

# Benefits administration

## Housing benefit and council tax benefit

### 1. The gross administration cost per case

#### *What the indicator reports*

This indicator shows the average administration cost in each council of dealing with housing benefit and council tax applications. The indicator allows costs to be more directly comparable by weighting the caseload mix using the housing and council tax benefit subsidy distribution formula.

#### *Points to bear in mind*

A council may choose to provide a high level of advice and counselling to claimants. The costs of such services will add to the cost to be reported in this indicator.

Benefit claims may be more numerous or more complicated in areas where:

- there is a high proportion of people who live at two or more addresses during the year
- there is a high proportion of applications from people in privately rented accommodation, for which the application process is more complex
- there are more people in shared accommodation, for which the application process is also more complex.

In these cases, the time taken to collect all the information needed to process a claim may be longer. This will be reflected in the costs of providing the service.

### 2. The time for processing applications from the date of receipt of the application to the posting of the notification of the outcome.

Type of claim	Number of claims	Average time to process
new claims		
notifications of changes of circumstances		
	Number of claims	% processed on time
renewal claims		

#### *What the indicator reports*

This indicator shows the average time taken to process applications for different types of benefits. The indicator aims to drive forward improvements in housing and council tax benefit service delivery by encouraging councils to provide a faster, more accurate, more secure service which is better integrated with other benefit providers.

#### *Points to bear in mind*

This indicator measures the efficiency of the council in processing housing benefit and Council Tax benefit applications. The major influencing factors will be the management and level of resources given to the task.

This indicator shows the average overall time for dealing with applications, which is important from the applicant's perspective since it is the elapsed time experienced by them.

## Benefits administration

---

3. a) The percentage of cases for which the calculation of the amount of benefit due was correct on the basis of the information available at the determination, for a sample of cases checked post-determination
- b) Does the council have a written security strategy for combating fraud and error which is communicated regularly to all staff and the whole of which is demonstrably acted upon by management and staff on a continuous basis
- c) The percentage of recoverable overpayments (excluding Council Tax Benefit) that were recovered in the year

### ***What the indicator reports***

Checking a percentage of benefit calculations for accuracy is considered to be good benefits practice. The first part of this indicator reports the proportion of benefit cases that were calculated correctly.

Part b) shows whether the council has a written security strategy for combating fraud and error, and part c) reports the percentage of recoverable overpayments that were recovered in the year.

### ***Points to bear in mind***

For part a) councils require to sample at least 500 cases through out the year ensuring that different types of claims are selected. A sampling methodology to select cases should also be in place. Councils with very small caseloads should sample 20% of the caseload in order to provide reasonable confidence limits.

Good management practice requires councils to have a written security strategy which will assist in combating fraud and error. The security strategy will commit a council to having at least two of the following sets of activities:

- operate the Department for Work and Pensions verification framework
- operate a policy for prosecution of benefit offenders
- operate at least three of the following: Royal Mail's service to return re-directed benefit mail, the housing benefit matching service; a national service level agreement with the benefit agency; a fraud service level agreement with the benefits agency.

Recoverable overpayments mean a departmental error overpayment, a fraudulent overpayment, an authority error overpayment, or a technical overpayment (each of these are defined in Article 18 of the Income-related Benefits (Subsidy to Authorities) Order 1998).

Overpayment caused by a mistake by the claimant or person acting on their behalf is also included, as well as any other type of overpayment.



## Benefits administration

Benefits Administration	Indicator 1			
	Weighted rent rebate caseload		Weighted private rented sector caseload	
	2001/2002	2002/2003	2001/2002	2002/2003
Aberdeen City	12,385	12,221	3,021	3,760
Aberdeenshire	9,505	6,684	5,330	3,455
Angus	4,668	4,343	3,294	2,922
Argyll & Bute	3,609	3,498	3,130	3,068
Clackmannanshire	4,859	3,300	3,832	863
Dumfries & Galloway	7,032	6,756	5,093	4,901
Dundee City	12,073	11,328	8,190	7,904
East Ayrshire	9,319	9,082	1,817	2,168
East Dunbartonshire	3,222	3,008	1,147	1,100
East Lothian	4,209	4,319	1,547	1,553
East Renfrewshire	2,397	2,290	1,154	1,131
Edinburgh, City of	19,205	18,371	15,592	14,906
Eilean Siar	1,074	1,118	502	510
Falkirk	14,130	10,547	4,215	2,257
Fife	21,156	20,627	7,454	7,210
Glasgow City	90,536	89,972	37,240	38,366
Highland	9,935	9,384	4,911	4,472
Inverclyde	6,827	6,412	2,018	2,400
Midlothian	3,035	2,915	1,128	1,136
Moray	3,221	3,077	2,174	1,927
North Ayrshire	10,354	9,750	3,203	2,912
North Lanarkshire	28,074	27,011	4,059	3,934
Orkney Islands	451	448	567	551
Perth & Kinross	4,564	4,438	4,456	4,215
Renfrewshire	12,920	11,742	4,103	4,189
Scottish Borders	3,310	3,234	2,564	2,603
Shetland Islands	809	801	99	133
South Ayrshire	6,560	6,343	3,695	3,713
South Lanarkshire	22,870	22,037	4,974	5,047
Stirling	4,422	4,235	1,056	1,108
West Dunbartonshire	8,413	8,309	978	952
West Lothian	8,650	8,475	4,186	4,183
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>352,720</b>	<b>246,103</b>	<b>146,227</b>	<b>101,183</b>

