

# **The Blue Badge Scheme Local Authority Guidance (England)**



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# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction

### 1.1. OVERVIEW AND SCOPE OF GUIDANCE

The Disabled Persons' Parking Badge Scheme ('the Scheme') was introduced in 1971, under Section 21 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 ('the 1970 Act') – a list of the legislation relevant to the Scheme is at **Appendix A**.

The Scheme provides a national arrangement of on-street parking concessions for severely disabled people who are unable, or find it difficult, to use public transport. The disabled persons' Blue Badge is recognised throughout the European Union.

This guidance only applies to **Local Authorities in England**. The Scottish Executive, National Assembly for Wales and Northern Ireland Assembly all provide separate guidance for their own Blue Badge Scheme.

The booklet, 'The Blue Badge Scheme: rights and responsibilities', contains detailed information on the parking concessions available under the Scheme. This leaflet should be given to all new Blue Badge holders (see **Appendix B** for details on how to obtain copies). The list of concessions given to Blue Badge holders in England is also summarised at **Appendix C**.

This document is designed to:

- provide guidance to English local authorities on the administration of the Scheme
- help improve consistency between different authorities' interpretation of the eligibility criteria; and
- assist with the enforcement of the Scheme.

Examples of good practice are highlighted throughout the document (with case studies in green text boxes).

This guidance replaces Local Authority Circulars 4/82 and 3/91. **Authorities are asked to ensure that this guidance is brought to the attention of all officers concerned with the assessment of applications and the issue of badges, together with officers responsible for parking enforcement. Copies should always be available for reference.**

### 1.2. RESPONSIBILITY FOR ADMINISTERING THE SCHEME

It is for local authorities to decide which department within the authority should be responsible for administering the Scheme. In some local authorities this lies within the Social Services Department, as they are already responsible for dealing with other

benefits for disabled and older people. In other authorities it has been placed within the Parking Management Department, as they are responsible for enforcing the Scheme and may be more effective at preventing abuse.

It is essential that all members of staff who deal regularly with applicants and badge holders should be included in your Disability and Equality Awareness training programme. Such training will help staff to understand the importance of the Scheme to those who rely upon it and the consequences for those people if badges are made available to those who do not fully meet the eligibility criteria.

It is the responsibility of each authority to ensure that only people satisfying one or more of the criteria, set out in Section 3, are issued with a badge. **Under no circumstances should anyone who does not satisfy at least one of the requirements, set out in Section 3 of this guidance, receive a badge.**

Good practice check list		Yes	No
Initial administration			
1.	Are all members of staff who deal regularly with applicants and badge holders included in your Disability and Equality Awareness training programme?		
2.	Do you provide potential applicants with sufficient information and support at the initial enquiry stage? For example, is information about the Scheme featured on your website?		
3.	Do you use DfT’s leaflet ‘Can I get a Blue Badge?’ to send to anyone making an enquiry about whether they are entitled to a badge?		
4.	Have you placed copies of ‘Can I get a Blue Badge?’ leaflet in public places, such as local libraries, to be picked up by members of the public?		
Application process			
5.	Do you collect the following core personal data from applicants as a minimum: first name, surname, title, gender (with sensitivity to transgender issues), date of birth, National Insurance number and address?		
6.	Do your application forms ask for detailed information about the applicant’s disability and mobility difficulties, to allow you to make informed decisions on their eligibility?		
7.	Have you asked applicants to sign a ‘Declaration’ for the purpose of allowing the sharing of their personal information, required under the Data Protection Act, for the purpose of verifying eligibility and for enforcement?		
8.	Do you use a version of the DfT model application form, with accompanying guidance notes?		
9.	Have you introduced a fast-track application process for people who have a terminal illness which affects their mobility, to make the final weeks of their life easier?		
Assessments			
10.	Do you train your Blue badge Advisors or call centre staff to provide basic advice about eligibility prior to the formal application stage?		
11.	If a medical opinion is needed, do you use independent health professionals, such as physiotherapists and occupational therapists, to undertake these assessments rather than the applicants GP?		
12.	Are the costs incurred for a medical assessment covered by you or the Primary Care Trust instead of the applicant?		
Successful applications			
13.	Do you send successful applicants a copy of DfT’s booklet ‘The Blue Badge Scheme: rights and responsibilities’, to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities under the Scheme and the consequences of misusing their badge?		

Good practice check list		Yes	No
Successful applications continued			
14.	Do you remind badge holders that they have a duty to return the badge if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the badge expires;</li> <li>b) the badge holder is no longer eligible or, in the case of an organisational badge, the organisation no longer exists or is no longer eligible;</li> <li>c) it is a replacement badge for one that is lost or stolen and the original is found/recovered (in this case the original badge should be returned so that it can be officially destroyed);</li> <li>d) the badge is so damaged/faded that the details on it are illegible;</li> <li>e) the badge is no longer required by the holder; or</li> <li>f) the badge holder dies</li> </ul>		
Unsuccessful applications			
15.	Do you follow what the Department considers good practice by having an established internal appeals procedure to deal with appeals against a decision not to issue a badge?		
16.	Do you give a detailed written explanation to applicants who are refused a badge? Does this include their right to report cases of procedural irregularities to the Local Government Ombudsman?		
17.	Do you keep records of rejected applications, including reasons for refusal, to support your appeals process?		
Ongoing administration			
18.	Do you keep badge holder records up to date by recording all transactions, such as the issuing of replacement badges for ones that have been lost or stolen or reported cases of misuse?		
19.	Do you send out reminder notices to badge holders three months before the expiry date of their badge?		
20.	Do you include information on returning Blue Badges in your death registry packs?		
21.	Do you cross-reference deaths registered in your area against badge holder records, so that these badges can be cancelled and recall notices issued if necessary?		
Enforcement and tackling abuse			
22.	(a) Is there close liaison and a good working relationship between issuing teams and enforcement teams? (b) Do you share information on badge holders (including lost or stolen badges) between issuing and enforcement teams and/or other local authorities?		
23.	Do parking enforcement officers check the authenticity of any suspicious badges with you back in the office?		
24.	Are parking enforcement officers aware of how to identify and use the new gender-specific serial number and hologram (included on the badge) in order to aid parking enforcement?		
25.	Do you advise badge holders who genuinely appear to have accidentally used their badge incorrectly of the rules of the Scheme and encourage them to comply with them in the future?		
26.	In areas where there is consistent abuse of the Scheme, particularly misuse by the friends and family of the badge holder, have you established a specialised Blue Badge enforcement team to carry out undercover surveillance activities?		
27.	Do you work together with your local police force to carry out targeted enforcement operations in known 'hot spots'?		
28.	Do you follow what the Department considers good practice by sending a warning notice to a badge holder who is misusing a badge, or allowing their badge to be misused, before requiring its return?		

# CHAPTER 2

## Initial application process

### 2.1. HANDLING APPLICATIONS AND QUERIES

It is important that potential applicants are provided with sufficient information and support at the initial enquiry stage about their likely eligibility and the application process – particularly regarding any supporting evidence that they need to provide (see Section 3 below). This approach enables better screening of potential applicants and greater assurance of complete applications first time.

**DfT has produced a leaflet titled ‘Can I get a Blue Badge?’ (See Appendix B about details of how to obtain copies), which can be sent to anyone making an enquiry or used by staff responsible for telephone enquiries.**

With sufficient advice/training, Blue Badge advisors can assess over the telephone whether an individual is likely to be eligible and can partially complete an application form, which can then be sent to the applicant for signature, photograph and supporting evidence. Where a contact centre is available, the role of handling and processing initial applications can be absorbed by Customer Service Advisors in order to streamline the administration process. Further information about this approach can be found in the Department of Health’s Care Services Efficiency Delivery (CSED) Programme 2006 report ‘Blue Badge Initiative’ (see [Appendix B](#) for details of how to view this paper).

Some local authorities have also updated their websites so that applicants can make initial applications online. As above, the information provided is used to assess whether the applicant is eligible for a badge and if they are a partially completed form is sent to the applicant for signature, photograph and supporting evidence. A case study of how this works in Lincolnshire is provided in Section 3.3.3.

### 2.2. MODEL APPLICATION FORMS

It is important that applicants are asked to provide detailed information about their disability and mobility difficulties at the initial application stage to allow for informed decisions about their eligibility. This can also avoid the need for the applicant to go through an independent medical assessment.

To assist local authorities in deciding whether or not an applicant meets the eligibility criteria, the DfT has produced a model application form, with accompanying guidance notes on how to complete the form for applicants. These are attached at [Appendix D](#).

The model form also includes the following core personal data items that we recommend local authorities request from the applicant as a minimum: first name, surname, title, gender (please see Section 2.3 below on transsexual/transgender people),

date of birth, National Insurance number and address. Further information on data storage and recommended core data fields is provided in Section 4.2.3

### 2.3. TRANSEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER APPLICANTS

Transsexual and many transgender people live permanently in a gender other than that assigned at birth. Accordingly, their name and personal details will have changed. Discrimination of such people in many circumstances will be unlawful and best practice will always be to regard the individual in the gender with which they identify. In addition, the Gender Recognition Act 2004 affords privacy of gender history to transsexual people who have obtained a Gender Recognition Certificate. Disclosure of that gender history, except in certain limited circumstances (see section 22 of the Act), is a criminal offence.

