

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.

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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) 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) reports the percentage of recoverable overpayments that 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.

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.

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Benefits Administration	Indicator 1					
	Weighted rent rebate caseload			Weighted private rented sector caseload		
	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004
Aberdeen City	12,385	12,221	12,100	3,021	3,760	3,167
Aberdeenshire	9,505	6,684	6,625	5,330	3,455	3,723
Angus	4,668	4,343	4,361	3,294	2,922	2,977
Argyll & Bute	3,609	3,498	3,299	3,130	3,068	2,930
Clackmannanshire	4,859	3,300	3,088	3,832	863	879
Dumfries & Galloway	7,032	6,756	105	5,093	4,901	4,833
Dundee City	12,073	11,328	10,666	8,190	7,904	7,363
East Ayrshire	9,319	9,082	9,149	1,817	2,168	2,319
East Dunbartonshire	3,222	3,008	2,884	1,147	1,100	926
East Lothian	4,209	4,319	4,250	1,547	1,553	1,570
East Renfrewshire	2,397	2,290	2,632	1,154	1,131	1,885
Edinburgh, City of	19,205	18,371	17,185	15,592	14,906	14,804
Eilean Siar	1,074	1,118	1,030	502	510	484
Falkirk	14,130	10,547	10,363	4,215	2,257	2,301
Fife	21,156	20,627	20,618	7,454	7,210	7,527
Glasgow City	90,536	64,315	685	37,240	23,483	25,956
Highland	9,935	9,384	9,019	4,911	4,472	4,194
Inverclyde	6,827	6,412	6,166	2,018	2,400	2,525
Midlothian	3,035	2,915	2,872	1,128	1,136	1,225
Moray	3,221	3,077	3,045	2,174	1,927	1,942
North Ayrshire	10,354	9,750	9,518	3,203	2,912	3,385
North Lanarkshire	28,074	27,011	26,288	4,059	3,934	4,347
Orkney Islands	451	448	430	567	551	569
Perth & Kinross	4,564	4,438	4,101	4,456	4,215	4,129
Renfrewshire	12,920	11,742	9,969	4,103	4,189	3,918
Scottish Borders	3,310	3,234	28	2,564	2,603	2,564
Shetland Islands	809	801	805	99	133	120
South Ayrshire	6,560	6,343	6,184	3,695	3,713	3,749
South Lanarkshire	22,870	22,037	21,252	4,974	5,047	5,338
Stirling	4,422	4,235	4,042	1,056	1,108	1,134
West Dunbartonshire	8,413	8,309	8,026	978	952	1,058
West Lothian	8,650	8,475	8,378	4,186	4,183	4,306
Scotland	352,720	246,103	229,163	146,227	101,183	128,147

