 158, 183, 834	ss. 1, 2	204
s. 4	183, 186	ss. 13(5), 14(3), 15(4)	508
s. 9	186	s. 19	744
s. 16	186, 473	s. 33	350
s. 17	186, 187	Part II	206, 788
ss. 18, 27	187	Sched 2, para. 4(2)(c)	350
Part III (ss. 42–75)	160, 183	Immigration Appeals Act	
ss. 42, 43	183	1969	203, 204, 508
s. 43(2)	184	Import Duties Act 1958	737
ss. 46, 48, 55	185	s. 13	770
ss. 59, 60, 68	690	Income and Corporation Taxes Act	
s. 92	182	1970	770
s. 111	188, 404	Indemnity Act 1920	740
s. 112	119	Independent Broadcasting Authority	
ss. 171–177	121	Act 1973	155
ss. 171–173	626	Industrial Development Act	
Sched. 1	835	1966	174
Sched. 3	184, 835	Industrial Relations Act	
Sched. 4	185	1971	112, 446, 499, 528
Sched. 5	690	Industrial Training Act 1964	748
Sched. 5, para. 2	184	s. 12	781, 802
Sched. 5, para. 5(4)	836	Industry Act 1972	351
Sched. 7	835	Industry Act 1975	140, 144
Housing Act 1961	185	s. 1	139
Housing Act 1964	139, 616	s. 2(2)	140
Housing Act 1969	185	s. 7	145, 149
Housing Act 1974	185, 186, 604, 680	Sched. 3	790
Housing Act 1980	183, 189	Industry Act 1980	140
s. 1	189	Interpretation Act 1978	
s. 28	188	s. 12	225, 747

s. 14	747, 760	s. 2	95
s. 16	747	s. 12(6)	224
s. 17	747	s. 119	383
Sched. 1	50	s. 193(6)	429
Iron and Steel Act 1949	144	s. 193(8)	224, 429
Iron and Steel Act 1953	144	Limitation Act 1939	613, 677
Iron and Steel Act 1967	144	Limitation Act 1980	677, 715
Iron and Steel Act 1975	144	Local Authorities (Goods and	
Iron and Steel Act 1981	149	Services) Act 1970	680
Judicature Acts 1873–1875	523,	Local Authorities Social Services	
	624, 632, 801	Act 1970	195
Judicature Amendment Act 1968		s. 6	112
(N.Z.)	13	Sched. 1	107
Judicature Amendment Act 1972		Local Government Act 1886	98, 832
(N.Z.)	572	Local Government Act 1888	96,
Judicial Pensions Act 1959	71		98, 105, 832
Judicial Review Procedure Act		Local Government Act 1894	97, 98
1971 (Ontario)	572		99, 832, 833, 834
Justices Jurisdiction Act		Local Government Act	
1742	423, 428	1929	99, 114, 832
Justices of the Peace Act 1949	72	Local Government Act	
Justices Protection Act 1848	674	1933	97, 99, 108, 110, 832
Labouring Classes Lodging Houses Act		s. 84	522
1851	182	s. 85	325
Land Commission (Dissolution) Act		ss. 98–104	112
1971	739	s. 229	118
Land Compensation Act 1961	687, 688	s. 276	534
s. 5(4)	688	Local Government Act 1948	101, 114
s. 10	690	Local Government Act 1958	
s. 31	162	s. 28	100, 101
Sched. 2	690	s. 34	99, 114
Land Compensation Act 1973	687,	Local Government Act 1966	114
	690, 691, 692, 696	Local Government Act 1972	94, 100,
Land Drainage Act 1930	95, 653		110, 129, 216, 325, 861
Land Powers (Defence) Act 1958	157	s. 1(4)	105
Land Registration Act 1925	704	s. 1(6)	104
Landlord and Tenant Act 1954	192	s. 1(9)–(11)	103
Lands Clauses Consolidation Act		s. 1(10)	115
1845	157, 158, 161	s. 2	104
	686, 687, 690, 691	s. 6	109
Lands Tribunal Act 1949	786	s. 7	108, 109
s. 2	784	s. 8	106
s. 3(3)	789	ss. 9, 10, 11, 13	105
s. 3(5)	811	s. 14(2)	104
Law of Property Act 1925	192	s. 16	109
Law Reform (Limitation of Actions,		s. 20(4)	104
etc.) Act 1954	613, 677	s. 20(6)	115
Law Reform (Personal Injuries) Act		s. 21	104
1948	708	ss. 28–9, 46–9, 53–4, 56	105
Laying of Documents (Interpretation)		ss. 60, 61	851
Act 1948	766	s. 70	105
Leasehold Reform Act 1967	192, 686	s. 82	429
Legal Aid Act 1974	811	s. 85	110
