

## Council Tax Benefit

<b>General details</b>	Data derived from a 100% scan of Council Tax Benefit Claimants held by Kirklees MC.
<b>Area output</b>	Kirklees data which can be allocated to areas by unit postcodes
<b>Time period</b>	Extracted annually in May from 1996 onwards
<b>Source</b>	Kirklees MC Revenues and Benefits
<b>Provider</b>	Research Section Corporate Development Unit
<b>Comments</b>	The data is regarded as being of very high quality. National comparisons not necessarily valid as Council Tax rates vary.

### 1 Introduction

1.1 Council Tax Benefit is a non-contributory but means-tested benefit, which is claimed from your local council. Anyone who has to pay Council Tax on their home may get Council Tax Benefit

1.2 Council Tax Benefit is calculated on a sliding scale dependent on:

- your Council Tax charge.
- your income and capital.
- your family size and circumstances.

1.3 However, if you have capital (including savings, shares and property other than your own house) of over £16,000 you cannot claim Council Tax Benefit.

1.4 A majority of claimants receive a 100% rebate of their Council Tax charge (e.g. those eligible for Income Support), with the remainder receiving a proportion.

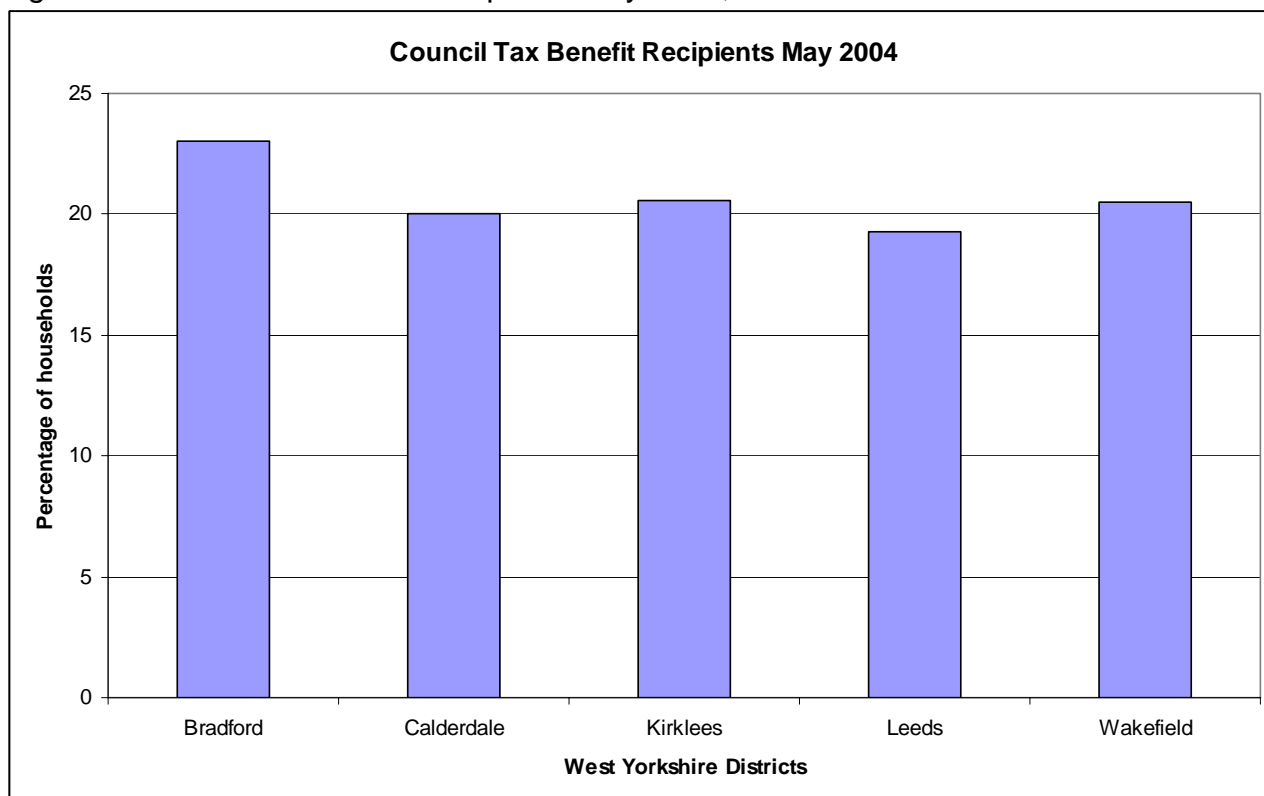
### 2 National and Regional Figures

2.1 In May 2004 about four million households in England claimed Council Tax Benefit, which was 19.3% of all households.

2.2 In Yorkshire and the Humber the rate of claiming was slightly higher than the national figure, 20.9%.

2.3 The Kirklees rate, as measured by the quarterly statistics compiled by the Department of Work and Pensions was 20.6% which was about average for West Yorkshire.