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Benefits Administration	Indicator 1					
	Weighted registered social landlord caseload			Weighted Council Tax Benefit caseload		
	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004
Aberdeen City	3,412	2,972	3,671	18,390	18,272	18,467
Aberdeenshire	4,007	2,772	3,021	20,330	12,730	12,954
Angus	2,780	2,624	2,861	9,691	9,009	9,307
Argyll & Bute	2,369	2,698	2,489	8,765	8,682	8,254
Clackmannanshire	1,264	1,904	2,022	1,541	5,903	5,612
Dumfries & Galloway	3,069	3,323	15,552	13,919	13,753	13,510
Dundee City	7,777	8,814	8,662	23,614	23,417	22,497
East Ayrshire	4,011	3,796	3,954	15,268	15,137	15,967
East Dunbartonshire	1,009	1,032	1,193	6,784	6,438	6,280
East Lothian	1,682	1,823	2,027	7,495	7,811	7,678
East Renfrewshire	1,264	1,431	1,357	5,358	5,434	4,861
Edinburgh, City of	14,659	15,694	15,774	43,269	42,594	41,170
Eilean Siar	91	93	78	2,996	3,277	3,073
Falkirk	3,861	2,622	2,774	22,307	15,877	15,849
Fife	7,885	7,775	7,834	37,129	36,254	36,160
Glasgow City	68,860	51,701	164,907	28,393	118,000	120,670
Highland	3,996	4,442	4,475	19,652	18,884	18,446
Inverclyde	3,241	4,058	4,102	11,847	12,357	12,287
Midlothian	3,661	3,392	3,409	7,455	7,068	7,376
Moray	1,081	1,146	1,383	6,368	6,068	6,147
North Ayrshire	4,456	4,285	4,579	17,711	17,043	17,091
North Lanarkshire	9,107	9,538	9,901	44,922	44,404	44,070
Orkney Islands	344	372	363	1,401	1,396	1,375
Perth & Kinross	2,084	2,329	2,573	9,492	9,305	9,083
Renfrewshire	7,613	7,691	7,817	22,103	21,989	20,327
Scottish Borders	5,202	5,267	11,071	9,152	9,185	9,111
Shetland Islands	114	150	177	1,297	1,284	1,290
South Ayrshire	1,455	1,634	1,794	11,960	11,760	11,876
South Lanarkshire	4,760	6,646	6,895	11,818	11,189	39,546
Stirling	1,195	1,558	1,569	7,354	7,228	7,123
West Dunbartonshire	6,198	6,107	6,310	15,980	15,704	15,679
West Lothian	4,756	5,022	5,402	16,154	16,083	16,286
Scotland	187,172	123,010	309,996	476,919	435,535	579,422

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Benefits Administration	Indicator 1			Indicator 2		
	Gross administration cost per case			Average time to process new claims		
	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004
Aberdeen City	£48.82	£52.60	£68.12	48.3 days	50.9 days	44.2 days
Aberdeenshire	£29.11	£46.41	£62.93	63.7 days	43.9 days	49.0 days
Angus	£53.02	£70.61	£78.80	45.9 days	78.9 days	76.9 days
Argyll & Bute	£37.68	£45.12	£54.42	41.5 days	32.7 days	45.8 days
Clackmannanshire	£35.15	£35.40	£33.67	33.0 days	29.2 days	33.2 days
Dumfries & Galloway	£37.71	£40.65	£52.44	48.0 days	40.0 days	45.8 days
Dundee City	£69.51	£64.30	£86.09	55.3 days	59.5 days	82.5 days
East Ayrshire	£47.11	£49.91	£49.77	71.1 days	58.5 days	39.8 days
East Dunbartonshire	£39.33	£51.95	£56.29	49.1 days	46.7 days	61.5 days
East Lothian	£57.56	£58.02	£57.68	80.1 days	52.7 days	48.0 days
East Renfrewshire	£48.10	£47.01	£47.74	26.3 days	31.8 days	39.6 days
Edinburgh, City of	£61.47	£62.31	£69.88	67.6 days	59.3 days	55.7 days
Eilean Siar	£53.68	£83.33	£85.88	80.2 days	58.7 days	67.4 days
Falkirk	£19.13	£31.94	£32.40	41.9 days	31.6 days	32.9 days
Fife	£43.05	£46.08	£46.93	52.1 days	57.5 days	49.1 days
Glasgow City	£36.60	£34.61	£34.50	36.0 days	42.1 days	43.9 days
Highland	£57.44	£70.54	£84.47	37.2 days	44.1 days	49.6 days
Inverclyde	£37.90	£37.40	£44.31	69.2 days	65.1 days	71.1 days
Midlothian	£61.37	£56.84	£55.83	71.1 days	63.5 days	38.2 days
Moray	£62.00	£68.94	£72.61	75.6 days	102.0 days	69.1 days
North Ayrshire	£32.56	£47.96	£52.01	92.7 days	111.4 days	116.6 days
North Lanarkshire	£31.14	£29.02	£32.07	44.0 days	26.4 days	19.2 days
Orkney Islands	£37.79	£50.70	£49.86	16.6 days	18.6 days	25.3 days
Perth & Kinross	£46.46	£50.40	£55.21	18.0 days	25.1 days	56.3 days
Renfrewshire	£37.47	£30.18	£51.14	28.6 days	38.7 days	63.7 days
Scottish Borders	£52.83	£49.99	£54.27	27.6 days	30.5 days	37.0 days
Shetland Islands	£101.55	£109.86	£98.52	23.1 days	31.5 days	31.3 days
South Ayrshire	£41.94	£46.75	£54.98	61.3 days	57.2 days	55.5 days
South Lanarkshire	£27.43	£27.99	£14.73	25.4 days	18.6 days	14.0 days
Stirling	£57.85	£55.52	£54.51	26.0 days	22.8 days	20.9 days
West Dunbartonshire	£34.55	£35.20	£47.94	105.9 days	83.6 days	56.7 days
West Lothian	£35.84	£39.41	£41.85	31.2 days	34.9 days	36.0 days
Scotland	£42.27	£47.27	£47.96	51.0 days	48.7 days	47.5 days