Some applicants, particularly those who have recently commenced living in a different gender, may, for a number of reasons, find it difficult to provide the appropriate documentation, so local authorities will need to be more flexible in assessing the proof of identity of transgender people. Respect for the individual and privacy of gender history are of paramount importance. For more advice and information on transsexual and transgender issues please contact: [agender@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:agender@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk)

Since 15 October 2007, the Blue Badge has included a gender marker (Male/Female). It is important that local authorities deal with applications made by transsexual and transgender people sensitively, and issue badges under the requested gender.

### 2.4. TERMINALLY ILL APPLICANTS

Local authorities may wish to consider having a fast-track application process for people who have a terminal illness that seriously limits their mobility, to make the final weeks of their life easier.

**North Yorkshire County Council** has a 'fast track' application service for terminally ill people.

The scheme enables Macmillan nurses (or specialist nurse), GPs and district nurses to fax or telephone through requests on behalf of their terminally ill patients. The health professionals use a specifically designed fax form. The badge is produced within 24 hours and dispatched by first class post on the same day. In order to speed up the application process, no photograph is required and the text 'photo exempt' is written in the space where the photograph should be. The applicant is also exempt from the provision of a signature, with the Blue Badge Administrator signing on the badge holders' behalf. No fee is payable.

This approach enables North Yorkshire to provide a compassionate and efficient service to people in the final weeks of their life. The Council currently issues approximately 500 of these badges a year, the majority of which are returned after a very short period of time.

## 2.5. APPLICATION FEE

The Regulations governing the Scheme give local authorities the discretion to charge an application fee, but this cannot exceed £2. However, it has been estimated by the British Bankers' Association that the cost of processing the fee is around £12–25. As a result many local authorities have chosen not to continue its collection. **The issue of whether to increase the fee or abolish it altogether is currently under review.**

## 2.6. PHOTOGRAPHS

Each applicant should be asked to supply two passport-size photographs showing their face, with their name and signature on the back. One photograph should be used for the badge and the other should be kept on the individual's file. The photographs should be returned to the applicant if their application is unsuccessful. Please note that some applicants may not be able to sign the back of the photograph because of their young age or disability. In the case of children, the person applying on their behalf should sign.

The photograph is a key feature in minimising abuse of the Scheme. Local authorities can refuse to issue a badge if they have reason to believe that the applicant is not who they claim to be or that the applicant would permit another person to display the badge on a motor vehicle.<sup>1</sup>

Authorities should thoroughly consider any reasons given by an applicant for not being able to supply a photograph. Wheelchairs users who are unable to access photo-booths should be asked to provide a photograph by other means and cut it down to an appropriate size. There may be a very few cases which deserve special consideration, including people with severe facial disfigurements. These matters should be considered in the context of the provision in the regulations that a local authority may refuse to issue a badge if they have reason to believe that the applicant is not who he/she claims to be or that the applicant would permit another person to display the badge on a motor vehicle. If exceptionally the local authority decides a photograph need not be displayed, it should endorse the badge accordingly in the space provided for the photograph.

Photographs do not need to be provided for organisational badges. Organisational badges should include the organisation's stamp or logo in the space provided on the badge.

<sup>1</sup> Regulation 8(2)(d)(i)&(ii) of The Disabled Persons (Badges for Motor Vehicles) (England) Regulations 2000.

# CHAPTER 3

## Assessing eligibility

### 3.1. THE TWO TYPES OF ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility is considered in terms of being **‘eligible without further assessment’** (previously known as the ‘automatic’ criterion) or **‘eligible subject to further assessment’** (previously known as the ‘discretionary criterion’).

### 3.2. TYPE 1: ‘ELIGIBLE WITHOUT FURTHER ASSESSMENT’

#### 3.2.1. The ‘Eligible without further assessment’ criterion at a glance

People who may be issued with a badge without further assessment are those who are more than two years old and fall within one or more of the following descriptions:

- **receives the Higher Rate of the Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance (HRMCDLA);**
- **is registered blind; or**
- **receives a War Pensioner’s Mobility Supplement (WPMS).**

#### 3.2.2. Detailed guidance on proof of entitlement

We expect badges to be issued with the minimum of formality in these cases, provided that the applicant can demonstrate that they satisfy one of the criteria listed above and can provide **one of the following forms of proof of their entitlement:**

##### Proof of being registered blind (severely sight impaired)

An applicant who is registered blind (now officially referred to as ‘severely sight impaired’) will be registered with the local authority’s Social Services Department (or their agents). The formal notification required to register as severely sight impaired is a Certificate of Vision Impairment (CVI), signed by a Consultant Ophthalmologist. However, registration is voluntary. The individual should have a copy of their CVI and should be encouraged to register, if they have not already done so, as they may be entitled to various other benefits too.

Proof of receipt of the Higher Rate Mobility Component of Disability Living Allowance (HRMCDLA)

An applicant receiving HRMCDLA will have had an award notice letter from the Disability & Carers Service (DCS) or a vehicle with excise duty exemption (which is given to those who receive HRMCDLA). If they have lost this the DCS can provide another copy at [http://www.dwp.gov.uk/lifeevent/benefits/dcs/contact\\_dcs.asp](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/lifeevent/benefits/dcs/contact_dcs.asp)

Proof of receipt of the War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement (WPMS)

An applicant receiving WPMS will have an award letter from the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency (free-phone enquiry number 0800 169 22 77).

Please refer to Section 4.2.2 for further guidance on the issue period of badges for people receiving HRMCDLA and WPMS.

In order to streamline administration, *where possible* local authorities should consider using electronic records to verify the criteria for those eligible without further assessment, with the relevant Government departments and agencies, where these are accessible and up to date. However, applicants must give their consent to sharing their personal information under the Data Protection Act. This can be done in the 'Declaration' section of the Blue Badge application form (see **Appendix D** for model application forms).

### 3.3. TYPE 2: 'ELIGIBLE SUBJECT TO FURTHER ASSESSMENT'

3.3.1. The 'Eligibility subject to further assessment criterion' at a glance

People who would be considered eligible subject to further assessment are those who are more than two years old and fall within one or more of the following descriptions:

- **drives a vehicle regularly, has a severe disability in both arms, and is unable to operate, or has considerable difficulty in operating, all or some types of parking meter;**
- **is unable to walk or has very considerable difficulty in walking because of a permanent and substantial disability.**

In addition, children under the age of two may be eligible for a badge if they fall within either or both of the following descriptions:

- **a child who has a condition that requires that they be always accompanied by bulky medical equipment which cannot be carried around with the child without great difficulty;**
- **a child who has a condition that requires that they must always be kept near a motor vehicle so that they can, if necessary, be treated for that condition in the vehicle or taken quickly in the vehicle to a place where they can be so treated.**

### 3.3.2. How to assess eligibility

Eligibility under the above categories should be carefully considered, in order to maximise the consistency of assessment across England and prevent, wherever possible, ‘post code lotteries’ in relation to Blue Badge entitlement.

**When a medical opinion is needed, the DfT strongly recommends that independent health professionals, such as physiotherapists and occupational therapists, should undertake these assessments. The DfT views the widespread practice of using an applicant’s GP to verify that an individual meets the criteria for a Blue Badge as wholly unsatisfactory in the vast majority of cases,** as it can compromise the doctor/patient relationship and create inconsistency of assessment. Occupational therapists or physiotherapists are often best placed to assess eligibility due to their professional knowledge of mobility. This argument is expanded in the Cabinet Office report *Making a difference: reducing burdens on general practitioners (GPs)* published in June 2002. **Appendix B** gives details of how to view the report.

Many local authorities have already adopted this ‘Non-GP’ approach by running assessment centres, sometimes using community physiotherapists. As well as reducing costs, this approach ensures that a fair and equitable service is being provided to all applicants who are required to have an assessment to determine their eligibility.

**The City of York Council** has developed a scheme where applicants who need to be assessed under the ‘assessed eligibility’ criteria are seen by the same Primary Care Trust nominated physiotherapist.

The physiotherapist holds weekly clinics where the applicant can be physically assessed using a standardised test. If the applicant is not physically able to attend the assessment the physiotherapist uses other sources to assess the application.

This approach has helped to improve the consistency and fairness of the application process. It has helped to release time for local GP’s and clerical staff within the Council. The new assessment process has been well received by Blue Badge applicants.

Local Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) tend to fund Blue Badge assessments but are under no legal obligation to do so. The most recent guidance from the British Medical Association suggests that ‘Mechanisms and responsibility for the reimbursement of fees and allowances are agreed locally between the parties concerned’. Under no circumstances should the cost incurred for a medical assessment, whether by a GP or other health professional, be passed onto the applicant.

The use of independent health professionals can also be supported and minimised by enabling Blue Badge administrators to make their own informed decisions on assessed eligibility through the use of set criteria, decision trees and targeted training so that only borderline cases need to be referred to independent professionals. The Care Services Efficiency Delivery report (2006) cited research which demonstrated that where this approach has been adopted, only about 5% of assessed applications required consultation from an independent health professional resulting in potential savings of around £70,000 per year (based on 3,000 assessed applications pa.).

### 3.3.3. Exceptions for assessing eligibility in rural settings

In very rural authorities, where the population is scattered and accessibility is a problem, careful consideration needs to be given as to how medical assessments are carried out and in some cases it may be more appropriate to use the applicant's GP. Authorities in these areas may also want to carry out some of the assessment and application process over the telephone or the internet.

**Lincolnshire County Council** provides an online application service, which makes life easier for their rural community.

The online system identifies whether or not an application needs to be processed under the 'eligible without further assessment' or 'assessed eligibility' criteria. It also allows the Council to make an initial eligibility assessment without the need to request photographs or other supporting information from people who are unlikely to qualify for the badge.