Legal Aid Act 1979	811	s. 92	522
Licensing Act 1729	95	s. 94	111, 429
Licensing Act 1964	97	s. 95	111
		s. 97	111, 429
		s. 100	111
		s. 101	110, 170, 325, 326, 680

s. 102	111, 325	Local Government Acts 1858–1933 ...	832
s. 104	110	Local Government (Boundary Commission)	
ss. 105, 106	111	Act 1945	101
s. 111	115, 116, 217	Local Government Boundary Commission	
s. 112	112	(Dissolution) Act 1949	101
s. 117	112, 113	Local Government (County Boroughs and	
s. 121	159	Adjustments) Act 1926	99
ss. 122, 123	121	Local Government (Financial Provisions)	
s. 125	159	Act 1963	116
s. 137	116	Local Government, Planning and Land Act	
ss. 149, 150	113	1980	110, 179
ss. 155, 156	117	s. 33	114
s. 157	118	s. 86	166
s. 159(2)	118	s. 87	170
s. 161	117, 118	s. 88	167
s. 162	118	s. 90	175
s. 164	117	s. 91	176
s. 165	118	s. 101	179–180, 689, 861
s. 166	120	s. 112	692
ss. 173, 174	110	s. 113	86, 692
Part IX (ss. 179–215)	106	s. 121	688
s. 179(4)	106	s. 124	178
s. 182	166, 168	s. 136	179
s. 185	178	s. 147	696
s. 222	534	ss. 183, 188	120
s. 227	323	Part I	120
s. 235	119, 733	Part III	116
s. 236	119, 120	Part VI	115
s. 237	120	Part VIII	116
s. 240	833	Part XII	179
s. 245	99, 104	Part XVI	179
s. 246	104	Sched. 17, para. 11	181
s. 250	121, 832, 835, 851	Sched. 17, paras. 8, 13	182
	859, 860	Local Government (Scotland) Act	
s. 254	121	1973	104
s. 270(3)	112	Local Government (Scotland) Act	
Sched. 1	104	1975	123
Sched. 2	106	Local Government Superannuation	
Sched. 2, paras. 6, 7	109	Act 1937	427
Sched. 4	104	Local Government Superannuation	
Sched. 12	110	Act 1953	428
Sched. 12 para. 47	111	Local Government (Termination of Reviews)	
Sched. 13	115	Act 1967	101
Sched. 18	178	London Government Act	
Sched. 29 para. 4	112	1899	97, 98, 105
Local Government Act 1974	78, 94	London Government Act 1963	102
s. 2	115	s. 1(2)	106, 759
s. 5(1), (2)	120	s. 1(5)	106
s. 11	114	s. 30	106
s. 23	123, 125	s. 82	106
s. 24	125		
s. 25	123		
s. 26	124, 126	Magna Carta 1215	387
s. 27	124	Markets and Fairs Clauses Act	
ss. 30, 32, 33	125	1847	98
s. 34	123, 125	Medical Act 1956	566
Sched. 2, Part III	123	Medical Act 1969	566
Sched. 5, Part I	114	Medical Act 1978	566
Local Government Act 1978	125	Medicines Act 1968	611, 615

Mental Health Act 1959		National Health Service Act 1946	
ss. 66(6), 123	781	100, 107, 149, 192, 193, 597, 737	
ss. 97, 98	193	s. 34(2)	799
s. 124	790, 813	s. 43	193
s. 141	33, 668, 703, 809	s. 72	33
Merchant Shipping Act 1894	871	National Health Service Act	
Metropolis Management Act 1855	98	1977	81, 91, 149, 153, 625
Metropolitan Police Act 1829	131		737, 861
Metropolitan Sewers Act 1848	98	s. 7	799
Ministerial and Other Salaries Act		s. 8	139
1972	50	s. 10	194
Ministers of the Crown Act 1937	50	s. 13	194, 742
Ministers of the Crown Act 1975	51	s. 14	194
Ministry of Social Security Act 1966		s. 15	788
see Supplementary Benefit Act 1966		s. 16	781
Ministry of Transport Act 1919	702	s. 17	742
Municipal Corporations Act		s. 18	194, 742
1835	98, 99, 128	ss. 19, 20, 21, 22	194
Municipal Corporations Act		s. 46	788
1882	98, 462 (s. 191)	s. 84	92, 832, 861
Municipal Corporations Act 1883	98	s. 109	92
		s. 111	91
National Health Service (Invalid Direction)		s. 115	92
Act 1980	364	s. 116	91, 92
National Health Service Reorganisation		ss. 117, 119	91
Act 1973	79, 90, 91, 192, 193	Sched. 4	788