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Benefits Administration	Indicator 2					
	Average time to process changes of circumstances			Percentage of renewal claims processed on time		
	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004
Aberdeen City	19.3 days	25.6 days	18.7 days	75.5%	73.9%	72.7%
Aberdeenshire	10.5 days	5.7 days	6.8 days	81.2%	88.1%	82.2%
Angus	14.7 days	18.2 days	19.2 days	69.5%	48.6%	52.6%
Argyll & Bute	9.4 days	5.0 days	6.2 days	48.1%	59.9%	40.7%
Clackmannanshire	19.8 days	15.4 days	13.6 days	99.3%	92.6%	51.4%
Dumfries & Galloway	14.0 days	10.5 days	10.8 days	72.0%	90.9%	67.7%
Dundee City	15.5 days	22.2 days	25.9 days	71.9%	76.0%	71.6%
East Ayrshire	49.1 days	12.4 days	9.2 days	93.6%	80.2%	78.9%
East Dunbartonshire	12.0 days	10.4 days	11.4 days	76.9%	72.3%	52.7%
East Lothian	12.6 days	11.4 days	9.2 days	36.1%	68.5%	74.2%
East Renfrewshire	9.2 days	9.4 days	11.5 days	99.4%	75.2%	51.0%
Edinburgh, City of	22.3 days	19.4 days	20.7 days	52.8%	58.7%	51.5%
Eilean Siar	32.9 days	14.5 days	17.8 days	25.9%	56.3%	24.7%
Falkirk	14.6 days	12.8 days	10.6 days	75.2%	78.9%	67.2%
Fife	18.2 days	24.4 days	18.1 days	99.1%	88.0%	64.4%
Glasgow City	21.4 days	17.5 days	13.0 days	80.3%	84.9%	75.4%
Highland	5.8 days	5.4 days	7.6 days	68.7%	64.3%	53.8%
Inverclyde	10.2 days	7.2 days	9.6 days	69.6%	77.4%	67.8%
Midlothian	32.6 days	33.3 days	14.9 days	45.2%	44.4%	76.2%
Moray	21.2 days	41.7 days	26.5 days	40.4%	3.6%	22.4%
North Ayrshire	19.5 days	30.0 days	27.2 days	60.5%	70.9%	72.6%
North Lanarkshire	10.8 days	7.2 days	4.2 days	67.2%	86.1%	87.5%
Orkney Islands	3.1 days	3.2 days	4.4 days	91.5%	91.4%	82.8%
Perth & Kinross	19.1 days	14.8 days	14.8 days	99.5%	99.5%	97.9%
Renfrewshire	18.5 days	20.5 days	19.7 days	77.1%	68.2%	49.6%
Scottish Borders	10.3 days	20.7 days	17.1 days	80.8%	86.8%	84.8%
Shetland Islands	3.2 days	4.7 days	3.0 days	98.0%	99.5%	99.8%
South Ayrshire	11.1 days	16.3 days	12.4 days	79.6%	80.3%	80.9%
South Lanarkshire	9.0 days	7.7 days	6.6 days	99.3%	92.5%	88.6%
Stirling	9.7 days	6.8 days	5.4 days	67.2%	78.5%	83.2%
West Dunbartonshire	13.8 days	9.6 days	5.6 days	71.6%	67.7%	64.4%
West Lothian	11.0 days	10.8 days	11.5 days	84.7%	90.5%	91.5%
Scotland	15.6 days	14.8 days	12.3 days	73.1%	76.9%	70.0%