The online system is more accessible for potential badge holders who have difficulties writing, talking or visiting their offices. It also helps the Council to reduce the badge processing time and costs. People who do not have access to a computer are still able to submit a paper application but the numbers of electronic applications are rising.

### 3.3.4. Detailed guidance on the 'Eligible subject to further assessment' criteria

#### *Severe disability in both arms*

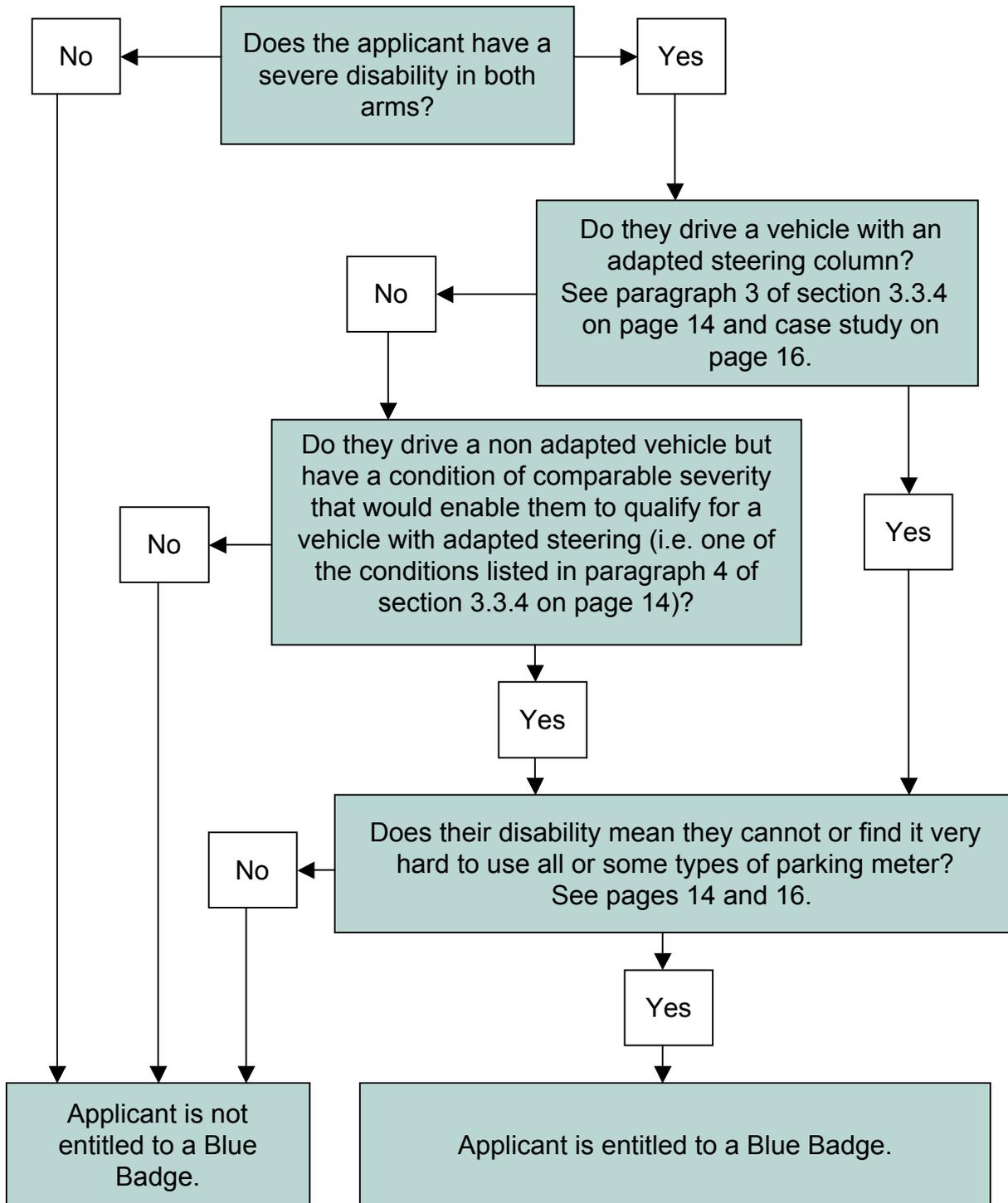
From 15 October 2007, the criterion covering people with severe disabilities in both arms was amended. When making an assessment under this criterion, local authorities will need to consider whether the applicant meets all of the following:

- a) regularly drives an adapted or non-adapted vehicle;
- b) has a severe disability in both arms; and
- c) is unable to operate, or has considerable difficulty operating, all or some types of parking meter.

**Only a very small number of people are likely to qualify under this criterion. In no circumstance should anyone who does not satisfy all three of the conditions set out above receive a badge. In particular, a badge should not be issued to a person who travels solely as a passenger or a person who has difficulties carrying parcels, shopping or other heavy objects, such as luggage.**

In the vast majority of cases, eligibility is likely to remain linked to those applicants who were eligible under the wording of the old criterion, i.e. had a severe disability in both upper limbs and were unable to turn, by hand, the steering wheel of a motor vehicle even if that wheel is fitted with a turning knob. Such individuals should be able to provide insurance documents which will state that they drive an adapted vehicle.

Where the applicant does not have an adapted vehicle, only drivers with the most severe disabilities in both their arms (who cannot operate a parking meter) should be considered eligible. This may cover disabled people with, for example, a limb reduction deficiency of both arms; bilateral upper limb amputation; muscular dystrophy; spinal cord injury; motor neurone disease; or a condition of comparable severity. See the following **good practice decision tree**:



For this purpose a ‘parking meter’ includes a machine for issuing pay-and-display tickets which show that a charge has been paid and the period of parking paid for, as well as a parking meter which itself indicates that a charge has been paid and whether the period paid for has expired.

**Sheffield City Council** has a robust process for assessing the eligibility of people with a severe disability in both upper limbs.

They use their client database to find out if they have any other adaptations in their home on account of their upper limb disability. They also link with the local Primary Care Trust (PCT) who employ a physiotherapist to assess individuals. The physiotherapist uses information from the application form and also other sources to assess the individual.

They also ask the applicant to provide evidence of any vehicle adaptation by requesting a copy of their driving insurance documents (which state whether the holder is indeed driving an adapted vehicle or not).

This approach helps Sheffield to verify the degree of disability the applicant has in a consistent and fair manner.

Although the upper limb criterion has recently been modified, it is expected that the vast majority of people who qualify for help under this criterion will still drive an adapted vehicle.

#### *Walking disability*

To qualify under this criterion, a person would have to have a permanent and substantial disability (i.e. a condition that is likely to last at least three years) that means they cannot walk or which makes walking very difficult.

It is envisaged that badges will generally only be issued to people who are unable to walk, or who are able to walk only with excessive labour and at an extremely slow pace or with excessive pain. Applicants should generally be physically incapable of visiting shops, public buildings and other places unless allowed to park close to their destination.

Their degree of impairment should be at a comparable level to that required to claim the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance i.e:

**(a) they cannot walk** or

Being unable to walk means that they **cannot take a single step.**

They need to show that because of their disability they cannot put one foot in front of the other.

Walking involves always having one foot on the ground.

If their **only way of getting about is to swing through crutches then they will be considered unable to walk.**

**(b) they are virtually unable to walk** or

They will need to show that, as a result of a physical disability, they are **unable to walk very far without experiencing severe discomfort**. This question does not apply to people with mental disabilities, your inability to walk very far must stem from a physical condition.

The Department for Works and Pensions takes a number of factors into account when deciding whether or not someone meets this criterion. For example:

**Discomfort** can mean either pain or breathlessness. Extreme fatigue and stress may also be taken into account. It has been accepted that discomfort is subjective and that some people have higher pain thresholds than others. Unless both legs are missing then they will need to show that they experience severe discomfort even when using an artificial aid.

When deciding whether they are virtually unable to walk, the following factors should be taken into account:

- the **distance** over which they can walk without experiencing severe discomfort;
- the **speed** at which they can walk;
- the **length of time** for which they can walk;
- the **manner** in which they can walk.

If they can only walk up to 27 metres without severe discomfort, then they will qualify for the higher rate.

If they can only walk between 27 and 64 metres without severe discomfort, then it is likely that they will qualify for the higher rate.

If they can walk more than 64 metres without severe discomfort, then they will need to show that the other three factors mean that they are virtually unable to walk. For example, if they can show that it takes them five minutes to walk 100 metres, they should qualify for the higher rate.

**As a guide, the average person can walk the following in a minute:**

- **90 metres at a brisk pace;**
- **60–70 metres at a moderate speed;**
- **40–50 metres at a slow pace;**
- **30–40 at a very slow pace.**

It does not matter whether the severe discomfort occurs at the time of their walk or later. What counts is that the discomfort is a direct result of their attempt to walk.

**(c) The exertion required to walk would ‘constitute a danger to their life or would be likely to lead to a serious deterioration in their health’**

The test here is whether the exertion required to walk would **constitute a danger to their life or whether it would be likely to lead to a serious deterioration in their health.**

They need to show that they should not walk very far because of the danger to their health.

This criterion is intended for people with serious chest, lung or heart conditions.

Some people with haemophilia may also qualify for the higher rate in this way.

The **serious deterioration** does not need to be permanent, but it should require medical intervention for them to recover.

They will need to show that any danger to their health is a direct result of the physical effort required to walk.