Figure 1: Council Tax Benefit Recipients May 2004, West Yorkshire



Source: DWP Housing Benefit & Council Tax Benefit Quarterly Summary Statistics: May 2004

### 3 Kirklees Figures

3.1 Council Tax Benefit has been used in Kirklees and many other local authorities as an indicator of deprivation. When Council Tax Benefit claimants are mapped at a small area level, the areas identified correlate well with other deprivation indicators such as the Index of Multiple Deprivation and the CACI PayCheck model.

3.2 Since 1996, the number of Council Tax Benefit Claimants in Kirklees has fallen by 7,500 which is about 18% of the 1996 total.

Table 1: Numbers of Council Tax Benefit recipients

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>South Kirklees</b>	22225	21581	21127	21014	19403	19231	18090	17520	18294
<b>North Kirklees</b>	18991	18723	18533	18663	17212	17131	16129	15529	16226
<b>Kirklees</b>	42000	40848	39969	39931	36781	36457	34225	33050	34523

3.3 Council Tax Benefit Claimants now represent 21.5% of the Kirklees households which are eligible to pay Council Tax, down from 27.6% in 1996. This trend is the same in North and South Kirklees but North Kirklees has a slightly higher overall rate than South Kirklees.\*

\*Note: The DWP quarterly figures for May 2004 report about 33,500 claimants but these are based on a one percent sample of Kirklees Council Tax records. Figures from Kirklees Revenues and Benefits are based on a one hundred percent download

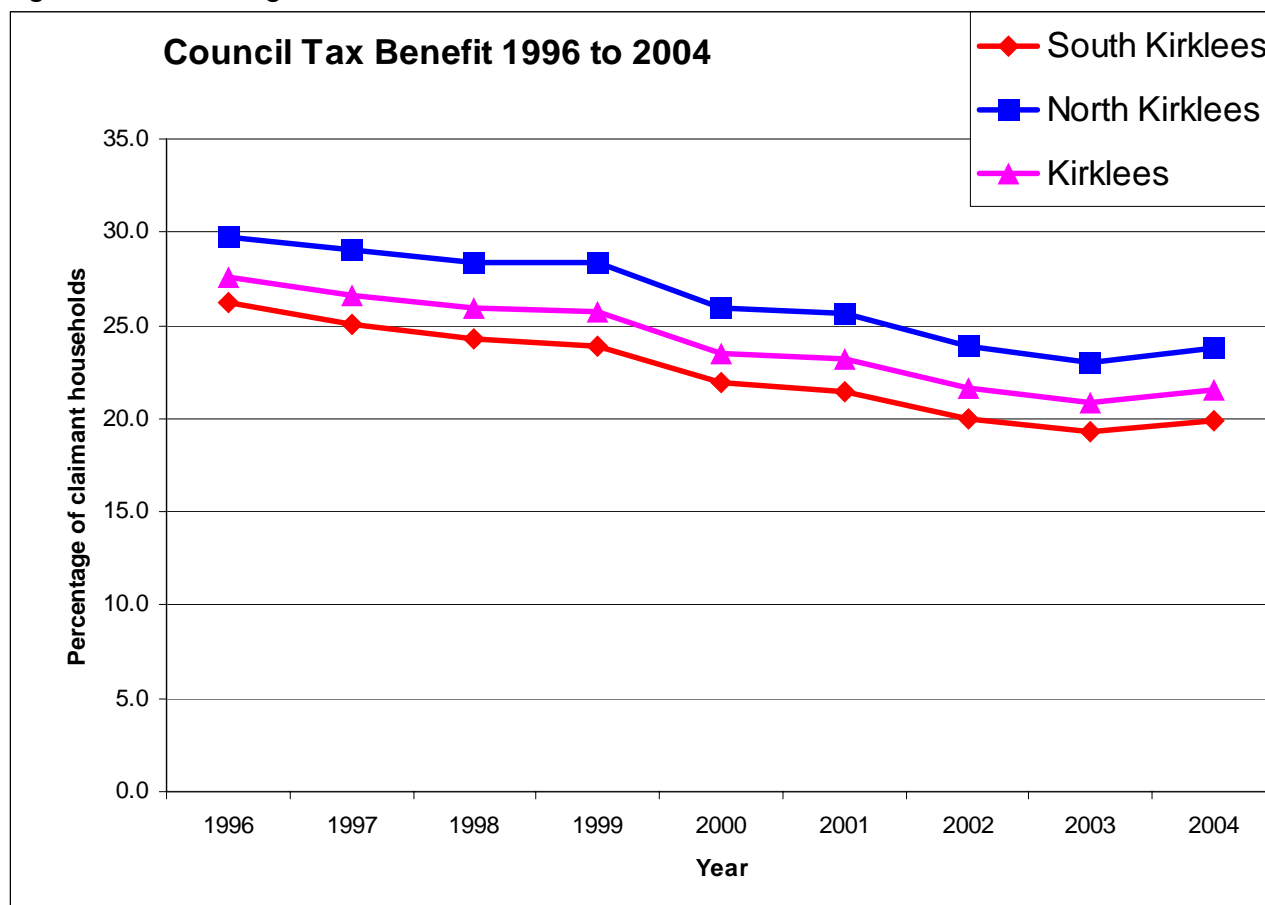
Table 2: Percentage of Council Tax Benefit Recipients

