

Pensioners on low income – Pension Credit

Pension Credit is an income-related benefit¹ that tops up weekly income to £201.05 for a single person and to a joint £306.85 for a couple². 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.

Nearly 5,000 people are estimated to be eligible for, but not yet claiming, Pension Credit in Oxfordshire equating to over £10.4 million per year in unclaimed entitlement.

- DWP estimates³ show that 70% of those entitled to Pension Guarantee Credit (GC) and 39% of those entitled to Pension Savings Credit (SC) received the benefit in 2022. This difference in take-up could be influenced by the difference in the average weekly amounts people were entitled to. The estimated average (mean) weekly amount unclaimed for GC (£63) was higher than SC only (£7) as expected given the difference in the available payments for GC and SC only.
- In 2022, take-up of SC only was 39%, a reduction from 2020 when it was 43%, because of the reduction in the eligible population for SC only.
- As of Feb23⁴ there were 8,172 people claiming Pension Credit in Oxfordshire.
- Applying the take-up estimates to Oxfordshire gives a total of 4,890 people eligible but not claiming. This is an increase of 518 people since the last estimate in November 2021 where it was estimated 4,372 people were eligible but not claiming.

Oxfordshire claimants of Pension Credit (Feb23)			
	Guarantee Credit*	Savings Credit only	TOTAL
Cherwell	1,596	297	1,893
Oxford	1,698	210	1,908
South Oxfordshire	1,345	265	1,610
Vale of White Horse	1,175	235	1,410
West Oxfordshire	1,136	215	1,351
Oxfordshire	6,950	1,222	8,172

Estimate of people eligible but not claiming			
	Guarantee Credit*	Savings Credit only	TOTAL
Cherwell	684	465	1,149
Oxford	728	328	1,056
South Oxfordshire	576	414	991
Vale of White Horse	504	368	871
West Oxfordshire	487	336	823
Oxfordshire	2,979	1,911	4,890

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

This equates to an estimated £10.4 million per year in unclaimed Pension Credit in Oxfordshire.

Take-up may be affected by broad factors such as the attractiveness of the benefit, lack of awareness of the benefit or application procedure, lack of awareness of entitlement, or the perceived stigma of receiving a benefit (Eurofound 2015)⁵.

Age UK's free to use and anonymous [benefits calculator](#) is a way of finding out what benefits could be owed or to get help with applying or reviewing a previous application which was not successful, you can contact the [Pension Credit claim](#) line.

[1] <https://www.gov.uk/pension-credit>

[2] <https://www.gov.uk/pension-credit/what-youll-get>

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

[4] <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/income-related-benefits-estimates-of-take-up-financial-year-ending-2022/> (note that take-up statistics are not available at a lower level of geography than Great Britain). Pension credit data from [Stat-Xplore](#) ([dwp.gov.uk](#))

[5] [Access to social benefits: Reducing non-take-up | European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions](#) ([europa.eu](#))