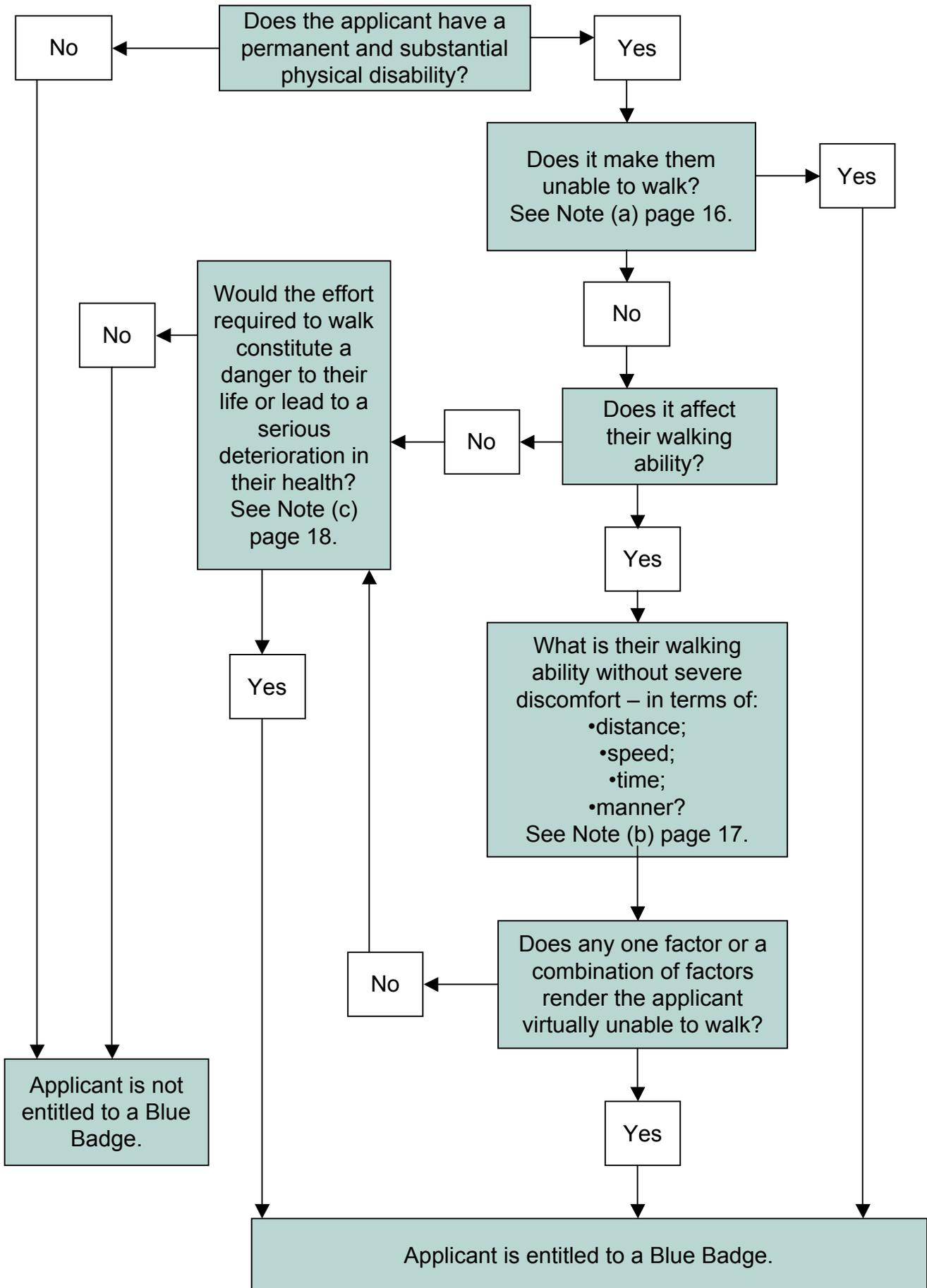
People with epilepsy will need to show that **any fits were brought about by the effort required to walk.**

**In all cases, entitlement depends on the applicant’s difficulty in walking, and considerations such as difficulty in carrying parcels are not to be taken into account.**

The fact that a walking aid is or is not used may be relevant to the eventual decision, but these alone should not determine whether or not a badge is issued. For example, if a person can walk relatively normally with the use of an artificial leg, then they should not be considered eligible. Alternatively, a person who can only swing through crutches could be considered eligible, as they would be seen as having considerable difficulty walking (provided it is due to a permanent disability and not due to legs being in plaster).

Medical conditions such as asthma, autism, psychological/behavioural problems, Crohn’s disease/incontinent conditions and myalgic encephalomyelitis (M.E.) are not in themselves a qualification for a badge. People with these conditions may be eligible for a badge, but only if they are in receipt of HMRCDLA on account of their condition or are unable to walk or have very considerable difficulty in walking, in addition to their condition.

The final decision is for local authorities to make, and they should ensure that an assessment is made by an independent health professional where they have difficulty in determining whether a person is eligible. See the following **good practice decision tree:**



*Children under the age of two*

From 15 October 2007 children under the age of two may be eligible for a badge if they fall under either or both of the criteria mentioned, in the third and fourth bullet points of section 3.3.1. above.

Examples of children under two likely to fall into the criterion mentioned in the third bullet point may be those who need to be accompanied by any of the following types of equipment:

- i. **Ventilators** – drive air through a tube placed into the windpipe. They blow oxygen-enriched air gently into the lungs through a tube that is passed through the mouth or nose, or via a tracheostomy.
- ii. **Suction machines** – are portable suction apparatus used for aspirating fluids and vomit from the mouth and airway by sucking the material through a catheter into a bottle using a vacuum pump (piston, diaphragm, or rotary vane), bacterial filter, vacuum gauge, trap for moisture (or any debris accidentally drawn into the mechanism), a reservoir for the aspirated material, and a suction catheter or nozzle.
- iii. **Feed pumps** – deliver fluid feeds via a nasogastric tube to the child's stomach.
- iv. **Parenteral equipment** – services intravenous lines providing nutrition if a child is unable to take food or fluids through his or her mouth. The line can also be used for injecting medication.
- v. **Syringe drivers** – are used to deliver medication by intravenous injection (e.g. antibiotics), or by subcutaneous injection (e.g. insulin to control diabetes) this can be given by using a small pump known as a syringe driver. A syringe is attached to the syringe driver and the drug is released through a small needle.
- vi. **Oxygen administration equipment** – consists of a tank and regulator with supply equipment for oxygen; mask or nasal prongs and tubing.
- vii. **Continuous oxygen saturation monitoring equipment** – involves a device usually strapped to the child's foot or hand. This shines light through the skin and monitors the amount of oxygen in the blood. It is used to monitor where a child may need access to oxygen.
- viii. **Casts and associated medical equipment for the correction of hip dysplasia** – between birth to six months of age, a brace called a Pavlik harness is often used to hold the baby's hips in position. The Pavlik harness is made of canvas, with straps, Velcro and buckles. From six months and over a child is often placed in a Spica cast after surgery. A Spica cast can be either plaster or fibreglass and will encase the child from the chest down to cover one leg or both. In both cases the apparatus is likely to be deployed for a period of up to three months per hip.

Examples of children with highly unstable medical conditions, who need quick access to transport to hospital or home and are likely to fall into the criterion mentioned in the fourth bullet point of 3.3.1 are set out below. This group may also need to stop to perform an urgent medical procedure e.g. suction of a tracheostomy tube:

- i. children with tracheostomies;
- ii. children with severe epilepsy/fitting;

- iii. children with highly unstable diabetes;
- iv. terminally ill children who can only access brief moments of outside life and need a quick route home.

Local authorities are recommended to treat each application as a special case. This may mean making arrangements to see the child, although this should not be necessary if the child's paediatrician is able to write a letter outlining the child's medical condition and any special equipment they need to use. A medical assessment should not be necessary.

**Please note that the lists provided above are indicative only and are not intended to be exhaustive to allow for new advances in technology and treatment equipment.**

### 3.4. ORGANISATIONAL BADGES

#### 3.4.1. Organisational eligibility at a glance

**An organisational badge may be issued to an organisation for a motor vehicle when the vehicle is to be used to carry disabled persons as specified in Section 4(2) of the 2000 Regulations.**

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005, amended Section 21 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970, to replace the word 'institution' with 'organisation' in the administration of the scheme. An 'organisation' is defined in the 2000 Regulations as meaning an organisation concerned with the care of disabled persons to which a disabled person's badge may be issued in accordance with section 21(4) of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970.

Therefore, local authorities need to ensure that the organisation in question does in fact care for disabled people and that it has a need for a badge. In addition, the disabled people under their care should meet one or more of the eligibility criteria for a Blue Badge (covered in Sections 3.1–3.3 above).

#### 3.4.2. How to assess applications from organisations

Applications for badges from organisations caring for disabled people should be examined to ensure that they are genuine and necessary. It is for local authorities to make this judgement, based on their local knowledge of the organisation concerned. Common examples include residential care homes, hospices or even Social Services Departments, that transport groups of people who would meet the eligibility criteria for a badge.

When making an application, organisations should be asked to provide the same type of information required by the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) for licensing a vehicle under the Disabled Passenger Vehicle (DPV) taxation class (for exemption from Vehicle Excise Duty (VED)). To license a vehicle in the DVP taxation class, an organisation needs to make a declaration on the organisation's letter-headed paper. The declaration needs to say that they are an organisation concerned with the care of disabled people and that they will be using the vehicle solely for the purpose of transporting those people.

Local authorities should ask organisations whether they have vehicles licensed under DVP taxation class and ask for a photocopy of the tax disc as proof. Or they should ask the organisation to make a similar declaration as mentioned above. They should also ask the organisation the number of qualifying disabled people being cared for and/or the type of vehicle(s) being used to carry them, e.g. Is the vehicle adapted and how? Please see model application form at **Appendix D** for more examples of the type of questions that can be asked.