## Benefits administration

Benefits Administration	Indicator 1			
	Weighted registered social landlord caseload		Weighted Council Tax Benefit caseload	
	2001/2002	2002/2003	2001/2002	2002/2003
Aberdeen City	3,412	2,972	18,390	18,272
Aberdeenshire	4,007	2,772	20,330	12,730
Angus	2,780	2,624	9,691	9,009
Argyll & Bute	2,369	2,698	8,765	8,682
Clackmannanshire	1,264	1,904	1,541	5,903
Dumfries & Galloway	3,069	3,323	13,919	13,753
Dundee City	7,777	8,814	23,614	23,417
East Ayrshire	4,011	3,796	15,268	15,137
East Dunbartonshire	1,009	1,032	6,784	6,438
East Lothian	1,682	1,823	7,495	7,811
East Renfrewshire	1,264	1,431	5,358	5,434
Edinburgh, City of	14,659	15,694	43,269	42,594
Eilean Siar	91	93	2,996	3,277
Falkirk	3,861	2,622	22,307	15,877
Fife	7,885	7,775	37,129	36,254
Glasgow City	68,860	75,037	28,393	24,290
Highland	3,996	4,442	19,652	18,884
Inverclyde	3,241	4,058	11,847	12,357
Midlothian	3,661	3,392	7,455	7,068
Moray	1,081	1,146	6,368	6,068
North Ayrshire	4,456	4,285	17,711	17,043
North Lanarkshire	9,107	9,538	44,922	44,404
Orkney Islands	344	372	1,401	1,396
Perth & Kinross	2,084	2,329	9,492	9,305
Renfrewshire	7,613	7,691	22,103	21,989
Scottish Borders	5,202	5,267	9,152	9,185
Shetland Islands	114	150	1,297	1,284
South Ayrshire	1,455	1,634	11,960	11,760
South Lanarkshire	4,760	6,646	11,818	11,189
Stirling	1,195	1,558	7,354	7,228
West Dunbartonshire	6,198	6,107	15,980	15,704
West Lothian	4,756	5,022	16,154	16,083
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>187,172</b>	<b>123,010</b>	<b>476,919</b>	<b>435,535</b>

## Benefits administration

Benefits Administration	Indicator 1		Indicator 2	
	Gross administration cost per case		Average time to process new claims	
	2001/2002	2002/2003	2001/2002	2002/2003
Aberdeen City	£48.82	<b>£52.60</b>	48.3 days	<b>50.9 days</b>
Aberdeenshire	£29.11	<b>£46.41</b>	<b>63.7 days</b>	<b>43.9 days</b>
Angus	£53.02	<b>£70.61</b>	45.9 days	<b>78.9 days</b>
Argyll & Bute	£37.68	<b>£45.12</b>	41.5 days	<b>32.7 days</b>
Clackmannanshire	£35.15	<b>£35.40</b>	33.0 days	<b>29.2 days</b>
Dumfries & Galloway	£37.71	<b>£40.65</b>	48.0 days	<b>40.0 days</b>
Dundee City	£69.51	<b>£64.30</b>	55.3 days	<b>59.5 days</b>
East Ayrshire	£47.11	<b>£49.91</b>	71.1 days	<b>58.5 days</b>
East Dunbartonshire	£39.33	<b>£51.95</b>	49.1 days	<b>46.7 days</b>
East Lothian	£57.56	<b>£58.02</b>	80.1 days	<b>52.7 days</b>
East Renfrewshire	£48.10	<b>£47.01</b>	26.3 days	<b>31.8 days</b>
Edinburgh, City of	£61.47	<b>£62.31</b>	67.6 days	<b>59.3 days</b>
Eilean Siar	<b>£53.68</b>	<b>£83.33</b>	80.2 days	<b>58.7 days</b>
Falkirk	£19.13	<b>£31.94</b>	41.9 days	<b>31.6 days</b>
Fife	£43.05	<b>£46.08</b>	<b>52.1 days</b>	<b>57.5 days</b>
Glasgow City	£36.60	<b>£39.14</b>	<b>36.0 days</b>	<b>42.1 days</b>
Highland	£57.44	<b>£70.54</b>	37.2 days	<b>44.1 days</b>
Inverclyde	£37.90	<b>£37.40</b>	<b>69.2 days</b>	<b>65.1 days</b>
Midlothian	£61.37	<b>£56.84</b>	71.1 days	<b>63.5 days</b>
Moray	£62.00	<b>£68.94</b>	75.6 days	<b>102.0 days</b>
North Ayrshire	£32.56	<b>£47.96</b>	92.7 days	<b>111.4 days</b>
North Lanarkshire	£31.14	<b>£29.02</b>	44.0 days	<b>26.4 days</b>
Orkney Islands	£37.79	<b>£50.70</b>	16.6 days	<b>18.6 days</b>
Perth & Kinross	£46.46	<b>£50.40</b>	18.0 days	<b>25.1 days</b>
Renfrewshire	£37.47	<b>£30.18</b>	28.6 days	<b>38.7 days</b>
Scottish Borders	£52.83	<b>£49.99</b>	27.6 days	<b>30.5 days</b>
Shetland Islands	£101.55	<b>£109.86</b>	23.1 days	<b>31.5 days</b>
South Ayrshire	£41.94	<b>£46.75</b>	61.3 days	<b>57.2 days</b>
South Lanarkshire	£27.43	<b>£27.99</b>	25.4 days	<b>18.6 days</b>
Stirling	£57.85	<b>£55.52</b>	26.0 days	<b>22.8 days</b>
West Dunbartonshire	£34.55	<b>£35.20</b>	105.9 days	<b>83.6 days</b>
West Lothian	£35.84	<b>£39.41</b>	31.2 days	<b>34.9 days</b>
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>£42.27</b>	<b>£47.27</b>	<b>51.0 days</b>	<b>48.7 days</b>

