

Freedom of Information request 2013-4597

Date received 25th September 2013

Date of response 23rd October 2013

Information request

Primarily for Oxford (i.e. at district council level) but also, ideally, for Cambridge and Guildford.

For those aged 50+ (with possible sub-group breakdowns within this age group)

- Count of Council Tax Benefit claimants year on year - up to 10 years from the most recent available
- Count of any equivalent or similar benefit since Council Tax benefit was replaced (sorry, not sure of the name of the current benefit?)
- Details of the source of, and any caveats around, the above stats

DWP response

In response to part of your question, statistics on Council Tax Benefit (CTB) claimants aged 50 and over for November 2010 to February 2013 in the requested areas are shown in the table below. Please note that this is "point in time data" therefore we have provided this as at November for 2010, 2011 and 2012, with the final year for 2013 as at February as that is the last month this data is available.

Council Tax Benefit claimants by age group and local authority - November 2010 to February 2013

	All claimants	Age Under 50	Age 50 - 54	Age 55 - 59	Age 60 - 64	Age 65 and over
Nov-10						
Great Britain	5,795,100	2,385,660	378,620	342,240	467,290	2,221,090
Cambridge	7,240	3,250	500	430	510	2,560
Oxford	10,300	5,030	720	600	650	3,300
Guildford	6,710	2,740	380	360	470	2,750
Nov-11						
Great Britain	5,865,420	2,446,440	396,720	352,510	458,660	2,210,930
Cambridge	7,190	3,210	490	460	500	2,540
Oxford	10,560	5,230	740	650	660	3,300
Guildford	6,770	2,790	400	380	470	2,740

Nov-12						
Great Britain	5,896,110	2,482,560	421,160	366,520	437,770	2,187,970
Cambridge	7,200	3,230	520	470	500	2,480
Oxford	10,370	5,060	800	650	660	3,210
Guildford	6,820	2,880	450	380	450	2,670
Feb-13						
Great Britain	5,904,250	2,493,540	427,590	371,750	434,940	2,176,310
Cambridge	7,180	3,230	520	480	500	2,450
Oxford	10,300	5,030	790	670	660	3,150
Guildford	6,730	2,790	450	390	430	2,670

Source: Single Housing Benefit Extract (SHBE).

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.
4. The latest data currently available is for February 2013
5. SHBE is a monthly electronic scan of claimant level data direct from local authority computer systems. It replaces quarterly aggregate clerical returns. The data is available from November 2008 and February 2013 is the latest available for CTB.
6. Age groups are based on the age on the count date (second Thursday in the month), of either: (a) the recipient if they are single, or (b) the elder of the recipient or partner if claiming as a couple

In response to the part of your request requiring CTB data, by age, for 2008 and 2009, I can confirm that the Department does hold some information falling within the description specified in your request. However, the required information is not readily available on the datasets used for analysis and we estimate that the cost of complying with 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.

Data prior to 2008 is not held by the Department as the data we received from local authorities was "stock count data" and not individual claimant level data as we receive now, which did not include age of claimant.

From the 1st April 2013 Council Tax Benefit (CTB) was abolished and replaced with a new scheme of Localised Council Tax Reduction (LCTR). In England the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) is

now responsible for the statistics. The Scottish and Welsh Governments have similar responsibility.

Guidance on how to raise a Freedom of Information request with DCLG can be found towards the bottom of the following page:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government>