Although there is nothing in the Regulations governing the Scheme about the actual numbers to be ‘cared for’ in order to qualify for a badge, organisations applying for the badge should cater for an adequate number of people with the required degree of disability. **Where relatively few people meet the eligibility criteria for a badge in the organisation, it would be preferable for the disabled people themselves to apply for badges, rather than have one issued to an organisation.** This then allows the holder to use their badge in any vehicle in which they are travelling, as either a driver or passenger.

In all circumstances, badges must be issued to the organisation or department and not to individual employees. However, like other successful applicants, organisations issued with a Blue Badge should be sent a copy of DfT’s booklet ‘The Blue Badge Scheme: rights and responsibilities’ and **all employees should be reminded that they must only use the badge for the purposes of transporting disabled people who meet one or more of the eligibility criteria for a badge. Employees using a badge should be reminded that, if they use the badge to take advantage of the concessions when there are no passengers in the vehicle who are eligible for a badge, they will face a fine of up to £1,000.**

**East Sussex County Council** has a rigorous assessment process for issuing ‘organisational badges’. This was prompted in response to complaints about some organisational staff misusing their badges in their leisure time.

All organisations applying for the badge (or a badge renewal) are asked to write to the Council on headed paper, providing evidence of the people in their care who need the badge and the nature of their disabilities. Generally the Council requires the organisation to have more than twelve members who will use the badge. Further checks are also carried out on the Commission for Social Care Inspectorate (CSCI) website to make sure that they are a valid organisation.

This procedure has helped East Sussex to improve consistency and reduce abuse amongst organisational badge holders. The Council’s policy has been well received by local organisations

# CHAPTER 4

## Administering the Scheme after the assessment

### 4.1. UNSUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS

#### 4.1.1. Grounds for refusing to issue a badge

Under regulation 8 of the 2000 Regulations, a local authority may refuse to issue a blue badge if:

- a) the applicant holds or has held a badge and misuse has led to at least three relevant convictions;
- b) the applicant fails to provide the local authority with adequate evidence of their eligibility, either as an individual or as an eligible organisation;
- c) the applicant fails to pay the fee (if a fee is required);
- d) the local authority believes that the applicant is not the person they are claiming to be, or would permit another person to whom the badge was not issued to use the badge.

With reference to (a) above, a ‘relevant conviction’ is defined in regulation 2(3) and 2(4) of the 2000 Regulations. Essentially, this covers convictions for contravening or failing to comply with road traffic regulation orders made by local authorities and wrongful use of a disabled person’s badge. More information on convictions is provided in Section 5.

With reference to (d) above, decisions to refuse to issue a badge on the grounds that the applicant is not the person they claim to be, or that they would permit another person to use their badge should not be taken lightly. In all cases the final decision should be taken by a senior officer after careful examination of the facts.

#### 4.1.2. Appeals procedure

There is no legal requirement for local authorities to have an appeals procedure in place if someone disagrees with the reason why their application was rejected. However, regulation 8(3) of the 2000 Regulations states that, where a local authority receives an application for a badge and refuses to issue one, it must let the applicant know in writing why their application was refused.

Local authorities are strongly recommended to establish an internal procedure to deal with appeals against an authority’s decision not to issue a badge. This process needs to be clear, straightforward and fair, and not in itself a deterrent to applying for a badge. Indeed, some authorities have already put in place a system whereby unsuccessful applicants can write, within a set deadline, to seek a review of their unsuccessful application by a senior manager within the issuing authority.

**Bournemouth Borough Council** has an appeals system that involves using a different person from the one who made the initial assessment.

Decisions on applications are initially taken by the Occupational Therapy team manager. A letter is sent out to the applicant saying if they have been successful or unsuccessful. If unsuccessful they are told why and given the option of appealing. The only time they are not offered an appeal is if they have applied because they need a badge in order to use the toilet urgently.

The appeal is sent to the service manager (who is of a higher grade than the individuals who administer the Scheme on a daily basis). The manager will then consider the appeal and may then talk to the applicant's GP or consultant if they need to confirm details of the person's condition. A decision is then made and the applicant is informed. Appeals are often upheld on receipt of more detailed information.

Bournemouth has been using this appeals system for a long time and finds that it works effectively for it. Most people who are refused after appeal do not appeal again, as they are usually satisfied that their case has been reconsidered in more detail and by someone in higher authority than the person who undertook the original assessment.

The Department for Transport also strongly recommends that every applicant who is refused a badge should be given a detailed written explanation of the grounds for refusal. It is not sufficient to simply say that the applicant did not meet the eligibility criteria. This should also include a detailed explanation of the appeals process.

Applicants should also be reminded that, if they consider that there have been procedural irregularities in dealing with their applications, they should report their cases to the Local Government Ombudsman.

Records of rejected applications, including reasons for refusal, should be kept for as long as necessary to support the appeals process. It is also important that these records are kept up to date.

#### 4.1.3. Appeals to the Secretary of State

As mentioned previously (Section 4.1.1) a local authority (under regulation 8(2)(a)) may refuse to issue a badge where the applicant holds or has held a badge and misuse has led to at least three 'relevant convictions'. In these circumstances, where a local authority receives an application and refuses to issue a badge, they are required (under Regulation 8(3)) to issue a notice stating the grounds for refusal to the applicant (a 'notice of determination').

Under regulation 9(2), a local authority may require the return of a badge on account of its misuse leading to at least three relevant convictions, or where the authority is satisfied that the badge was obtained by false representation.

Where an applicant has been refused a badge on the grounds specified in regulation 8(2) (a), or the holder of a badge has been required to return it in accordance with regulation 9(2), they may appeal to the Secretary of State against the determination of the local authority's decision. These are the only circumstances in which appeals may be made to the Secretary of State.

The appeal must be made within 28 days from the date of the local authority's decision letter ('notice of the determination').

Where the appeal to the Secretary of State is unsuccessful, a person may appeal to a magistrate's court, whose decision will be final.

## 4.2. SUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS

Successful applicants should be given the DfT booklet 'The Blue Badge Scheme: rights and responsibilities' (see **Appendix B** for details of how to obtain copies), together with their Blue Badge and parking disc.

In addition, it is recommended by the Department for Transport that a covering letter is given to successful applicants of a Blue Badge, pointing out that it is their responsibility to use their badge properly and that they should take the time to read the DfT leaflet (outlining their rights and responsibilities) carefully, as misusing or allowing others to misuse their badges is a criminal offence.

Badge holders should also be reminded that they have a duty under regulation 9 of the 2000 Regulations to return the badge if:

- a) the badge expires;
- b) the badge holder is no longer eligible or, in the case of an organisational badge, the organisation no longer exists or is no longer eligible;
- c) it is a replacement badge for one that is lost or stolen and the original is found/recovered (in this case the original badge should be returned so that it can be securely destroyed);
- d) the badge is so damaged/faded that the details on it are illegible;
- e) the badge is no longer required by the holder (e.g. where they have become confined to the house); or
- f) the badge holder dies.

Where possible local authorities should require individuals or their representatives to collect their Blue Badge in person and to provide proof of ID on collection. In addition, if they are collecting a renewal badge, they should return their old badge to the local authority so it can be officially destroyed.

See regulation 9 of the 2000 Regulations for further details.

**Birmingham City Council** issue its Blue Badges via 28 post offices in the Birmingham area. All successful applicants need to attend a nominated post office with proof of their identity in order to collect their badge. In the case of renewals, existing badge holders also have to return their old badge in order to collect the new one. However, replacements for lost and stolen badges are still issued at the Council's headquarters in order to allow for tighter scrutiny in case of any possible abuse.

#### 4.2.1. Issuing the Blue Badge and Parking Disc

All local authorities should now be issuing the new form of Blue Badge which was introduced by the 2007 Amendment Regulations on 15 October 2007. Sample badges are provided at **Appendix E**.

The new badges contain a gender-specific serial number, for parking enforcement purposes, which must be correctly assigned to the applicant (see Section 2.3 for information on transsexual/transgender applicants) and a tamper-proof hologram. However, the Department strongly recommends that all badges **are laminated before they are issued**. This is essential to reduce the possibility of badges being amended by those not entitled to the concessions, e.g. to change the photograph.

The Parking Disc (time clock) is designed to be displayed with the Blue Badge when parking on yellow lines or in parking bays which are time-limited and set to show the time of arrival by badge holders. A Parking Disc should be issued to new badge holders at the same time as their Blue Badge.

**Supplies of badges, laminate sleeves and parking discs are available from The Stationery Office ('TSO'); see Appendix B for details of how to order copies.**

DfT recommends the use of permanent indelible pens or inks (which are fade resistant when writing/printing on badges).

#### 4.2.2. Period of issue

Most badges are issued for three years only. However, certain exceptions apply and are explained below.

In the case of children under two, the badge will be issued for a maximum period of two years ending on the day immediately following their second birthday.

Where entitlement for a Blue Badge is linked to Higher Rate Mobility Component of Disability Living Allowance (HRMCDLA) and War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement (WPMS) the period of issue should be linked to the period of receipt of that allowance, where that period is less than three years. This removes the anomaly where someone whose disability lasted for less than three years could still be enjoying the concessions of the Scheme beyond the period of their benefit.

Where HRMCDLA or WPMS has been granted for a period longer than three years, the badge can still only be issued for the maximum three-year period. The badge should continue to be reviewed on a three yearly cycle (see 'Renewals' below).