## Benefits administration

Benefits Administration	Indicator 2			
	Average time to process changes of circumstances		Percentage of renewal claims processed on time	
	2001/2002	2002/2003	2001/2002	2002/2003
Aberdeen City	19.3 days	25.6 days	75.5%	73.9%
Aberdeenshire	10.5 days	5.7 days	81.2%	88.1%
Angus	14.7 days	18.2 days	69.5%	48.6%
Argyll & Bute	9.4 days	5.0 days	48.1%	59.9%
Clackmannanshire	19.8 days	15.4 days	99.3%	92.6%
Dumfries & Galloway	14.0 days	10.5 days	72.0%	90.9%
Dundee City	15.5 days	22.2 days	71.9%	76.0%
East Ayrshire	49.1 days	12.4 days	93.6%	80.2%
East Dunbartonshire	12.0 days	10.4 days	76.9%	72.3%
East Lothian	12.6 days	11.4 days	36.1%	68.5%
East Renfrewshire	9.2 days	9.4 days	99.4%	75.2%
Edinburgh, City of	22.3 days	19.4 days	52.8%	58.7%
Eilean Siar	32.9 days	14.5 days	25.9%	56.3%
Falkirk	14.6 days	12.8 days	75.2%	78.9%
Fife	18.2 days	24.4 days	99.1%	88.0%
Glasgow City	21.4 days	17.5 days	80.3%	84.9%
Highland	5.8 days	5.4 days	68.7%	64.3%
Inverclyde	10.2 days	7.2 days	69.6%	77.4%
Midlothian	32.6 days	33.3 days	45.2%	44.4%
Moray	21.2 days	41.7 days	40.4%	3.6%
North Ayrshire	19.5 days	30.0 days	60.5%	70.9%
North Lanarkshire	10.8 days	7.2 days	67.2%	86.1%
Orkney Islands	3.1 days	3.2 days	91.5%	91.4%
Perth & Kinross	19.1 days	14.8 days	99.5%	99.5%
Renfrewshire	18.5 days	20.5 days	77.1%	68.2%
Scottish Borders	10.3 days	20.7 days	80.8%	86.8%
Shetland Islands	3.2 days	4.7 days	98.0%	99.5%
South Ayrshire	11.1 days	16.3 days	79.6%	80.3%
South Lanarkshire	9.0 days	7.7 days	99.3%	92.5%
Stirling	9.7 days	6.8 days	67.2%	78.5%
West Dunbartonshire	13.8 days	9.6 days	71.6%	67.7%
West Lothian	11.0 days	10.8 days	84.7%	90.5%
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>15.6 days</b>	<b>14.8 days</b>	<b>73.1%</b>	<b>76.9%</b>