National Health Service (Scotland)		Sched. 5, Part II	788
Act 1972	91	Sched. 5, para. 15	155
National Insurance Act 1911	100, 195, 738, 778	Sched. 13	91
s. 53(1)	68		
s. 66(1)	619	Obscene Publications Act 1959	360
s. 107(3)	68	Occupiers' Liability Act 1957	656, 704
National Insurance Act 1946	196	Offices Shops and Railway Premises	
National Insurance Act 1965	619	Act 1963	767
National Insurance Act 1966	200, 788, 799, 801	Official Secrets Act 1911	61, 722
		Official Secrets Acts 1911–1939	60, 88, 133
National Insurance Act		Old Age Pensions Act 1908	195, 778
1972	200, 599, 780		
National Insurance (Industrial		Parliament Act 1911	27
Injuries) Act 1946	196, 199	Parliament Act 1949	27
National Insurance Regulations		Parliamentary Commissioner Act	
(Validation) Act 1972	757	1967	50, 75, 76, 78, 81, 91, 92, 123, 124, 125
Naturalisation Act 1870	521	s. 1	77
New Towns Act 1946	177, 437	s. 1(5)	90, 867
New Towns Act 1965	177	s. 4	78
New Towns Act 1981	149, 158, 177	s. 4(2)	51
s. 1	177	s. 5(1)	76, 81, 86, 638
s. 3	139	s. 5(2)	83
Sched. 1, paras. (1), (7)	177	s. 5(3)	78
Sched. 1, para. (3)	851	s. 5(5)	87, 638
Sched. 4, para. 4(3)	160	s. 6(1)	81, 87
Northern Ireland Act 1974	93, 773	s. 6(2), (3), (4)	87
Nuclear Installations Act 1965	664	s. 7	87
Nuclear Installations Act 1969	664	s. 8(3)	88
National Economy Act 1931	71	s. 8(4)	51, 87
National Fire Service Regulations		ss. 8, 9	87
(Indemnity) Act 1944	756	s. 10	76, 88
		s. 11	88

s. 13	92	Protection from Eviction Act 1977	191
Sched. 2	78	Public Authorities Protection Act	
Sched. 3	78	1893	677
Sched. 3, para. 10	70	Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings)	
Parliamentary Commissioner Act		Act 1960	111
1969 (Northern Ireland)	92	Public Health Act 1848	98, 832
Parliamentary Commissioner (Consular		Public Health Act 1872	99
Complaints) Act 1981	78, 87	Public Health Act 1875	99, 157-158,
Parliamentary Commissioner (Ombudsman)		182, 241, 429, 627, 832	
Act 1962 (N.Z.)	75, 78, 83	s. 258	428
Patents Act 1949	799	s. 265	33, 656
Petitions of Right Act		s. 268	619
1860	699, 709, 710	s. 299	626
Petroleum and Submarine Pipe-lines		Public Health Act 1936	155, 177,
Act 1975	140, 144	654, 659, 832	
s. 1(5)	155	s. 6	122
s. 4	145, 149	s. 31	654
s. 15	145	ss. 61, 81	119
Pipe-lines Act 1962	157, 158	s. 100	534
Planning Inquiries (Attendance of		s. 104	119
Public) Act 1982	859	ss. 171-7	121
Police Act 1946	129	s. 305	656
Police Act 1964	129, 134, 851	s. 322	626
s. 2	129	Public Inquiries Act 1971	
s. 3	122	(Ontario)	572
s. 5(4)	130	Public Service Vehicles (Travel	
s. 5(5)	130	Concessions) Act 1955	380
s. 7	130		
s. 12	132	Quarter Sessions Act 1849	274, 600
s. 28	131		
s. 29	130	Race Relations Act 1968	68, 715
s. 30	132	Race Relations Act 1976	68, 802
s. 32	861	Railway Clauses Consolidation Act	
s. 33	130	1845	650
s. 37	137	Railway Regulation Act 1871	870
ss. 45(4), 46(3)	130	Rating and Valuation Act 1925	113
s. 48	135	Reform Act 1832	98, 99
s. 49	137	Reform Act 1884	99
Sched. 3	494	Rent Act 1957	189, 191, 372, 378
Police Act 1976	137	Rent Act 1965	190, 221, 798
Police (Scotland) Act 1956	129	Rent Act 1974	191, 627, 802
Poor Law Acts 1834-1930	736	Rent Act 1977	189
Poor Law Amendment Act 1834	96, 735	ss. 2, 4, 17, 51-6, 98(2)	190
Poor Relief Act 1601	97, 113	Parts III, IV	190
Post Office Act 1953	151	ss. 21, 22	191
