

Households being benefit capped rises again to 170,000

New statistics show a worrying rise in the numbers of households benefit capped since the pandemic

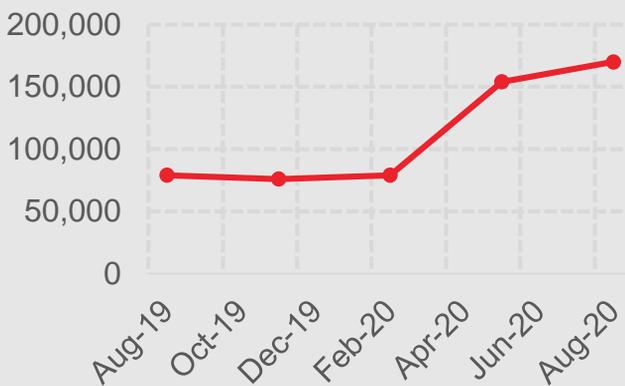


- **170,000 households** are now benefit capped
- This has **risen by 116%** since February
- Families **are losing £57 per week on average**

1

Benefit capped households are still rising

The main increase in claimants took place between February to May. However, despite lockdown easing over the summer, the number of households benefit capped continued to rise. This is particularly concerning given the re-introduction of lockdown measures and the worsening unemployment rate since then, and the nine-month grace period that is due to end for many at the end of the year.



Total households benefit capped (UC HE and HB)

116%

more benefit capped since Feb



170k

households now benefit capped

2

Families are losing £57 per week on average

This is the same as the average amount spent every week on food and non-alcoholic drinks by a family in the UK (£56.60).

Average weekly food budget for a family



=

Average weekly benefit cap loss



3

Over 100,000 are lone parent households

Lone parent households are disproportionately impacted by the benefit cap, making up 61% of capped households. They may face additional barriers to getting back into the labour market, even following economic recovery.



6 in 10 are lone parents



15%
single people

The number of single people who are benefit capped is growing. 1 in 6 capped households live alone. In London it is more than one third. **The cap will clearly present real problems to the government's attempts to end rough sleeping.**

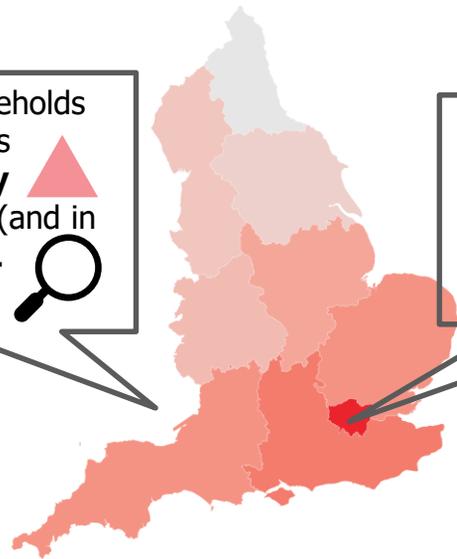
4 Numbers of capped households are rising across the country

Increase in number of benefit capped households by region



The number of households affected by the cap is **increasing in every region in England** (and in Scotland and Wales).

The greatest increases to date have been **in London (162%) and the South East (127%)**.



"It's been horrible, my husband got made redundant... I am a stay at home mum as we have 5 children ranging from 15 down to 3. Our Universal Credit got cut due to the benefit cap. We have used food banks every week and relied on family members to get food for us. Myself and my husband have been applying for jobs left right and centre but due to the current situation no one is hiring. We are behind on rent, and all our bills as we just don't have the money to pay for it. It has affected our mental health drastically which then has an impact on our children. I'm really, really at my wits end as there's no one to help us."

Anonymous submission to Shelter's *Home Truths* survey

Sources

DWP, 'Benefit Cap Statistics to August 2020, November 2020.
ONS, 'Living Cost and Food Survey 2019', 'Family spending, Workbook 1 - Detailed Expenditure and Trends, Table A1: Components of household expenditure, Average weekly expenditure all households, food and non-alcoholic drinks'.
March 2020