## Benefits administration

Benefits Administration	Indicator 3					
	Percentage of cases for which the calculation of the amount of benefit due was correct			Does the council have a written security strategy for combating fraud and error which is communicated regularly to all staff.		
	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003
Aberdeen City	99.0%	99.2%	<b>99.4%</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
Aberdeenshire	Not Reported	91.2%	<b>Not Reported</b>	Not Reported	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
Angus	97.0%	97.6%	<b>97.4%</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
Argyll & Bute	91.1%	96.6%	<b>94.8%</b>	No	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
Clackmannanshire	Not Reported	98.6%	<b>98.6%</b>	No	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
Dumfries & Galloway	99.0%	98.2%	<b>95.4%</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
Dundee City	Not Reported	Not Reported	<b>96.8%</b>	No	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
East Ayrshire	91.2%	96.0%	<b>96.4%</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
East Dunbartonshire	97.0%	<b>87.4%</b>	<b>93.2%</b>	Yes	No	<b>Yes</b>
East Lothian	Not Reported	<b>95.3%</b>	<b>98.2%</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
East Renfrewshire	97.6%	99.8%	<b>99.0%</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>No</b>
Edinburgh, City of	94.7%	98.2%	<b>97.4%</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
Eilean Siar	Not Reported	97.0%	<b>98.9%</b>	Not Reported	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
Falkirk	95.8%	95.1%	<b>94.6%</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
Fife	92.3%	97.3%	<b>97.3%</b>	Yes	No	<b>Yes</b>
Glasgow City	96.7%	<b>90.4%</b>	<b>95.3%</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
Highland	97.0%	95.6%	<b>99.2%</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
Inverclyde	92.1%	92.7%	<b>89.7%</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
Midlothian	91.7%	93.4%	<b>93.4%</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
Moray	Not Reported	93.4%	<b>94.4%</b>	No	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
North Ayrshire	97.0%	95.9%	<b>96.8%</b>	No	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
North Lanarkshire	94.6%	96.3%	<b>99.0%</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
Orkney Islands	98.7%	98.5%	<b>98.9%</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
Perth & Kinross	90.0%	93.6%	<b>95.2%</b>	No	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
Renfrewshire	94.5%	96.0%	<b>90.8%</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
Scottish Borders	96.8%	99.0%	<b>97.7%</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
Shetland Islands	99.8%	99.8%	<b>100.0%</b>	No	No	<b>Yes</b>
South Ayrshire	91.4%	90.2%	<b>96.8%</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
South Lanarkshire	99.7%	98.3%	<b>93.2%</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
Stirling	94.7%	96.8%	<b>98.2%</b>	Yes	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
West Dunbartonshire	98.0%	97.4%	<b>98.4%</b>	No	No	<b>No</b>
West Lothian	82.1%	90.9%	<b>94.2%</b>	No	Yes	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>95.8%</b>	<b>95.5%</b>	<b>96.1%</b>			



## Benefits administration

<b>Benefits Administration</b>	<b>Indicator 3</b>		
	Percentage of recoverable overpayments (excluding Council Tax Benefit) that were recovered in the year.		
	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003
Aberdeen City	30.4%	59.6%	32.8%
Aberdeenshire	Not Reported	Not Reported	Not Reported
Angus	77.0%	55.7%	48.4%
Argyll & Bute	95.9%	62.3%	58.2%
Clackmannanshire	Not Reported	47.0%	64.8%
Dumfries & Galloway	52.0%	64.0%	39.3%
Dundee City	Not Reported	Not Reported	Not Reported
East Ayrshire	36.0%	41.7%	56.7%
East Dunbartonshire	54.2%	57.9%	50.9%
East Lothian	Not Reported	43.7%	36.5%
East Renfrewshire	25.4%	38.4%	29.9%
Edinburgh, City of	65.2%	34.7%	58.0%
Eilean Siar	Not Reported	89.0%	Not Reported
Falkirk	48.7%	39.6%	41.0%
Fife	49.2%	Not Reported	Not Reported
Glasgow City	66.5%	73.3%	74.9%
Highland	69.6%	86.0%	70.8%
Inverclyde	24.6%	32.7%	32.7%
Midlothian	66.4%	50.2%	57.5%
Moray	Not Reported	Not Reported	Not Reported
North Ayrshire	57.0%	42.2%	52.2%
North Lanarkshire	13.6%	21.3%	74.2%
Orkney Islands	76.1%	56.7%	56.7%
Perth & Kinross	49.4%	51.6%	59.1%
Renfrewshire	52.3%	39.2%	43.3%
Scottish Borders	Not Reported	Not Reported	Not Reported
Shetland Islands	Not Reported	50.7%	44.4%
South Ayrshire	21.3%	29.1%	Not Reported
South Lanarkshire	37.0%	56.3%	60.6%
Stirling	49.2%	52.2%	44.4%
West Dunbartonshire	38.6%	21.0%	20.1%
West Lothian	41.5%	22.3%	18.4%
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>50.3%</b>	<b>45.6%</b>	<b>46.5%</b>