Post Office Act 1969	150	Sched. 10	784
s. 9(4)	150	Representation of the People Act	
s. 14	143	1949	109, 670
ss. 29, 30	707	Representation of the People Act	
s. 55	141	1969	109
Prevention of Corruption Acts		Requisitioned Land and War Works	
1889-1916	155	Acts 1945 & 1948	157
Prevention of Fraud (Investments)		Road Traffic Act 1960	704, 715
Act 1958	803	Road Traffic Act 1972	702
Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary		Rolls Royce (Purchase) Act	
Provisions) Act 1976	204	1971	140, 144
Prison Act 1952	219, 668, 743	Rules Publication Act 1893	736,
Proclamations, Statute of, 1539	735	761-2, 763, 765, 767	
Promissory Oaths Act 1868	70		

Scientific Societies Act 1843	241-2	s. 14	789
Scotland Act 1978	93	s. 10	768
Selective Employment Payments Act 1966	802	Social Security (No. 2) Act 1980	201, 202
Settlement, Act of, 1700	521	s. 1	198
Sewers, Statute of, 1427	95	s. 4	196, 197
Sewers, Statute of, 1531	95, 735	Social Security Pensions Act 1975	197
Sex Discrimination Act 1975	69, 739, 775	Solicitors Act 1957	755
s. 63	802	Solicitors Act 1974	566
s. 85	716	Statute Law Revision Act 1888	568
Small Tenements Recovery Act 1838	245	Statutory Instruments Act 1946	50, 739, 761, 762, 766, 767, 774
Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1908	601	s. 2	763
Social Security Act 1973	196, 201	s. 3(2)	764
Social Security Act 1975	196, 607, 626	s. 4	765
s. 1(5)	198	s. 5	770
s. 12	196	ss. 6, 8	763
s. 13(1), 18, 19, 20	197	s. 10	50
Part II, ch. III	197	Statutory Orders (Special Procedure) Act 1945	158, 160, 833
s. 50	196, 199	Statutory Orders (Special Procedure) Act 1965	833
s. 56	199	Statutory Powers Procedure Act 1971 (Ontario)	572
ss. 57-75	200	Summary Jurisdiction Act 1848 ...	274, 289
s. 93(3)	861	Summary Jurisdiction Act 1857	274, 282, 599
ss. 93-5	783	Superannuation Act 1972	428
s. 93, 95	199	Supplementary Benefit Act 1966	201, 285, 607
s. 96	199	Supplementary Benefits Act 1976	196, 201
s. 97(3)	786	ss. 1, 2	201
ss. 97-9	198	s. 4	202
ss. 97-101	199, 200	s. 15, s. 15A	202
ss. 97-119	787	Sched. 1	201
s. 104	199, 812	Supplies and Services (Extended Purposes) Act 1947	736
ss. 105, 106	199, 788	Suppression of Terrorism Act 1978	209
ss. 107-113	788	Supreme Court Act 1981	35, 70
ss. 108-112	200	Taxes Management Act 1970	684
s. 110	200	s. 33(2)	683
s. 117	199, 200	s. 50	807
ss. 124, 125	198, 200	s. 56	789
s. 127	68, 715	Telegraph Act 1863	833
s. 128	715	Television Act 1954	144, 150
s. 141	196	Town and Country Amenities Act 1974	175
Sched. 3	197	Town and Country Planning Act 1932	163
Sched. 4	198	Town and Country Planning Act 1944	164
Part V	199	Town and Country Planning Act 1947	164, 165, 456, 688, 693, 694
Social Security Act 1979	202		
s. 9	199		
s. 6	787		
Social Security Act 1980	201		
ss. 9, 10	196		
s. 10	768		
ss. 14, 15	199		
s. 6	201		
s. 1	198		
2nd Sched., Part II	201		
3rd Sched., Part II	196		
ss. 12-15	787		

Town and Country Planning Act 1953	693	s. 166, 168, 169	694
Town and Country Planning Act 1954	693, 688	s. 170	170
Town and Country Planning Act 1959	620, 688, (693), 843, 856	s. 171-5	175, 694
Town and Country Planning Act 1962	224, 847	s. 177	173
Town and Country Planning Act 1968	166, 343	ss. 180, 186, 188, 189	695
ss. 61-63	862	s. 190	696
s. 64	343	s. 192	692, 696
Town and Country Planning Act 1971	106, 107, 164-81, 716, 745	ss. 193-207	696
