

# 188,000 households now have their benefits capped

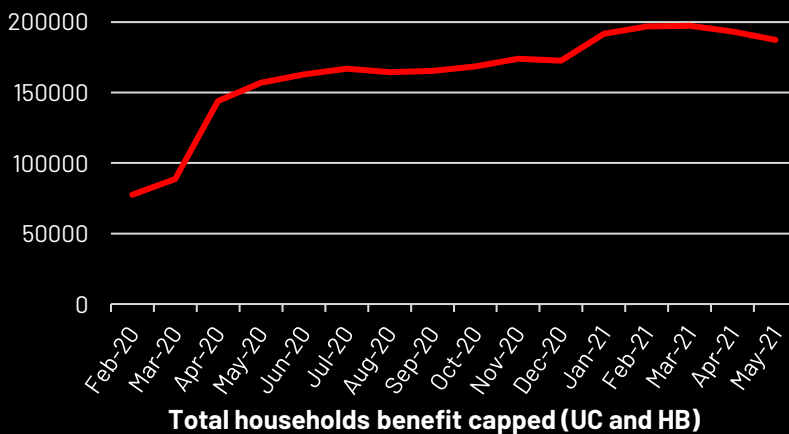
More than 8 in 10 are families with children, who lose more than the cost of an average food shop every week

1

## Numbers capped increased over the pandemic

The number of households having their benefits capped has increased by **19%** over the past year (May 2020–May 2021) to 188,000 and has **more than doubled** compared to the number capped before the pandemic (78,000) in February 2020.

Capped households have their benefits limited to £20,000 a year, or £23,000 in London, and for single people without children the limit is £13,400 or £15,410 in London. This takes no account of factors like the cost of housing or size of a family.



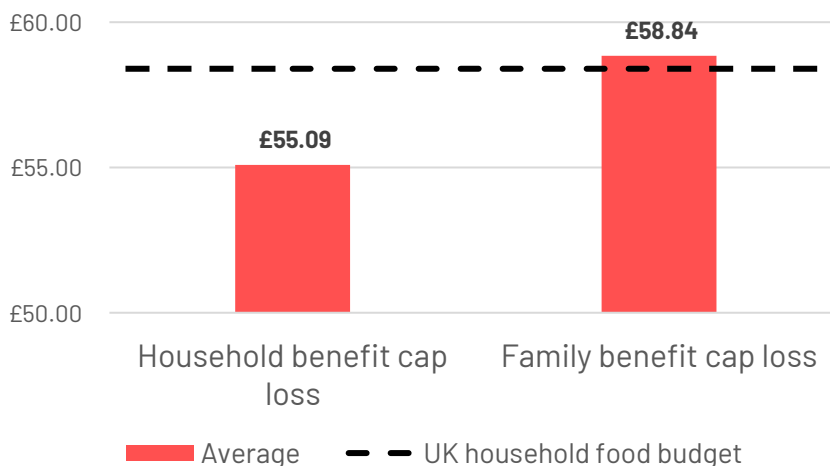
**141%**  
more households with capped benefits since Feb 2020

**188k**  
households with capped benefits as of May 2021

2

## Capped families lose out on £59 a week

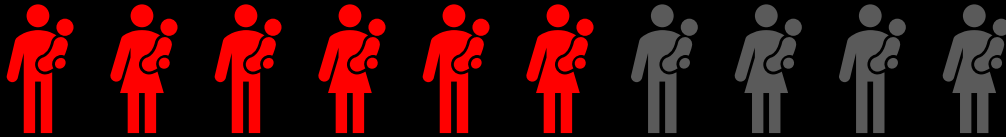
The average that families with children lose every single week under the cap is £58.84. This has risen since the start of the pandemic, so that capped families now lose **more than the average UK household spends on food** each week (£58.40).



3

## Most of those capped are families

83% of those whose benefits are capped are **families with children**. 62% (115,000 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



38%

in London are single adults

The number of single people who are benefit capped is growing. 1 in 6 (17%) 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.

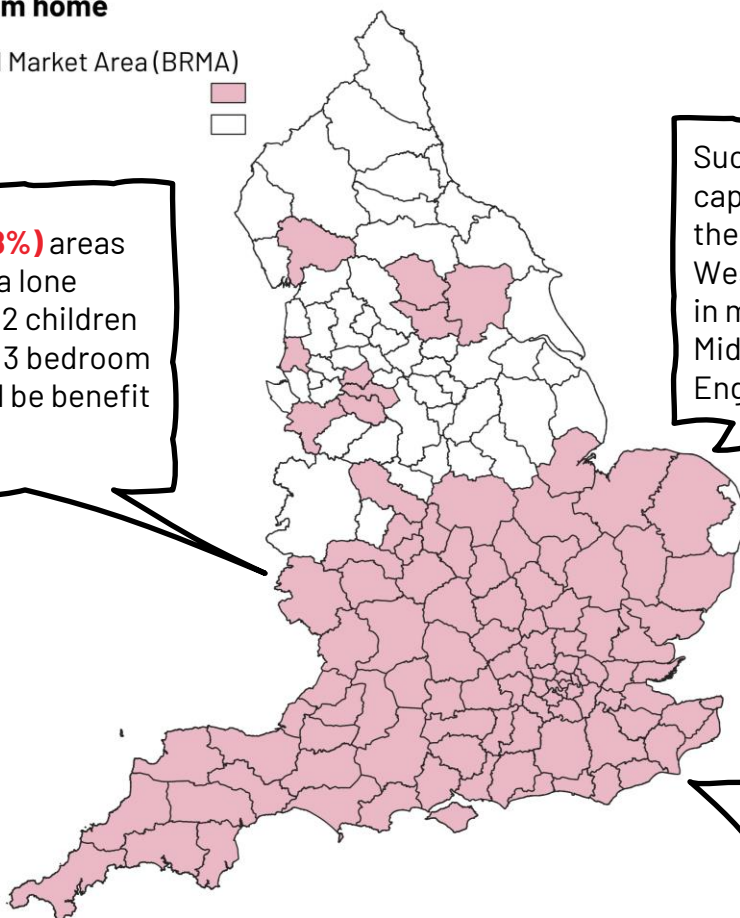
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## Budgets squeezed by cap across England

Single parent with 2 children in 3 bedroom home

Broad Rental Market Area (BRMA)  
 Capped ■  
 Not capped ■

In **7 in 10 (68%)** areas in England, a lone parent with 2 children in a modest 3 bedroom home would be benefit capped



Such a family would be capped everywhere in the South East, South West and London and in most of the West Midlands and East of England.

If a family moves to escape the cap, they face losing access to schools, childcare and a support network

5

## Scrap the benefit cap

The cap is arbitrary and unfair and it **must be scrapped**. It forces families to make impossible choices between keeping up with the rent and paying for food and other essentials.

## Sources

Numbers of households claiming Universal Credit or Housing Benefit who have their benefits capped taken from DWP, [Benefit Cap Statistics: Households capped to May 2021](#) and DWP, statxplore, accessed 27<sup>th</sup> September 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', March 2021.

The map of where a lone parent family with 2 children would be benefit capped refers to a single parent claiming Universal Credit including housing element and child benefit renting a three bedroom home at the Local Housing Allowance rate in their area. Local Housing Allowance rates are taken from Valuation Office Agency, [LHA Rates Tables 2021-22](#), January 2021. Base map of broad rental market areas in England is from Valuation Office Agency, [Broad Rental Market Area boundary layer for Geographical Information System \(GIS\)](#), June 2020.