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>South Kirklees</b>	26.2	25.0	24.3	23.9	21.9	21.5	20.0	19.3	19.9
<b>North Kirklees</b>	29.7	29.0	28.4	28.3	26.0	25.7	23.9	23.0	23.7
<b>Kirklees</b>	27.6	26.7	26.0	25.7	23.5	23.2	21.7	20.9	21.5

3.4 Possible causes of the decline in the number and percentage of Council Tax Claimants include:

- A reduction in the number of people who are eligible through being unemployed
- A rise in income levels

Figure 2: Percentage of Council Tax Benefit



3.5 The figures for 2004 show a slight rise on the 2003 figure. In April 2001 the income threshold for Council Tax Benefit increased more than the increase in the basic state retirement pension. This increased the number of pensioners who were eligible for the benefit. The slight rise in 2004 may be the effect of this overcoming the underlying decline caused by rising incomes and falling unemployment.

3.6 The Department of Work and Pensions estimates the level of under-claiming of Council Tax Benefit annually. In 2001-2 the Department estimated that between 66 and 72% of those entitled to claim Council Tax actually made a successful claim and that the total amount claimed was between 70 and 76% of the amount that could have been claimed.

3.7 The equivalent figures for pensioners (people who could claim but do not are referred to as entitled non-recipients) are between 57 and 63% for claims and between 61 and 68% for the amount of money.

3.8 Claimants of Council Tax Benefit are not spread evenly across Kirklees. There are two and half times as many claimants living in Deighton or Batley West wards as there are living in the rural wards of Kirkburton, Holme Valley South and Denby Dale.

