

Freedom of Information request 2013-4906

Date received: 15th October 2013

Date of response: 12th November 2013

Information request

How many households in Hastings and St Leonards on Sea in East Sussex are receiving Support for Mortgage Interest Benefit.

DWP response

Claimants who receive Income Support (IS), income-based Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), or Pension Credit (PC) may be entitled to help towards their mortgage costs. This is known as Support for Mortgage Interest (SMI). SMI covers eligible interest on loans, up to prescribed capital limits, taken out to purchase a home and on certain home improvement loans for repairs and improvements which are necessary to maintain the home's fitness for habitation.

Statistics on the number of claimants in Hastings Local Authority receiving SMI under IS, JSA and PC, as at August 2012, is available from the table below:

Benefit claimants receiving Support for Mortgage Interest (SMI) in Hastings Local Authority: August 2012

	Income Support	Jobseeker's Allowance	Pension Credit
Total Caseload	2,700	3,300	4,900
:of which receiving SMI	-	100	300

Source: DWP Information, Governance and Security Directorate, 5% sample

Notes:

1. Caseloads are rounded to the nearest hundred. August 2012 is the latest data available for IS and PC. The latest data available for JSA is at February 2013; however August 2012 is given for comparative reasons.
2. Figures are based on 5% sample data. All figures are subject to a degree of sampling variation.

3. Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance cases will include those receiving Income-based benefit with an underlying entitlement to contribution-based benefit.
4. Caseload figures have been uprated by using 5% proportions against 100% Work & Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) data.
5. St. Leonards-on-Sea is part of the Hastings Local Authority and is included in the figures above.

In relation to income-related ESA, I can confirm that the Department does hold some information falling within the description specified in your request. However, we estimate that the cost of complying with this part of your request would exceed the appropriate limit of £600. The appropriate limit has been specified in regulations and for central Government it is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3½ working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information.

Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act the Department is not obliged to comply with your request and we will not be processing this part of your request further.