### 4.2.3. Data storage and sharing

Local authorities have a statutory obligation under Section 21(5) of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 to maintain a register showing the holders of badges issued by the authority and the vehicle or vehicles for which each of the badges is held. A robust system that can identify badge holders within a local authority is invaluable not only to issuing authorities but also to police and enforcement authorities in dealing with instances of misuse, or stolen or fraudulent badges.

The Department recommends that local authorities use electronic database systems for storing Blue Badge holder records, share this information with local parking enforcement officers. Local authorities should ideally hold the same minimum core data items as follows: first name, surname, title, gender (please see Section 2.3 on transsexual/transgender people), date of birth, National Insurance number; address; eligibility category; proof of eligibility provided (if applicable); badge serial number; TSO number; issue date and expiry date.

In addition, local authorities should keep records of any transaction with the badge holder, e.g. reissuing badges that have been lost or stolen or recording reported cases of misuse.

### 4.2.4. Standard renewals

Issuing badges for a maximum three-year period allows local authorities the opportunity to re-assess badge holders when their badges expire to ensure that they continue to meet the eligibility criteria and are therefore in need of a badge. Although a badge holder may still have the same disability, it is possible that their degree of disability may have improved to such an extent that they no longer meet the eligibility criteria. Where a badge holder has a permanent disability that will not change (e.g. where there has been loss of limbs), the opportunity to renew the badge allows the local authority to ensure that the holder's personal details, such as their address, are unchanged.

It is entirely a matter for local authorities to assess an applicant's eligibility for a badge at renewal in accordance with the regulations governing the Scheme. The administrative measures taken in assessing applicants for renewals are for individual authorities to decide. It is not a requirement that a local authority has to formally see an applicant in order to assess entitlement for a renewed badge. In some cases, specific details provided on the application form may determine straight away whether a badge should be issued. In other cases, it is at the discretion of individual local authorities to decide whether they need to see an applicant before assessing their renewal application. Local authorities should generally do their best to ensure that renewal applications are dealt with as quickly and efficiently as possible.

It has been brought to the Department's attention that some Blue Badge holders forget to renew their badge, or do not realise it was out of date until after they have been issued with either a Fixed Penalty Notice or a Penalty Charge Notice. Therefore, some local authorities send reminder notices to badge holders when their badges are approaching the expiry date.

**The Department recommends that all local authorities should adopt this practice and, in conjunction with robust deceased practices (see Section 4.2.6 below), send out reminder notices to badge holders three months before the expiry date of their badge, making it clear that the expired badge must be returned to the issuing authority when the new one is received.**

#### 4.2.5. Replacement of damaged/lost and stolen badges

Where a badge has been lost, stolen or destroyed, or has become so damaged/faded that it is illegible, the local authority can issue a replacement badge.

**Replacement badges must have a new serial number, and the word ‘Duplicate’ should be clearly marked on the front. The expiry date shown on the replacement badge should be the same as the date that appeared on the original badge. The record of the original badge should be updated to show that it is no longer valid and this information should be passed on to on-street enforcement teams where possible.**

In the case of stolen badges, the authority should ideally ask for a crime reference number, for their records. If the badge is subsequently found or recovered, the original badge should be returned to the issuing authority so that it can be destroyed.

Damaged badges should also be returned to the issuing authority to be officially destroyed, either at the same time that the replacement badge is issued, if the badge holder is collecting the badge from local authority offices, or after the replacement badge has been received if this has been issued by post.

Each time a replacement badge is issued, the date of reissue and reason should be noted on the badge holder’s record so that repeated cases can be monitored and action can be taken if abuse is suspected.

#### 4.2.6. Deaths

When a badge holder dies, their badge should be immediately returned to the issuing authority (regulation 9(1) of the 2000 Regulations).

The Department recommends that local authorities include Blue Badges in their death registry packs and cross reference deaths registered in their area against their Blue Badge holder records so that these badges can be cancelled and recall notices issued if necessary.

Local authorities participating in the National Fraud Initiative (which is currently run by the Audit Commission every two years) can also now opt to submit their Blue Badge holder records for comparison against the Department for Work and Pensions’ database of deceased persons as part of this exercise. This may be particularly relevant for local authorities operating in metropolitan areas with a more transient population.

For further information contact Peter Yetzes, Associate Director – IT Audit via e-mail: [nfqueries@audit-commission.gov.uk](mailto:nfqueries@audit-commission.gov.uk) or call: 0844 798 2222 or visit the National Fraud Initiative, web page [www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nfi](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/nfi)

**Kent County Council** recently updated its death registry pack. This means that the 'Blue Badge' is now included in the list of official documents that must be returned to the Council when someone dies. This addition should help to reduce the number of invalid badges in circulation and prevent their fraudulent use once the genuine holder is deceased. Within their first month, 106 badges were returned, compared to the average of 14 per month previously.

# CHAPTER 5

## Enforcing the Scheme

The misuse of Blue Badges undermines the benefits of the Scheme, impacts upon local traffic management and creates hostility amongst other badge holders and members of the public.

Robust ongoing administration and enforcement processes can help counter more systematic abuse of the Scheme. Issuing authorities and on-street parking enforcement teams have a dual role to play in ensuring that the Scheme's rules are obeyed. **A combination of effective information sharing, active inspection, targeted surveillance and decisive action where systematic misuse is identified can help ensure that abuse is tackled successfully.**

### 5.1. DEFINING ABUSE

There are several ways in which badges can be misused including:

- **use of a badge that is no longer valid;**
- **misuse of a valid badge by a friend or relative** (with or without the badge holder's knowledge or permission e.g. going to the shops and using the badge without the badge holder being present or using it or to park outside their place of work).
- **use of a badge that has been reported as 'lost or stolen'** (by the badge holder – the reported loss is sometimes a deliberate deception by the badge holder to supply another badge to a friend or family);
- **use of a stolen or copied badge** (e.g. either by the thief or forger themselves or by someone who has acquired the badge through unauthorised channels knowing or not knowing that the badge is stolen).

**Local authorities should ensure that all badge holders are made aware of their responsibilities under the Scheme and the consequences of misusing their badge. This should help prevent instances of accidental misuse.**

This can be done by providing them with a copy of the Department's guidance leaflet 'The Blue Badge scheme: rights and responsibilities in England'. Some local authorities have also produced free information leaflets informing local badge holders of where they can park in the Borough and conditions of use at each site to enable badge holders to use their badge correctly (see Section 6.2 for more information about increasing awareness of the Scheme).

## 5.2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON PARKING ENFORCEMENT

There are two types of parking enforcement in England: criminal and civilian. The police and traffic wardens enforce criminal offences and issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs). Parking attendants, employed by local authorities, enforce parking contraventions and issue Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs).

Parking offences are provided for in the main by the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The Road Traffic Act 1991 brought about a significant change in the way that on-street parking restrictions are enforced and made it mandatory for London boroughs and optional for other local authorities to take on the civil enforcement of non-endorseable parking offences. Endorseable offences (broadly those involving dangerous or obstructive parking) and some other parking offences remain criminal and can only be enforced by the police service, through the Courts.

Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act (TMA) 2004 provides for the civil enforcement of most types of parking contraventions and replaces Part II of the Road Traffic Act 1991. Good practice guidance to local authorities, on the parking provisions of the TMA 2004, is being prepared by the Department and will be published in due course.

## 5.3. SHARING INFORMATION BETWEEN ISSUING AUTHORITIES AND ENFORCEMENT TEAMS

It is important that there is effective communication between issuing authorities and on-street parking enforcement teams or other enforcement agencies. They need to be able to share the information they have on badge holders. However, local authorities are reminded that badge holders must have given their consent to sharing their personal information under the Data Protection Act. This should have been done at the initial application stage in the 'Declaration' section of the Blue Badge application form (see [Appendix D](#) for model application forms).

Where possible, issuing authorities should provide on-street enforcement teams with data on local badge holders particularly in relation to badges that have been reported as lost or stolen so that these badges can be recognised if used on the street. This process can be made easier through the use of technology. For example, parking enforcement officers can use a Personal Digital Assistance type device (hand held computer) to independently check the status of individual badges against downloaded data or by accessing the live database via a wireless connection (e.g. the Global System for Mobile Communication network). Alternatively, where this approach is not viable, parking enforcement officers should contact their local issuing authority to check the status of suspicious badges.

Where a badge has been issued by a different authority, local enforcement teams should ask their local authority to check the status of that badge with the relevant authority. This process can be made easier if local authorities work together to share information on lost and stolen badges in their area.

**Manchester City Council** has an effective system of sharing information across the Council.

The Social Services team (which issues the badge) has a simple Microsoft Access database that holds information on current and former Blue Badge holders, including their photograph, their age, gender and whether or not they are deceased etc. The Microsoft Access database is cheap to develop, and Manchester has been keen to share the tool with other local authorities in the Greater Manchester area.

Manchester also employs a dedicated Blue Badge Parking Enforcement Team, which conducts targeted surveillance and enforcement operations across the city. The enforcement team can access the information on the database to help them identify people abusing the Scheme. At present this information is only available on an office computer, but plans are afoot to make the information available to all parking attendants, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, through hand held devices or mobile phones and a central radio dispatch controller.

This effective ‘joined-up’ approach has helped to reduce abuse of the Scheme.