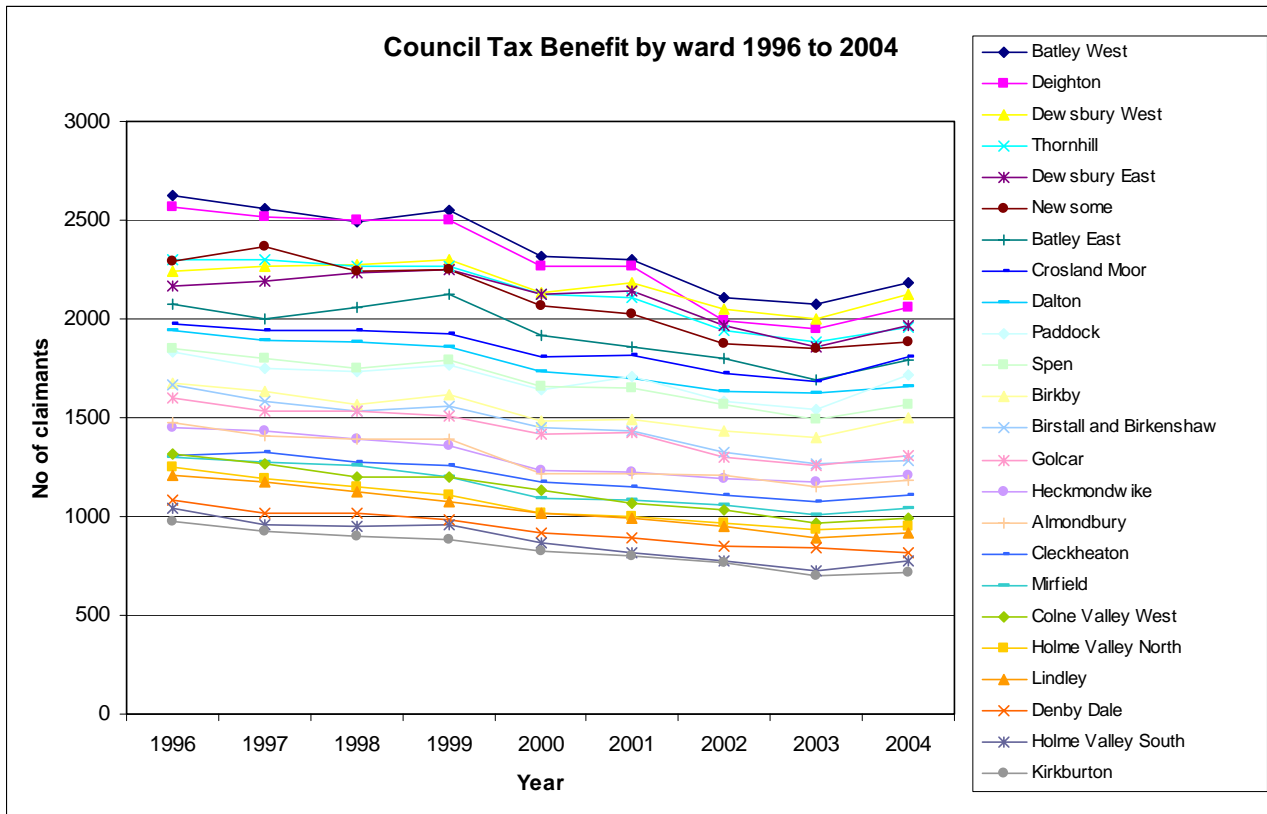
Table 3: Number of Council Tax Benefit Claimants by 2003 wards

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
<b>Batley West</b>	2626	2555	2492	2552	2315	2296	2105	2074	2181
<b>Deighton</b>	2563	2518	2499	2496	2269	2268	1992	1949	2061
<b>Dewsbury West</b>	2244	2263	2276	2301	2133	2185	2053	2001	2122
<b>Thornhill</b>	2302	2300	2269	2270	2129	2110	1944	1885	1958
<b>Dewsbury East</b>	2167	2190	2231	2250	2121	2140	1966	1859	1964
<b>Newsome</b>	2289	2367	2241	2246	2063	2027	1877	1848	1886
<b>Batley East</b>	2072	1996	2058	2123	1913	1861	1801	1690	1791
<b>Crosland Moor</b>	1973	1943	1945	1928	1807	1817	1726	1687	1806
<b>Dalton</b>	1939	1895	1882	1857	1734	1703	1637	1624	1655
<b>Paddock</b>	1830	1750	1733	1764	1638	1712	1587	1542	1718
<b>Spennings</b>	1849	1802	1747	1792	1655	1648	1570	1489	1570
<b>Birkby</b>	1675	1634	1569	1617	1482	1494	1432	1404	1499
<b>Birstall and Birkenshaw</b>	1665	1587	1534	1558	1447	1433	1329	1267	1284
<b>Golcar</b>	1598	1533	1531	1507	1419	1428	1297	1257	1306
<b>Heckmondwike</b>	1453	1430	1389	1356	1232	1221	1194	1179	1206
<b>Almondbury</b>	1475	1406	1392	1394	1216	1213	1210	1154	1187
<b>Cleckheaton</b>	1309	1322	1277	1261	1176	1152	1112	1073	1109
<b>Mirfield</b>	1304	1278	1260	1200	1091	1085	1055	1012	1041
<b>Colne Valley West</b>	1319	1268	1197	1196	1136	1070	1030	964	994
<b>Holme Valley North</b>	1253	1189	1148	1111	1014	997	963	930	954
<b>Lindley</b>	1209	1176	1121	1078	1013	989	948	891	919
<b>Denby Dale</b>	1083	1020	1015	980	920	889	852	841	820
<b>Holme Valley South</b>	1043	961	954	959	868	820	772	726	774
<b>Kirkburton</b>	976	921	900	881	824	804	767	703	715

3.9 When these figures are expressed as a percentage of eligible households, some wards have only about 10% of households claiming benefit in 2004 while Deighton ward has over 37%

