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## Pension backpay woe for 80,000 women who will not get a penny of the £3billion set aside to rectify historical admin blunders

- 200,000 women will be sent letters saying they are due on average £13,500
- But married women entitled to the pay rise will not be told if they missed out
- The underpayments scandal relates to the old state pensions system

By [BEN WILKINSON MONEY MAIL DEPUTY EDITOR FOR THE DAILY MAIL](#)

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Up to 80,000 women who were underpaid their state pensions will not get a penny of the £3billion set aside to rectify historical admin blunders.

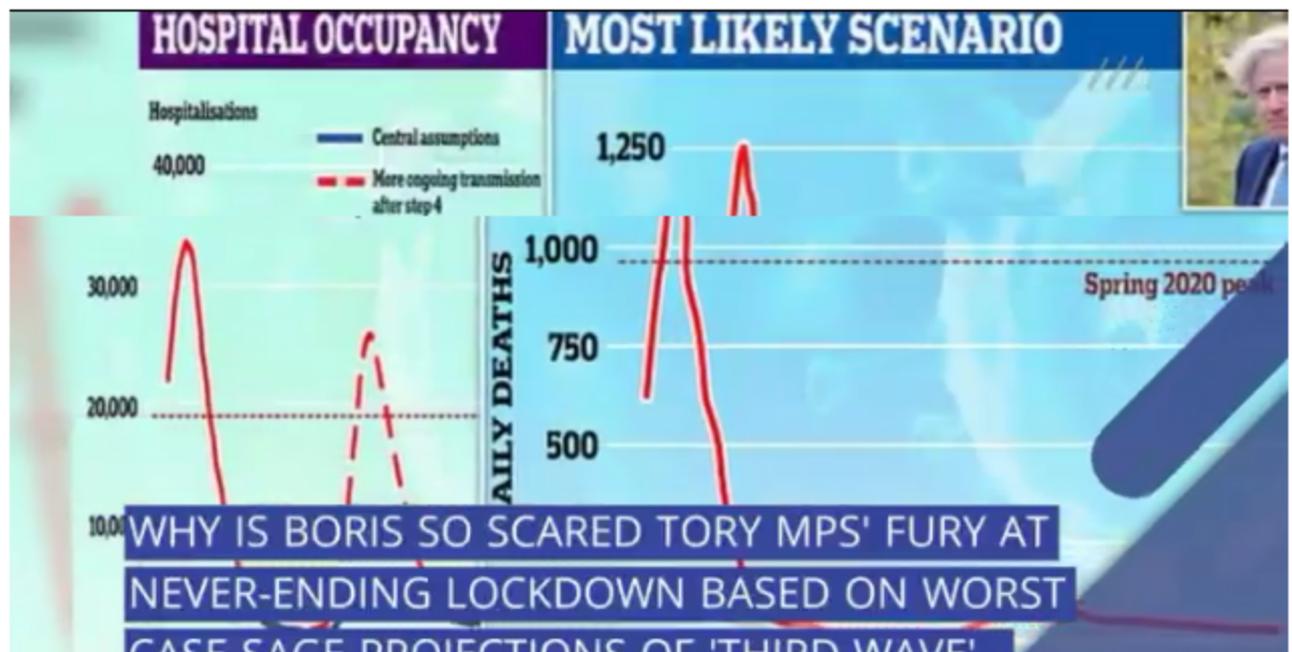
Around 200,000 wives, widows and over-80s will be sent letters to say they are due an average of £13,500 after the Government found systemic failures to automatically award pension pay rises stretching back nearly 30 years.

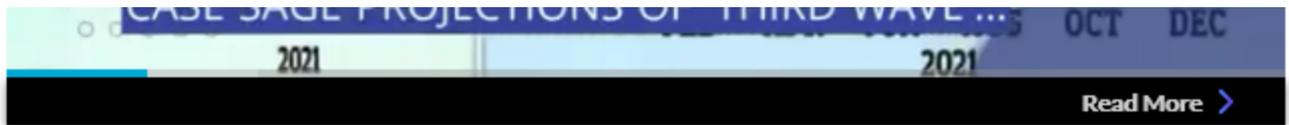
But married women who were entitled to the pension pay rise before March 2008 will not be told if they have missed out – or get the money back.



**Up to 80,000 women who were underpaid their state pensions will not get a penny of the £3billion set aside to rectify historical admin blunders**

This is because it was their duty to claim the extra pension before the law changed to make it the Government's responsibility to award it automatically.





Former pensions minister Sir Steve Webb estimates this group comprises between 70,000 and 80,000 women.

The underpayments scandal relates to the old state pensions system, and it affects women who went into retirement before April 2016.

They are entitled to a state pension worth 60 per cent of their husband's basic rate, if this is bigger than a pension based on their own contributions.

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Money Mail has campaigned for women to receive all the money they missed out on. The law currently means they can only backdate a claim by 12 months.

Many women who have found out that they had lost thousands of pounds insist they were not properly informed of their entitlement by the DWP.

Sir Steve said: 'If they had any idea they could have claimed a bigger pension, they would have done so. They clearly did not know and they government did not make sure they knew.'

'(The Government) could do something about this group, but they are just hoping they go away.'



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**The underpayments scandal relates to the old state pensions system, and it affects women who went into retirement before April 2016**

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Money Mail exposed last year that the DWP had sent the vital forms to their husbands when it was time to make a claim. This revelation is now being used by women in a complaint of maladministration to the Parliamentary Ombudsman against the DWP.

Another former pensions minister, Baroness (Ros Altmann) said she was 'mortified' when she found out about the scale of the underpayments scandal.

She said: 'I am very sorry it has happened. It is such a shame to think of all those women living on far less than they should.'

'If they wrote to the man rather than the woman, then that is wholly inappropriate. It looks to me like maladministration but I am not the judge. There is certainly a case to answer.'

'If it is established that they were not fairly told and there was an administration failure, they should be entitled to redress.'

The Government has also said it will not add interest to the arrears owed to the 200,000 women. This is despite having previously added interest to sums paid to victims of the scandal.

Sir Steve added: 'It's absolutely outrageous. In some cases they have been paying hundreds of pounds in interest. It's the same people losing the same money.'

The DWP says it will correct the historical underpayments and will contact anyone affected to ensure they receive all that they are owed.

But a spokesman added: 'Married women whose husbands reached state pension age after them, but before 17 March 2008, were required by law to make a separate claim. Once an application is made, women can receive a backdated payment but the law limits that backdating to a period of 12 months.'