

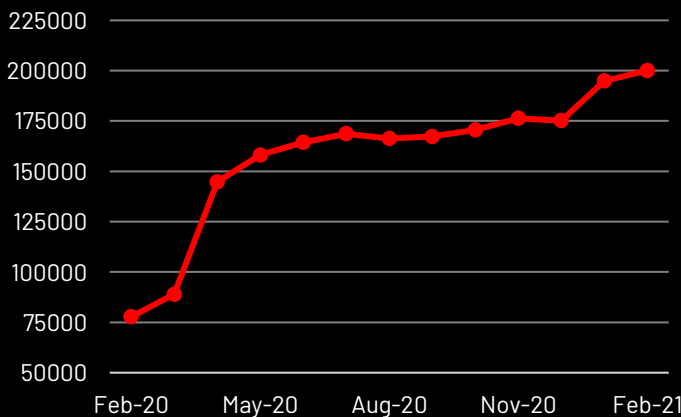
# 200,000 households now have their benefits capped

Sharp increases in those capped over winter as the grace period for new 'COVID claimants' ends

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## Households benefit capped still rising

**200,000 households** across Britain now have their benefits capped, and numbers **increased by 13%** over the winter. January saw the **biggest rise in a single month** since April 2020 as those who began claiming Universal Credit at the start of the pandemic came to the end of their grace periods and were capped. Even when lockdowns eased in summer 2020, we saw no sustained falls in numbers capped so these new households could struggle to find work to escape the cap despite the economy reopening.



Total households benefit capped (UC and HB)

**157%**  
more households with capped benefits since February 2020



**200K**

households with capped benefits as of February 2021

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## Capped families lose out on **£59 a week**

The average that families with children lose every week under the cap is £59.44. This has risen since the start of the pandemic, so that capped families now lose **£1 more than the average UK household spends on food** each week (£58.40).



Amount capped families lose per week

■ Feb-20 ■ Feb-21

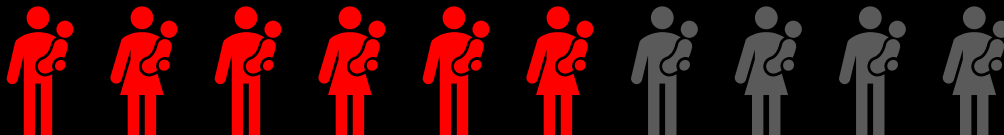


a week more lost by capped families than a year ago

# 3

## Most of those capped are families

83% of those whose benefits are capped are **families with children**. **59% (117,000 households)** are **lone parents**, who may face additional barriers returning to work even as the economy recovers from the pandemic.



**6 in 10** are lone parents



**17%**

The number of single people who are benefit capped is growing. **1 in 6** capped households live alone. In London it is **38%**. **The cap puts people at risk of rough sleeping**: single people who cannot pay their rent may find it more difficult to access homelessness assistance.

# 4

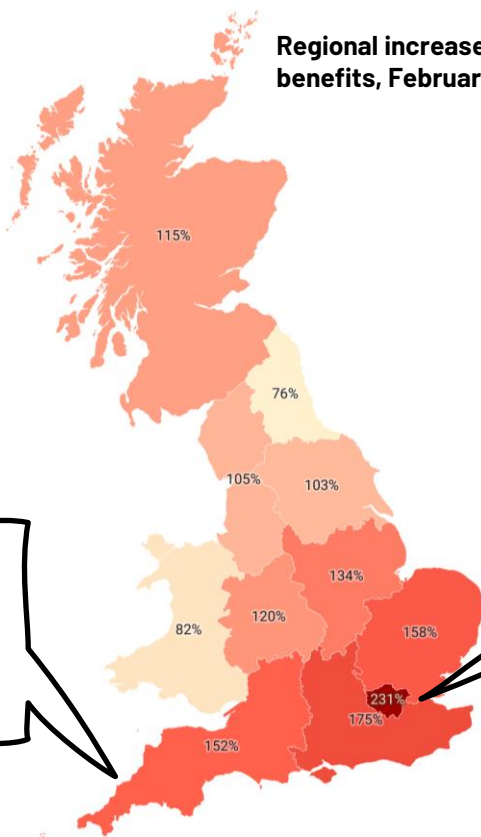
## Numbers of capped households **more than doubled** in most regions

Regional increases in numbers of households with capped benefits, February 2020-February 2021

Every part of Great Britain has seen an increase in benefit capped households, with numbers **at least doubling** in the majority of regions

In the South West, 11,000 households are now benefit capped, **7 in 10** of whom are lone parents with children

The biggest increase has been in London, where numbers capped have more than trebled to **66,000 households**. **4 in 10** of those capped in the capital are single people



Map: Shelter • Source: Department for Work and Pensions • Created with Datawrapper

### Sources

Numbers of households claiming Universal Credit or Housing Benefit who have their benefits capped taken from DWP, 'Benefit Cap Statistics: Households capped to February 2021' and DWP, statxplore, accessed 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2021.

Average weekly food budget for a UK household taken from ONS, 'Living Costs and Food Survey, financial year ending 2001 to financial year ending 2020': Table A1 'Detailed expenditure with full-method standard errors'.