s. 1	122	ss. 209-214	176
s. 4	325	s. 242	168, 608, 611, 615
s. 4(5)	325	s. 243	173, 608, 611
s. 4(6)	650	s. 244	168, 611
ss. 6-10	166	s. 245	608, 611
s. 9(4)	456, 743	ss. 246, 247	172
s. 13	168	s. 270	171
s. 14(2), (3)	167	s. 276	626
s. 16	166, 168	s. 277	175
s. 22	168	s. 282	832, 835, 859
s. 22(2)	169	s. 289	368
s. 24	169, 171, 742	Sched. 1	122, 176
ss. 26, 27	170	Sched. 2	325
s. 29(1)	365	Sched. 8	689, 694
ss. 34-35	170	Sched. 9	172, 328, 863
s. 35(1)	615	Sched. 11, Part I	175
s. 36	171, 172, 489	Sched. 11, Parts VII, VIII	694
s. 37	170	Sched. 13	174
s. 40	171	Part II	166
s. 45	170, 694	Town and Country Planning (Amendment) Act 1972	166, 167, 743, 852
s. 46	170	Town and Country Planning (Amendment) Act 1977	173
ss. 47, 48	862	Town and Country Planning (Interim Development) Act 1943	164
s. 51	170, 694	Town Development Act 1952	178
s. 52	680	Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847 ..	98
s. 53	170	Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Act 1927	55
ss. 54, 55, 58	175	Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Act 1946	55
ss. 59-83	176	Trade Union and Labour Relations Act 1974	417, 446, 743
s. 60	175, 176	Trade Union and Labour Relations (Amendment) Act 1976	446
s. 61	175	Transport Act 1947	144
ss. 63, 64	176	Transport Act 1962	144
s. 65	175	s. 1	156
ss. 67, 74, 85	174	s. 9	122
s. 87	172, 173	s. 30	155
s. 88	173	ss. 43, 45	783
s. 88(4)	225	s. 67	733
ss. 89, 90, 91	173	s. 70	783
s. 102	175	Sched. 5	122
ss. 104-7, 109	176	Sched. 10	789
s. 112	160, 176	Transport Act 1968	144
s. 113	159, 160	Transport Act 1980	148
ss. 114-117	176	Transport Act 1981	149
s. 132	160, 852	Transport (London) Act 1969	626
s. 158	694	Travel Concessions Act 1964	380
s. 164	170		

Tribunals and Inquiries Act	
1958	18, 283, 286, 486, 607
	776, 777, 789, 791, 792, 796,
	799, 822, 844, 861, 871
s. 1(1)(c)	842, 862
ss. 1–3	796
s. 11	605
s. 12	812
s. 12(1)	847
s. 12(3)	282
s. 14	601
Tribunals and Inquiries Act	
1971	18, 168, 223, 608, 776, 780
	783, 786, 796, 808, 814, 829
	832, 836, 852, 854, 860, 863
ss. 2, 4	798
s. 5	796
s. 7	784, 797
s. 8	72, 797
s. 10	796, 797, 804
s. 11	607, 843, 856
s. 12	812, 847
s. 12(2)	756, 767
s. 12(3)	813, 861
s. 12(5)	282
s. 12(6)	813
s. 13	789, 797, 815
s. 13(2), (3)	815
s. 13(5)	790
s. 14	607, 645
s. 15	789, 797
s. 19	861
s. 19(1)	843, 848
	s. 19(4)
	Sched. 9, Part 7
Tribunals of Inquiry (Evidence)	
Act 1921	872, 873, 874
Trunk Roads Act 1936	100
Unemployment Act 1934	100
Union Assessment Committee Amendment	
Act 1864	423
Universities of Oxford and Cambridge	
Act 1923	733
Vaccine Damage Payments Act	
1979	781
Vehicle and Driving Licences Act	
1969	108
Vehicles (Excise) Act 1971	108
Vestries Act 1831	97
Wales Act 1978	93
War Charges Validity Act 1925	740
War Damage Act 1965	685
Water Act 1973	122, 625, 733, 738
Water Act 1981	665
Westminster, Statute of, 1931	27
Wheat Act 1932	751
Wireless Telegraphy Act 1904	756
Wireless Telegraphy Act 1949	362
Wireless Telegraphy (Validation of	
Charges) Act 1954	757
W. & M., ann. 5 & 6, c. 20 (1694)	144
Workmen's Compensation Acts	
1897–1945	195, 199, 778, 779

CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF STATUTES

For page references see the preceding alphabetical table

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1215 (1225) Magna Carta | 1860 Petitions of Right Act |