#### **5.4. TARGETED SURVEILLANCE OPERATIONS**

The most commonly reported forms of abuse tend to relate to misuse of the Blue Badge by the friends and family of the badge holder. Accordingly, the Department strongly recommends that local authorities in areas where this is perceived to be a problem (especially urban areas) establish specialised Blue Badge enforcement teams to carry out undercover surveillance activities. These teams (as established in Manchester and Wandsworth) can identify cases of suspected systematic abuse and apply for permission to carry out undercover surveillance under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) in order to build up evidence that can later be used to prosecute a person.

The **London Borough of Wandsworth** has a dedicated Blue Badge anti-fraud and enforcement team, which uses section 117 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (Wrongful use of disabled person's badge), to prosecute people who use another person's badge for their own benefit.

The team carry out targeted operations around shops, places of employment and stations. Once they identify someone who they think is abusing the Scheme, they apply for permission to carry out undercover surveillance on them under section 28(3) of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime.

After permission has been granted under RIPA, they begin videoing and photographing the alleged offender arriving, parking and departing illegally and using the badge without the badge holder being present. If there is evidence to suggest that the person using the badge is not the badge holder, the team treat the badge as an 'invalid parking instrument' and arrange for the vehicle to be towed away and impounded for being illegally parked.

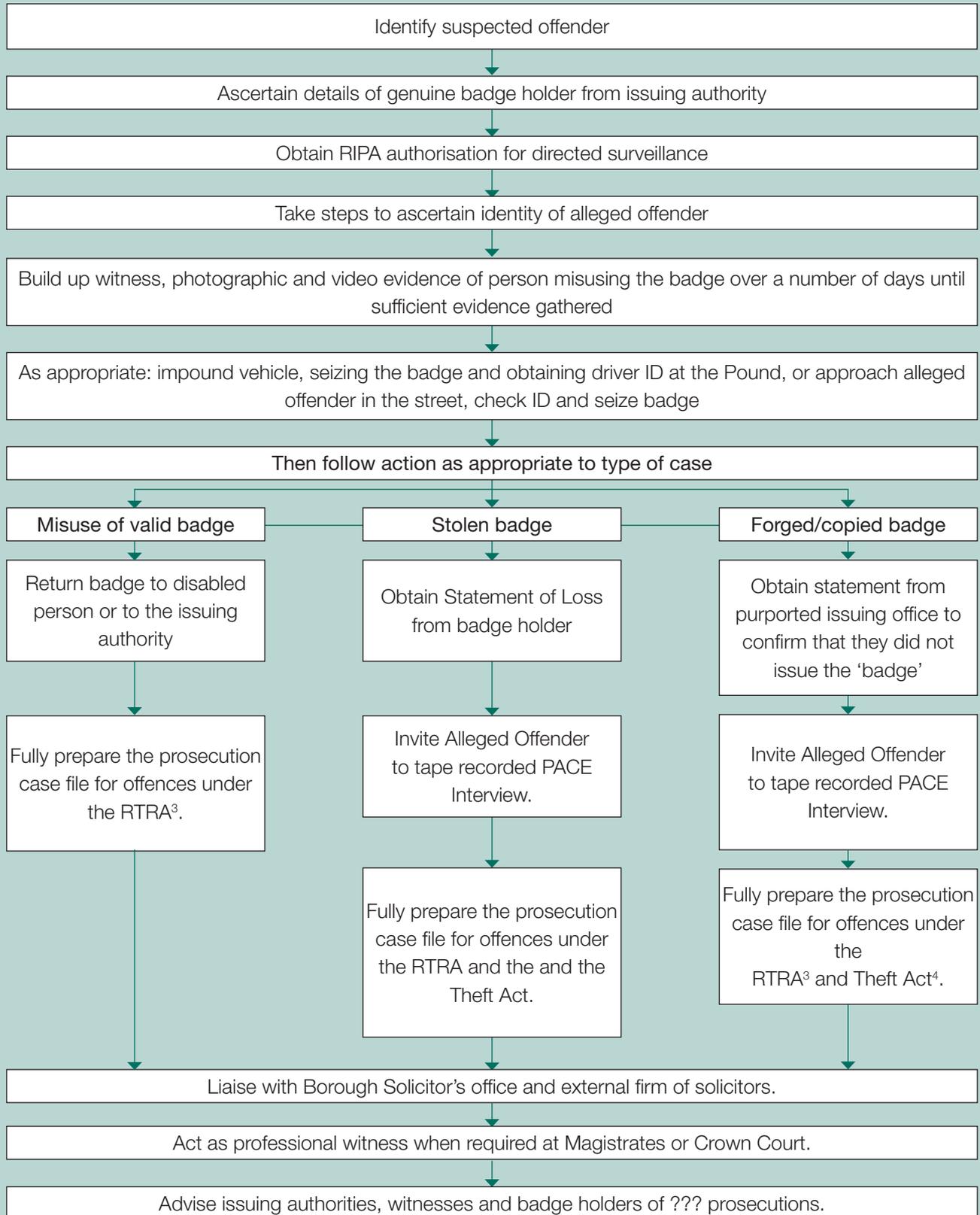
When the alleged offender tries to reclaim their vehicle, they are asked to prove their identity and hand over the Blue Badge. If the Blue Badge is lost, stolen or forged, it is retained and further charges may be added. If the Blue Badge is issued by Wandsworth and belongs to an existing holder, it is returned to them with a letter warning that they must not allow anyone else to use it. If it is a badge issued by another authority, it is returned to them with a report on the circumstances concerning its return.

A prosecution file is then put together, which includes witness statements, video/photographic evidence, interview tapes and a court cost claim form. The Council's solicitor then arranges for the defendant to be prosecuted in the Magistrates Court under section 117 of the Road Traffic Act 1984. If found guilty, the defendant is liable for a fine of up to £1,000 per offence and the authority can usually reclaim its surveillance costs.

The Scheme has enabled Wandsworth to bring 450 successful prosecutions between September 2004 and April 2007 and has led to it being awarded the 2007 British Parking Association 'Overall Winners Award'.

This process is illustrated in the diagram below.

**WANDSWORTH'S MODEL TARGETED SURVEILLANCE PROCEDURE MAP**



Notes:

1. Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
2. Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984
3. Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984
4. Theft Act 1968.

## 5.5. WORKING WITH THE POLICE AND CARRYING OUT TARGETED OPERATIONS

As explained in the text box on page 36 below, under section 21(4BA) of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970, where a badge is displayed on the vehicle, the police or enforcement officer has the power to require a person who is in the vehicle or appears to have been in, or to be about to get into, the vehicle to produce the badge for inspection

In terms of putting this into practice, local enforcement teams tend to identify Blue Badge abuse 'hot spots', such as football stadiums, schools, shopping centres or entertainment/sports facilities. As explained above, parking enforcement officers have the power to inspect the Blue Badge but only the police has the power to seize a badge. For this reason, local authorities can generate big impacts from working with the police to carry out 'inspection swoops' on hot-spot areas.

For example, Liverpool City Council works with its local police force to conduct targeted enforcement operations, using the general powers of seizure available to the police, under section 19 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, to seize badges. They also impound any vehicles that are illegally parked (see case study below). Other local authorities have arranged for police officers to be seconded to them to focus on Blue Badge abuse and carry out on-street patrols.

**Liverpool City Council** has been working in partnership with Merseyside Police to crack down on Blue Badge abuse.

In Liverpool the local parking enforcement officers are trained up to be effective at identifying Blue Badge abuse on a day-to-day basis. However, they also conduct high profile targeted enforcement operations in conjunction with plain-clothes police at venues such as football games.

The police are able to use a range of different (non-Blue Badge specific) powers to inspect and seize lost, stolen, fraudulent or borrowed badges and impound any illegally parked vehicles. This approach has been highly successful with approximately 1,600 misused badges being seized over a two-year period.

The police also have a policy of automatically prosecuting every case of abuse. They also interview a certain percentage of badge holders where the abuse concerns misuse by friends or relatives. These interviews provide useful information in terms of identifying the source of the problem and uncovering other sources of crime and theft.

Targeted operations of this nature have significantly reduced forgeries and abuse of the Scheme in Merseyside.

Targeted operations can be combined with public information campaigns, for example through the distribution of leaflets explaining the purpose of the operation, providing information/reminders on the rules of the Scheme to badge holders and the wider public, and inviting the media to run news articles on the operation.

## 5.6. DAY-TO-DAY PARKING ENFORCEMENT INSPECTIONS

Undercover surveillance and targeted operations, undertaken in conjunction with the police are often the most effective ways of tackling abuse. However, there is still a role for all parking enforcement officers in identifying, lost, stolen and fraudulent badges as part of their day-to-day activities. Parking enforcement officers should be able to identify lost, stolen or fraudulent badges through car windscreens when carrying out their daily checks. The following section provides advice on verifying and inspecting badges and the legal powers available for dealing with misuse.

## 5.7. DETAILED ADVICE ON INSPECTING BADGES

### 5.7.1. Providing a sensitive service

Whenever misuse or abuse of a badge is suspected, the parking enforcement officer needs to deal with the badge holder in a sensitive manner. No assumption or questions should be raised about why the individual has been issued with a badge, as this is not the enforcement officers' role. In addition, some disabilities may not be immediately visible. In enforcing the Blue Badge Scheme, we strongly recommend that enforcement officers receive disability awareness training so that they can carry out their duties appropriately.

To aid the inspection process, from 15 October 2007, a gender marker has been added to the TSO serial number, prefixed by an 'X' for male badges and a 'Y' for female badges. The marker has been added to the badge to help enforcement officers to identify obvious cases of badge misuse. When using this marker to check that the correct badge holder is using the badge, officers should be aware of, and deal sensitively with, individuals who may have undergone – or be undergoing – gender reassignment. These individuals will have been issued with a male or female badge, according to whichever gender they are living under (See Section 2.3 above).