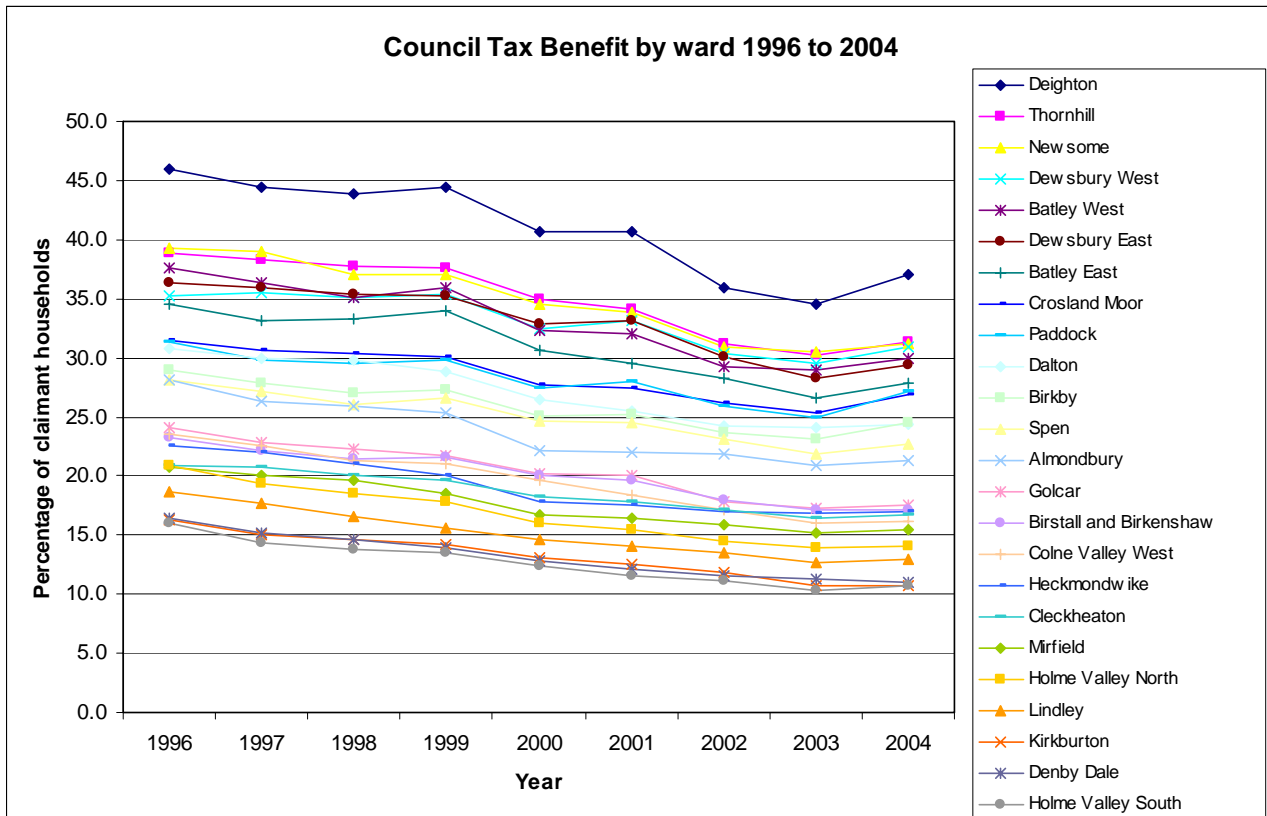
3.10 The rate of claiming in Deighton has consistently been 5% higher than the next highest claiming ward since 1996.

Figure 3: Number of Council Tax Benefit Claimants by 2003 wards



3.11 All wards have seen a significant fall in the number of claimants since 1996 and almost all wards have seen that fall arrested in 2004. It is the wards that have the highest overall numbers and percentages of claimants that have also seen the highest rise from 2003 to 2004 (Figures 2,3).

Figure 4: Percentage of Council Tax Benefit by 2003 wards



3.12 A revaluation of domestic properties is due for 2005(6) which will take into account the considerable rise in property values over the last few years. This may have a considerable impact on the pattern of Council Tax Benefit claiming as many people may become eligible for benefit because their house has entered a different valuation band.

3.13 Using the Department of Work and Pensions estimate of take-up rates, around 15,000 households in Kirklees may be eligible for Council Tax Benefit but do not claim. Few of these are likely to be eligible for a full rebate (e.g. through eligibility for Income Support) and the amount of rebate for which they are eligible is likely to be fairly small.

#### 4 Links and further information

Department for Work and Pensions (Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit quarterly statistics)

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/asd/hbctb.asp>

#### 5 Indicator archive

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