

18 February 2025

Our Ref: FOI 654

Request

We received your request on 24 January 2025 for the following information:

- *The total Discretionary Housing Payment budget in each of the last 3 years*
- *The total Discretionary Housing Payment expenditure in the last 3 years*
- *The date of implementation of the policy to reduce Discretionary Housing Payment awards at each review stage during a 2-year award period.*
- *The frequency of award reviews during a 2-year award period*
- *The average Discretionary Housing Payment award reduction made at award reviews*
- *The number of Discretionary Housing Payment awards made in each of the last 3 years*
- *The average Discretionary Housing Payment award amount made in each of the last 3 years*
- *The average duration of a Discretionary Housing Payment award made in each of the last 3 years*
- *The number of Discretionary Housing Payment awards, which are for a 2-year duration in each of the last 3 years*
- *The number of Discretionary Housing Payment applications which have been rejected because the claimant has maxed out the 2-year award period*

Your request has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Our response:

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
DHP budget	£6,100,000	£6,490,000	£6,490,000
DHP expenditure	£4,380,297.59	£6,297,557.07	£6,200,587.15
Number of awards	20,541	22,614	28,205
Average weekly award	£13.59	£17.67	£13.75

	April 2024 - January 2025
No rejected as >2 yrs	260

Implementation date of policy to reduce awards during 2-year period

To ensure as many customers as possible receive assistance, it has always been the intention that DHP awards would be made to help sustain tenancies and for a period to enable customers to seek suitable, alternative accommodation. It was deemed that 2 years would be an appropriate period to facilitate this, with payments reducing gradually at each review, rather than a sudden and significant drop in financial assistance at the end of the 2-year period.

Each case is reviewed on individual circumstances, so discretion is exercised on the amount of any reduction applied. Payments may not reduce at all and may be paid in excess of the standard 2-year period where mitigating circumstances apply, such as the customer residing in accommodation, which is specifically suited, or adapted for their needs.

Frequency of reviews

All DHP awards are reviewed at the end of their award as notified in the letter to the customer; however, depending on budget availability we might need to review awards more frequently to ensure we are supporting as many customers as possible while remaining within budget.

In most cases awards will be paid for a maximum of two years; however, this is kept under review and any future decisions will be dependent on budget availability.

The DHP budget is managed on a financial year basis. Awards can only be made for a maximum of 12 months at a time, and all cases must end on 31 March each year.

In year reviews are carried out at the end of the period specified in the customer's award letter. Generally, this is annually or bi-annually but may be more frequent where required by the customer's circumstances.

Further reviews may also be carried out where the decision maker is advised of a significant change in the customer's financial situation or is notified that the customer ceases to meet the conditions of entitlement to a DHP award.

Average Discretionary Housing Payment award reduction made at award reviews

We do not capture data on the average Discretionary Housing Payment award reduction made at award reviews.

Average duration of a Discretionary Housing Payment award made in each of the last 3 years

DHP awards are keyed for a maximum of 12 months, and must end on 31 March each year, therefore we are unable to calculate the average duration of a Discretionary Housing Payment award made in each of the last 3 years.

Number of Discretionary Housing Payment awards which are for a 2-year duration in each of the last 3 years

DHP awards are keyed for a maximum of 12 months, and must end on 31 March each year, therefore we are unable to calculate the number of Discretionary Housing Payment awards which are for a 2-year duration in each of the last 3 years.

Number of Discretionary Housing Payment applications which have been rejected because the claimant has maxed out the 2-year award period

In April 2024 we introduced a process to capture the number of Discretionary Housing Payment applications which have been rejected because the claimant has maxed out the 2-year award period. This information is not available for previous years.

This concludes our response.