

Freedom of Information request 4551/2012

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Information request

“How many Cold Weather Payments were triggered between the periods 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 and for what particular weeks. The area that you are concerned with is Wardlow Road, Nechells, Birmingham, B74 4JH”

DWP response

The Meteorological weather station at Coleshill covers postcode district B74.

It might be helpful if I briefly explain how the current Cold Weather Payment scheme operates

The Meteorological (Met) Office collects temperature information currently through a network of 92 weather stations. Each weather station covers specified postcode districts. Every day during the winter (1 November to 31 March) the Met Office provides the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) with both recorded and forecasted temperature information. When the average temperature is recorded as, or forecast to be, 0°C or below over seven consecutive days at the weather station linked to an eligible person's postcode, a CWP is issued.

At the end of every winter DWP conducts a review of the scheme. The review takes into account Met Office changes to the weather stations used to provide data for the scheme, representations from MPs and the public about the suitability of weather station to postcode linkages and any changes made by Royal Mail to the postcode system. As part of the review, the Met Office provides expert advice and recommends the necessary changes to linkages to address any inconsistencies. These changes are then made to the scheme before the start of the next CWP season.

As well as postcode district B74 Coleshill weather station covers many other postcode districts. The figures provided below therefore includes payments made outside of the B74. DWP does not gather information in respect of Cold Weather Payments at a lower geographical level.

The table below gives details of the triggers recorded at the Coleshill weather station in the winters of 2009/10, 2010/11 and 2011/12

Winter	Trigger Notified Date	Trigger Type	Trigger Period	Estimated No. of Payments
2009/10	18/12/2009	Forecast	18/12/2009 – 24/12/2009	321,100
	04/01/2010	Forecast	01/01/2010 – 07/01/2010	321,100
	08/01/2010	Forecast	08/01/2010 – 14/01/2010	321,100
2010/11	29/11/2010	Forecast	27/11/1010 – 03/12/2010	313,000
	06/12/2010	Forecast	04/12/2010 – 10/12/2010	313,000
	13/12/2010	Forecast	13/12/2010 – 19/12/2010	313,000
	20/12/2010	Forecast	20/12/2010 – 26/12/2010	313,000
2011/12	31/01/2012	Forecast	31/01/2012 – 06/02/2012	318,900
	13/02/2012*	Recorded	04/02/2012 – 10/02/2010	318,900

* This is a further trigger as the recorded temperatures for the periods involved means that customers would have received an additional payment if forecasted triggers were not being used for the scheme

Notes:

- 1) The exact number of Cold Weather Payments made each year is not recorded. The number of payments made at each trigger is estimated based on eligibility on the 1st November in that year.
- 2) Cold Weather Payments are made to benefit units rather than to households or individuals. A benefit unit can be a single person or a couple and can include children.
- 3) The estimated payment figures are rounded to the nearest 100.

Please note, since the start of this year's cold weather season on the 1 November to date, there have been no triggers recorded at the Coleshill weather station.