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Benefits Administration	Indicator 3					
	Percentage of cases for which the calculation of the amount of benefit due was correct			Percentage of recoverable overpayments (excluding Council Tax Benefit) that were recovered in the year.		
	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004
Aberdeen City	99.2%	99.4%	99.8%	59.6%	32.8%	26.6%
Aberdeenshire	91.2%	Not Reported	94.6%	Not Reported	Not Reported	Not Reported
Angus	97.6%	97.4%	96.8%	55.7%	48.4%	48.3%
Argyll & Bute	96.6%	94.8%	98.2%	62.3%	58.2%	55.1%
Clackmannanshire	98.6%	98.6%	98.7%	47.0%	64.8%	59.8%
Dumfries & Galloway	98.2%	95.4%	96.6%	64.0%	39.3%	53.4%
Dundee City	Not Reported	96.8%	95.8%	Not Reported	Not Reported	Not Reported
East Ayrshire	96.0%	96.4%	96.0%	41.7%	56.7%	58.1%
East Dunbartonshire	87.4%	93.2%	93.6%	57.9%	50.9%	29.2%
East Lothian	95.3%	98.2%	93.8%	43.7%	36.5%	41.2%
East Renfrewshire	99.8%	99.0%	99.2%	38.4%	29.9%	36.1%
Edinburgh, City of	98.2%	97.4%	98.2%	34.7%	58.0%	42.2%
Eilean Siar	97.0%	98.9%	98.0%	89.0%	Not Reported	Not Reported
Falkirk	95.1%	94.6%	93.2%	39.6%	41.0%	27.3%
Fife	97.3%	97.3%	99.4%	Not Reported	Not Reported	Not Reported
Glasgow City	90.4%	95.3%	92.8%	73.3%	74.9%	54.4%
Highland	95.6%	99.2%	97.4%	86.0%	70.8%	59.3%
Inverclyde	92.7%	89.7%	91.0%	32.7%	32.7%	56.3%
Midlothian	93.4%	93.4%	93.0%	50.2%	57.5%	49.0%
Moray	93.4%	94.4%	96.4%	Not Reported	Not Reported	Not Reported
North Ayrshire	95.9%	96.8%	95.5%	42.2%	52.2%	51.1%
North Lanarkshire	96.3%	99.0%	100.0%	21.3%	74.2%	79.0%
Orkney Islands	98.5%	98.9%	98.7%	56.7%	56.7%	47.2%
Perth & Kinross	93.6%	95.2%	92.0%	51.6%	59.1%	50.6%
Renfrewshire	96.0%	90.8%	91.6%	39.2%	43.3%	51.4%
Scottish Borders	99.0%	97.7%	92.4%	Not Reported	Not Reported	Not Reported
Shetland Islands	99.8%	100.0%	99.5%	50.7%	44.4%	Not Reported
South Ayrshire	90.2%	96.8%	98.0%	29.1%	Not Reported	28.4%
South Lanarkshire	98.3%	93.2%	94.4%	56.3%	60.6%	42.4%
Stirling	96.8%	98.2%	98.6%	52.2%	44.4%	Not Reported
West Dunbartonshire	97.4%	98.4%	99.4%	21.0%	20.1%	23.9%
West Lothian	90.9%	94.2%	94.8%	22.3%	18.4%	23.0%
Scotland	95.5%	96.1%	96.3%	45.6%	46.5%	44.6%