

Pensioners on low income – Pension Credit

Pension Credit is an income-related benefit that tops up weekly income to £182.60 for a single person and to a joint £278.70 for a couple.

Even a small award of Pension Credit can provide access to other types of benefits such as help with housing costs, council tax or heating bills. For those over 75, this includes continued entitlement to a free TV licence.¹

Over 4,000 people are estimated to be eligible for, but not yet claiming, Pension Credit in Oxfordshire equating to over £8.2 million per year in unclaimed entitlement.

- DWP estimates² show that 73% of those entitled to Pension Guarantee Credit and 43% of those entitled to Pension Savings Credit received the benefit in 2020. This difference in take-up could be influenced by the difference in the average weekly amounts people were entitled to. The estimated average weekly amount unclaimed for Guarantee Credit (£57) was substantially higher than Savings Credit only (£6).
- As of Nov21³ there were 8,354 people claiming Pension Credit in Oxfordshire.
- Applying the take-up estimates to Oxfordshire gives a total of 4,372 people eligible but not claiming.

| Oxfordshire claimants of Pension Credit (Nov21) | | | |
|---|-------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| | Guarantee Credit* | Savings Credit only | TOTAL |
| Cherwell | 1,617 | 310 | 1,927 |
| Oxford | 1,727 | 237 | 1,964 |
| South Oxfordshire | 1,338 | 286 | 1,624 |
| Vale of White Horse | 1,160 | 256 | 1,416 |
| West Oxfordshire | 1,169 | 257 | 1,426 |
| Oxfordshire | 7,012 | 1,342 | 8,354 |

| Estimate of people eligible but not claiming | | | |
|--|-------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| | Guarantee Credit* | Savings Credit only | TOTAL |
| Cherwell | 598 | 411 | 1,009 |
| Oxford | 639 | 314 | 953 |
| South Oxfordshire | 495 | 379 | 874 |
| Vale of White Horse | 429 | 339 | 768 |
| West Oxfordshire | 432 | 341 | 773 |
| Oxfordshire | 2,593 | 1,779 | 4,372 |

* Includes (a) Guarantee only and (b) both Guarantee and Savings credit

This equates to an estimated £8.2 million per year in unclaimed Pension Credit in Oxfordshire.

An Age UK briefing (Jul22)⁴ cites a range of inter-related reasons why people do not receive their entitlements including:

- Lack of awareness,
- An assumption that they would not be entitled to help,
- Not knowing how to go about making a claim,
- A concern that the process will be complicated,
- A reluctance to provide personal information,
- Negative attitudes about receiving benefits or asking for help.

Age UK's free to use and anonymous [benefits calculator](#) is a way of finding out what benefits could be owed.

[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/eligible-pensioners-urged-to-claim-pension-credit-to-help-with-cost-of-living>

[2] [Income-related benefits: estimates of take-up: financial year 2019 to 2020 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) (note that take-up statistics are not available at a lower level of geography than Great Britain).

[3] Pension credit data from [Stat-Xplore \(dwp.gov.uk\)](#)

[4] [benefit-take-up-and-older-people--july-2022.pdf \(ageuk.org.uk\)](#)