

NEWS RELEASE

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Seven in 10 pensioner homeowners entitled to benefits are failing to claim, missing out on an average of £1,339 extra income a year

- 16th annual State Benefits Insight Report from retirement specialist Just Group reveals non-claiming at 'epidemic' levels
- Analysis finds 74% eligible for State cash are failing to claim any benefits
- A further 14% who are claiming are receiving less than their full entitlement

Cash-strapped pensioner homeowners are missing out on thousands of pounds a year of extra income by failing to claim their full entitlement to State cash.

The 16th annual State Benefits Insight Reportⁱ from **retirement specialist Just Group** found that in 2025, seven in 10 (74%) pensioner homeowners eligible for cash help were failing to claim any of the benefits, missing out on an average of £1,339 a year extra income.

Nearly one in seven (14%) who were claiming were receiving too little, on average missing out on an additional £1,162 a year income.

"Our survey once again reveals what appears to be an epidemic of pensioner homeowners missing out on income they are entitled to claim," said **David Cooper, director at retirement specialist Just Group**.

"Of the 42% of pensioner homeowners eligible for benefits, about three in four were failing to claim any benefit. These are low-income pensioner households likely to be struggling with the cost-of-living crisis.

"Guaranteed Pension Credit is the main means-tested benefit for older people, and a gateway to a range of other benefits such as Winter Fuel Payment, but we found more than two thirds who were eligible were missing out."

The research from Just Group, is based on in-depth fact-finding interviews with clients seeking advice on equity release during 2025. It shows 42% were entitled to one of the key benefits. Of those eligible, seven in 10 (74%) were not claiming any benefit and one in seven (14%) were claiming less than they were entitled to.

2025	Guarantee Pension Credit	Savings Pension Credit	Council Tax Reduction	Universal Credit
Eligible to claim	7%	9%	41%	5%
Take-up rate among those eligible to claim	29%	56%	24%	60%
Average annual value of new claim identified	£394	£453	£1,050	£3,926

"Specialist equity release advisers from our sister company HUB Financial Solutions make a comprehensive check of State benefit entitlement as part of the advice process to ensure clients are receiving all the cash support they are entitled to," said David Cooper.

The highest amount of extra income uncovered was £113.03 a week (£5,877 a year) due to a client in South Yorkshire. In total, more than half (58%) of those missing out on income were entitled to benefits worth £1,000 or more a year.

Guarantee Pension Credit is the main benefit targeted at helping low-income pensioners. It was being claimed by only three in 10 of those pensioner homeowners who were eligible. Households failing to claim were losing an average £394 extra income per year.

Savings Pension Credit – only 9% were eligible for the ‘top up’ benefit for low-income pensioners who have modest savings. A little over a half (56%) of those eligible were claiming, with the average annual loss £453 per household.

Council Tax Reduction should be claimed by nearly four in 10 (41%) of pensioner homeowner households, but less than a quarter (24%) of those were actually claiming with the average annual loss £1,050.

Universal Credit - about a third of the lifetime mortgage enquiries who received advice were below State Pension age, potentially eligible for Universal Credit. Although actual eligibility rates were low, the take-up rate was just 60% with those households not claiming missing out on £3,926 per household on average.

Of those failing to claim, six in 10 (62%) were missing out on one key benefit, 12% were missing out on two benefits and 5% were missing out on three benefits.

Government estimatesⁱⁱ suggest that in 2023/24, up to 910,000 families entitled to receive Pension Credit did not claim, totalling about £2.5 billion or an average of around £2,600 a year for each family.

“Our take-up figures for homeowners are a little lower than the overall rates published by the government, suggesting some people may think owning a home rules them out of receiving State support,” said David Cooper.

“Our report raises serious questions about the support and guidance available to people heading into retirement and beyond,” he said. “Benefits like Pension Credit are not paid automatically but must be claimed, so people need the foresight to check if they are entitled to it.

“It’s important cash-strapped pensioner households do not simply assume there is no State help available – a five-minute check could unlock thousands of pounds of income each year.”

There are a range of resources to provide information and guidance:

- The government highlights free, independent third-party benefit calculators at <https://www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators>
- Local councils provide information on financial help to pay rent or Council Tax
- Organisations such as the MoneyHelper and charities such as Citizens Advice and Age UK can be good sources of assistance.
- Free, impartial and independent guidance is available to retirees through the government-backed Pension Wise.
- Professional advisers will charge but can provide regulated advice alongside information about benefit eligibility.

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Notes to Editors

1 – Just Group State Benefits Insight Report is based on in-depth fact-finding interviews with clients seeking advice on equity release during 2025

2 – DWP, Income-related benefits: estimates of take up: financial year ending 2024

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/income-related-benefits-estimates-of-take-up-financial-year-ending-2024/income-related-benefits-estimates-of-take-up-financial-year-ending-2024>

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- Individually underwritten retirement income products delivering a guaranteed income for life;
- Long term care plans that provide those people moving into residential care with peace of mind by knowing a regular payment will be made to the care provider for the rest of their life;
- Lifetime mortgages for people who want to safely release some of the value from their home.

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