

# Freedom of Information request 2012-3750

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## Information request

How many people in the UK are in receipt of housing benefit?

How many people in Sheffield are in receipt of housing benefit?

Can claimants/claims from Sheffield be broken down into brackets/categories to detail how much each person or household receives?

How many people fell into the highest payment bracket in Sheffield in 2010?

How many people fell into the highest payment bracket in Sheffield in 2011?

What is the largest sum being paid to a household in Sheffield, with details on how many occupants there are and their ages?

## DWP response

The information given below is for Great Britain only. The responsibility for statistics in Northern Ireland lies with the [Department for Social Development](#) (DSD). Requests for information in Northern Ireland, to obtain figures for all of the United Kingdom, should therefore be directed to the DSD.

Information on how to submit a freedom of information request to the DSD can be found via the link below.

<http://www.delni.gov.uk/index/freedom-of-information/requesting-information.htm>

For Housing Benefit recipients in Sheffield, Section 21 of the Act allows us to direct you to information which is already reasonably accessible to you.

The Department publishes a range of statistical information on Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit recipients on its website at:

<http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=hbctb>

For example, to produce statistics on the number of Housing Benefit recipients in Great Britain and Sheffield, go to

<http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=hbctb>, scroll down to the bottom of the page and select **Additional tables are available here**, then select **Table 1 – Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit recipients by Region and Local Authority: May 2012** and scroll down to find the number of Housing Benefit recipients in Sheffield.

In response to your specific questions regarding whether or not Sheffield can be broken down into groups to detail what amount each claimant receives, the information is available via the following tables;

**Number of Housing Benefit Recipients in Sheffield Local Authority broken down into Bands of Annual Amount of Housing Benefit Received: May 2012, May 2011 and May 2010**

| Annual Amount                  | May 2012 | May 2011 | May 2010 |
|--------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| <b>Total</b>                   | 51,520   | 49,560   | 48,040   |
| up to £1,000                   | 980      | 920      | 830      |
| over £1,000 and up to £2,000   | 2,360    | 2,490    | 2,580    |
| over £2,000 and up to £3,000   | 9,980    | 13,650   | 18,800   |
| over £3,000 and up to £4,000   | 25,090   | 22,360   | 17,480   |
| over £4,000 and up to £5,000   | 7,300    | 4,610    | 4,260    |
| over £5,000 and up to £7,500   | 5,020    | 4,810    | 3,420    |
| over £7,500 and up to £10,000  | 450      | 420      | 300      |
| over £10,000 and up to £15,000 | 280      | 200      | 250      |
| In excess of £15,000           | -        | 10       | -        |
| Unknown Amount                 | 80       | 90       | 120      |

Source: Single Housing Benefit Extract 100% individual level data (SHBE) May 2012, May 2011 and May 2010.

Notes:

1. Recipients are as at second Thursday of the month.
2. Components may not sum to total due to independent rounding.
3. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10. "-" indicates nil or negligible.
4. SHBE is a monthly electronic scan of claimant level data direct from local authority computer systems. The data is available monthly from November 2008 and May 2012 is the latest available.

Methodology:

1. Data is collected on a monthly basis and released as the Single Housing Benefit Extract 100% level data (SHBE).
2. This provides the weekly housing benefit amount for each individual household.
3. The annualised amounts are then calculated by multiplying by 52.18.

In response to your specific question regarding the largest sum paid to a household in Sheffield;

Information on the largest sum paid to a household, the number of occupants and their ages is being withheld as it falls under the exemption in section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act. This exemption covers personal information about a third party. Disclosure of this information would breach the right to privacy contrary to the Data Protection Act.

Although the geographical area is large, and providing the highest amount paid in Housing Benefit in itself would unlikely lead to disclosure of an individual recipient, this information could be used in conjunction with information gathered from other sources and local knowledge to potentially identify an individual recipient.