| 1427 Statute of Sewers | 1862 Habeas Corpus Act |
| 1461 Statute 1 Edw. 4, c. 1 | 1863 Telegraph Act |
| 1531 Statute of Sewers | 1864 Union Assessment Committee |
| 1539 Statute of Proclamations | Amendment Act |
| 1601 Poor Relief Act | 1868 Promissory Oaths Act |
| 1660 Statute 12 Charles 2, c. 23 | 1870 Education Act |
| 1679 Habeas Corpus Act | 1870 Naturalisation Act |
| 1689 Bill of Rights | 1870–1935 Extradition Acts |
| 1694 Bank of England Act | 1871 Railway Regulation Act |
| 1700 Act of Settlement | 1872 Ballot Act |
| 1729 Licensing Act | 1872 Board of Trade Inquiries Act |
| 1740 13 Geo. 2, c. 18 | 1872 Public Health Act |
| 1742 Justices Jurisdiction Act | 1873–1875 Judicature Acts |
| 1751 Constables Protection Act | 1875 Public Health Act |
| 1816 Habeas Corpus Act | 1876 Appellate Jurisdiction Act |
| 1829 Metropolitan Police Act | 1881 Fugitive Offenders Act |
| 1831 Vestries Act | 1882 Electric Lighting Act |
| 1832 Reform Act | 1882 Municipal Corporations Act |
| 1834 Poor Law Act | 1883 Municipal Corporations Act |
| 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act | 1884 Reform Act |
| 1834 1930 Poor Law Acts | 1886 Local Government Act |
| 1835 Highway Act | 1888 Local Government Act |
| 1835 Municipal Corporations Act | 1888 Statute Law Revision Act |
| 1838 Small Tenements Recovery Act | 1889 Arbitration Act |
| 1842 Defence Act | 1889 Prevention of Corruption Acts |
| 1843 Scientific Societies Act | 1890 Housing of the Working Classes Act |
| 1845 Companies Clauses Consolidation Act | 1892 Foreign Marriage Act |
| 1845 General Inclosure Act | 1893 Public Authorities Protection Act |
| 1845 Lands Clauses Consolidation Act | 1893 Rules Publication Act |
| 1845 Railways Clauses Consolidation Act | 1894 Local Government Act |
| 1847 Markets and Fairs Clauses Act | 1894 Merchant Shipping Act |
| 1847 Towns Improvement Clauses Act | 1897–1945 Workmen's Compensation |
| 1848 Justices Protection Act | Acts |
| 1848 Metropolitan Sewers Act | 1889 London Government Act |
| 1848 Public Health Act | 1902 Education Act |
| 1848 Summary Jurisdiction Act | 1904 Wireless Telegraphy Act |
| 1849 Quarter Sessions Act | 1905 Aliene Act |
| 1850 Court of Chancery, England, Act | 1908 Old Age Pensions Act |
| 1851 Evidence Act | 1908 Smallholdings and Allotments Act |
| 1851 Labouring Classes Lodging Houses | 1909 Housing and Town Planning Act |
| Act | 1910 Finance (1909–1910) Act |
| 1852 Court of Chancery Procedure Act | 1911 National Insurance Act |
| 1853 Charitable Trusts Act | 1911 Parliament Act |
| 1854 Common Law Procedure Act | 1911–1939 Official Secrets Acts |
| 1855 Metropolis Management Act | 1914 Defence of the Realm Act |
| 1857 Summary Jurisdiction Act | 1914–1919 Aliens Restriction Acts |
| 1858–1933 Local Government Acts | 1917 Chequers Estate Act |

- | | | | |
|------|--|-----------|--|
| 1919 | Housing Town Planning &c Act | 1946 | Acquisition of Land (Authorisation Procedure) Act |
| 1919 | Ministry of Transport Act | 1946 | Administrative Procedure Act (U.S.A.) |
| 1920 | Census Act | 1946 | Bank of England Act |
| 1920 | Emergency Powers Act | 1946 | Civil Aviation Act |
| 1920 | Finance Act | 1946 | Coal Industry Nationalisation Act |
| 1920 | Government of Ireland Act | 1946 | Furnished Houses (Rent Control) Act |
