



Department
for Work &
Pensions

0207 340 4000

www.dwp.gov.uk

ministers@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Rt Hon Ian Blackford MP
House of Commons

1 February 2019

Dear Ian

I am writing to advise you of the outcome of the Cold Weather Payments scheme annual review.

The scheme is reviewed after the end of each winter season to ensure that the weather station network remains viable and representative. Expert advice is sought from the Met Office and changes made where appropriate before the start of the next winter period. As part of this, we consider representations made during the previous winter about the suitability of individual weather stations and the links with postcode districts.

Last year we were asked if further consideration could be given as to whether the current Cold Weather Payment weather station was the most appropriate for the IV15 postcode. The Head of the Met Office National Climate Information Centre reviewed the data for the IV7, IV15 and IV16 postcodes and has advised that:

The main population centre for IV15 is the town of Dingwall with a winter mean temperature in the range 2.6 to 3.1 °C. The postcode also contains some higher elevation land to the north and west of Dingwall.

The postcodes adjacent to the coast and estuaries are linked to the coastal climate station at Kinloss (3.8 °C) and the more inland postcodes are linked to the higher elevation site at Loch Glascarnoch (2.0 °C).

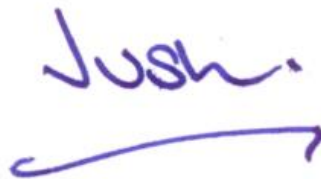
In his findings, he recommended that the postcodes of IV7, IV15 and IV16 would be better represented by linking to the weather station at Loch Glascarnoch, which is more representative of the higher elevation

and cooler postcodes. On this basis the Cold Weather Payment weather station for these postcodes has been changed to Loch Glascarnoch for the 2018/19 Cold Weather Payment season, which has received an average temperature of 0 degrees or below forecast for 16/01/2019-22/01/2019.

In making its recommendations, the Met Office examined the Geographic Information System database showing postcode areas, weather stations, topography, built-up areas and 1 km-gridded winter mean air temperature for 1981-2010. (i.e. the latest 30-year measurement of winter mean temperature used to calculate various weather parameters.)

I will place a copy of this letter in the House Library.

If you have any further questions, please contact my officials at socialfundstrategy.singlepointofcontact@dwp.gsi.gov.uk



Justin Tomlinson MP
Minister for Family Support, Housing and Child Maintenance