| 1920 | Indemnity Act | 1946 | National Health Service Act |
| 1921 | Tribunals of Inquiry (Evidence) Act | 1946 | National Insurance Act |
| 1923 | Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act | 1946 | National Insurance (Industrial Injuries) Act |
| 1925 | Housing Act | 1946 | New Towns Act |
| 1925 | Judicature Act | 1946 | Police Act |
| 1925 | Land Registration Act | 1946 | Statutory Instruments Act |
| 1925 | Law of Property Act | 1946 | Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Act |
| 1925 | Rating and Valuation Act | 1947 | Agriculture Act |
| 1925 | War Charges Validity Act | 1947 | Crown Proceedings Act |
| 1926 | Local Government (County Boroughs and Adjustments) Act | 1947 | Electricity Act |
| 1927 | Audit (Local Authorities) Act | 1947 | Supplies and Services (Extended Purposes) Act |
| 1927 | Police (Appeals) Act | 1947 | Town and Country Planning Act |
| 1927 | Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Act | 1947 | Transport Act |
| 1929 | Local Government Act | 1948 | Agricultural Holdings Act |
| 1930 | Housing Act | 1948 | British Nationality Act |
| 1930 | Land Drainage Act | 1948 | Companies Act |
| 1931 | National Economy Act | 1948 | Gas Act |
| 1931 | Statute of Westminster | 1948 | Law Reform (Personal Injuries) Act |
| 1932 | Town and Country Planning Act | 1948 | Laying of Documents (Interpretation) Act |
| 1932 | Wheat Act | 1948 | Local Government Act |
| 1933 | Administration of Justice (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act | 1948 | Requisitioned Land and War Works Act |
| 1933 | Local Government Act | 1949 | Civil Aviation Act |
| 1934 | Betting and Lotteries Act | 1949 | Coast Protection Act |
| 1934 | Unemployment Act | 1949 | Housing Act |
| 1935 | Housing Act | 1949 | Iron and Steel Act |
| 1936 | Public Health Act | 1949 | Justices of the Peace Act |
| 1936 | Trunk Roads Act | 1949 | Lands Tribunal Act |
| 1937 | Local Government Superannuation Act | 1949 | Local Government Boundary Commission (Dissolution) Act |
| 1937 | Ministers of the Crown Act | 1949 | Parliament Act |
| 1938 | Administration of Justice (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act | 1949 | Patents Act |
| 1939 | British Overseas Airways Act | 1949 | Representation of the People Act |
| 1939 | Emergency Powers (Defence) Act | 1950-1969 | Foreign Compensation Acts |
| 1939 | Limitation Act | 1952 | Prison Act |
| 1941 | Fire Services (Emergency Provisions) Act | 1953 | Iron and Steel Act |
| 1943 | Town and Country Planning (Interim Development) Act | 1953 | Local Government Superannuation Act |
| 1944 | Education Act | 1953 | Post Office Act |
| 1944 | National Service Regulations (Indemnity) Act | 1953 | Town and Country Planning Act |
| 1944 | Town and Country Planning Act | 1954 | Agriculture (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act |
| 1945 | Family Allowances Act | 1954 | Atomic Energy Authority Act |
| 1945 | Local Government (Boundary Commission) Act | 1954 | Landlord and Tenant Act |
| 1945 | Requisitioned Land and War Works Act | 1954 | Law Reform (Limitation of Actions, etc.) Act |
| 1945 | Statutory Orders (Special Procedure) Act | 1954 | Mines and Quarries Act |
| | | 1954 | Protection of Birds Act |
| | | 1954 | Television Act |