### 5.7.2. Actual physical inspection and follow-up action

When inspecting badges, authorised officers can check the badge through the windscreen and, if necessary, ask to see the badge under the 'power to inspect' (see below) so that they can check the detailed information and the photograph of the badge holder on the back of the badge in order to verify whether the badge is being used by the correct badge holder.

#### 'Power to inspect' legislation

Under section 21(4BA) of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 (1970 Act), the police or enforcement officer can approach a person in a vehicle displaying a Blue Badge (or a person who appears to have been in or to be about to get into, the vehicle) and require them to produce the badge for inspection.

A person who without reasonable excuse fails to produce a badge when required to do so under section 21(4BA) of the 1970 Act shall be guilty of an offence under section 21(4BD) of the Act and liable to a fine not exceeding £1,000.

Only the police has the power (under the general power of seizure under section 19 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984) to seize a Blue Badge, so it is often necessary to work in partnership with the police (see Section 5.5 above).

There are four main types of misuse that are likely to be uncovered when inspecting the badge:

- use of a badge that is no longer valid;
- misuse of a valid badge by a non badge holder;
- use of a lost or stolen badge;
- use of a forged/copied badge;

Whenever a holder genuinely appears to have accidentally used their badge incorrectly, then it is important to advise them of the rules and encourage them to comply with them in the future.

However, action can be taken on all the above forms of misuse. Advice on how to do this is provided below.

#### Use of a badge that is no longer valid

Where the badge has expired, is illegible (or should have been returned because of a change in circumstances recorded by the issuing authority), the authorised parking enforcement officer can:

- issue a Fixed Penalty Notice or a Penalty Charge Notice (depending on whether or not civilian parking enforcement is in operation) for any parking offence that has occurred;
- ask the police to seize the badge if engaged in a joint enforcement operation.

The issuing authority should then write to the badge holder advising them to reapply for their badge if it has expired or is no longer legible and explaining why the badge has been seized (if relevant).

It may also be possible to prosecute the person under section 21(4B) of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970, the penalty for which is a fine of up to £1,000.

### Misuse of a valid badge by a friend or relative

Where a badge holder has allowed a non-disabled person (whether accompanied or not by the badge holder) to use the badge for their own use, the badge should be seized using police powers and returned to the issuing authority.

The issuing authority should then:

- record the instance and what action has been taken (i.e. any penalty notices that have been served); and
- formally write to the badge holder confirming the restrictions that apply when using a badge and outlining the consequences of continued misuse (i.e. the possible withdrawal of the badge following three relevant convictions).

If there is evidence of repeated misuse (i.e. three relevant convictions) the issuing authority should write to the individual explaining that the authority refuses to allow the badge to continue in use on account of its misuse leading to at least three relevant convictions and giving particulars of that misuse .[0]

Consideration should be given to prosecuting the non-badge holder under section 117 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

The enforcement officer should also consider issuing a Fixed Penalty Notice or a Penalty Charge Notice for any parking offence that has occurred.

### Use of a stolen or lost badge

Where a non-badge holder is found using another person's badge that has been lost or stolen a Fixed Penalty Notice or a Penalty Charge Notice can be issued for any parking offence that has occurred. The issuing authority should:

- obtain a statement of loss from the badge holder and return the badge or destroy the badge (if a replacement badge has already been issued); and
- consider prosecuting the non badge holder under section 117 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

### Use of a forged/copied badge

Where a non-badge holder has been found using a forged or copied badge, the authorised parking enforcement officer can:

- issue a Fixed Penalty Notice or a Penalty Charge Notice for any parking offence that has occurred; and/or
- ask the police to seize the badge if engaged in a joint enforcement operation.

Consider prosecuting the non badge holder under section 117 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

If there is any evidence that the badge holder was involved in the copying of the badge, you should write to them directly warning them that their badge may be withdrawn if they persistently abuse the Scheme.

## 5.8. WITHDRAWING BADGES AS A RESULT OF REPEATED MISUSE

Under regulation 9(2) of the 2000 Regulations, local authorities can withdraw a badge if the holder has had at least three relevant convictions for misuse.

A local authority can also request for a badge to be returned if the authority is satisfied that the badge was obtained by false representation.

In addition, local authorities need to make clear to applicants and badge holders that a badge should be immediately returned to the local issuing authority in certain instances (see Section 4.2).

### 5.8.1. Warning notices

It is strongly recommended that local authorities should issue a warning notice to a badge holder who is misusing a badge, or allowing their badge to be misused, prior to consideration being given to withdrawing the badge.

## 5.9. SUMMARY OF OFFENCES AND LEGISLATIVE POWERS

A summary of the powers available to tackle different types of Blue Badge abuse is provided in the table below.

<i>Abuse</i>	<i>Application</i>	<i>Powers</i>	<i>Relevant legislation</i>
<b>Acquisition of badge by false representation</b>	Where an individual has provided false information in order to qualify for a badge.	Local authority can require that the badge be returned to them if they are satisfied that it has been obtained by false representation.	Regulation 9(2)(b) of the Disabled Persons (Badges for Motor Vehicles) (England) Regulations 2000 (SI 2000/682)
<b>Misuse of badge in certain circumstances</b>	For example, where a badge holder is using a badge for which they no longer qualify due to a change in their circumstances.  Where a badge holder is using a badge which has expired, or where a badge holder is using a badge which is no longer legible.	If found guilty person could face fine of up to £1,000 on conviction.  A Fixed Penalty Notice or a Penalty Charge Notice could be issued if a parking offence has occurred.  The Police can also seize the badge if required as evidence.	Section 21 (4B) of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970  Parking offences under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984  Section 19 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (general power of seizure etc)
<b>Systematic misuse of valid badge by badge holder</b>	Where a badge holder or other person using such a badge with the holder's consent has misused the badge leading to at least three relevant convictions.	Local authority can withdraw a badge and require that the badge be returned to them (on account of its misuse leading to at least three relevant convictions).  A Fixed Penalty Notice or a Penalty Charge Notice could be issued if a parking offence has occurred.	Regulation 9(2)(a) of the Disabled Persons (Badges for Motor Vehicles) (England) Regulations 2000 (SI 2007/682)  Parking offences under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984

<i>Abuse</i>	<i>Application</i>	<i>Powers</i>	<i>Relevant legislation</i>
<b>Misuse of badge by a non-badge holder</b>	Where a non-badge holder is using a badge (with or without the badge holder's permission) and the badge holder is not present.	If found guilty, person could face a fine of £1,000 on conviction.  A Fixed Penalty Notice or a Penalty Charge Notice could also be issued if a parking offence has occurred.  The Police can also seize the badge if required as evidence.	Section 117 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984  Parking offences under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984  Section 19 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (general power of seizure etc)
<b>Refusal to produce a badge for inspection when requested by an authorised person</b>	Where the police or enforcement officer has requested the badge be produced for inspection.  This can include instances where they believe the badge has been stolen, fraudulently altered/created document or is not being used by the badge holder.	The police and enforcement officers have the power to inspect badges when a badge is displayed on the vehicle and a person is in the vehicle or appears to have been in, or to be about to get into, the vehicle.  It is an offence for a person without reasonable excuse to fail to produce a badge when requested to do so, and a person can be fined up to £1,000 if convicted.  The police can also seize the badge if required as evidence.	Section 21(4BA) of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970  Section 21(4BD) of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970  Section 19 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (general power of seizure etc.)

### 5.10. ENFORCEMENT OF OFF-STREET PARKING SPACES FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

As the Scheme does not apply to off-street car parks, enforcement of disabled persons' parking bays in these car-parks is a matter for the individual owner or operator concerned. In the case of local authority off-street car parks, parking place orders normally either make it an offence for someone not displaying a valid Blue Badge to park in a disabled persons' parking bay or make it subject to the payment of a penalty charge.

In private off-street car parks, such as those at supermarkets, the position is more complicated. These car parks are private property, and the charges and conditions of use are essentially a contractual matter between the owner and the motorist.

Where there is suspected misuse of marked out disabled persons' parking bays in private car parks, it should be brought to the attention of the management of the store or premises concerned, so that they may consider effective action to enforce the parking restrictions in their car parks. It is, of course, in the interests of supermarkets and other stores to enforce their disabled persons' parking bays, as unauthorised use can lead to loss of trade if disabled people are unable to shop at their stores.

# CHAPTER 6

## Further advice

### 6.1. DISABILITY DISCRIMINATION ACTS 1995 AND 2005

Part 3 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA 1995) requires service providers to take reasonable steps to ensure that disabled people do not find it impossible, or unreasonably difficult, to enjoy the service on the same basis as non-disabled people. This has implications for car park operators who may have to demonstrate that, as well as marking out disabled persons' parking spaces, they have taken reasonable steps to ensure that they are available to disabled people. A best practice guide 'Inclusive Mobility' has been published on access to pedestrian and transport infrastructure, which includes a chapter on parking issues. It is designed to help service providers meet their obligations under Part 3 of the DDA 1995 and provides guidance on established best practice in a general sense that relevant organisations can apply to their particular situation. See [Appendix B](#) for details of how to obtain a copy.

The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 introduced a new duty on all public authorities – including local authorities – requiring them, when exercising their functions, to have due regard to the need to eliminate harassment of and unlawful discrimination against disabled people. In order to meet this duty, a public authority might need to give consideration to practices, policies and procedures relating to all its public functions, including parking enforcement.

### 6.2. INCREASING AWARENESS OF THE SCHEME

Not everyone who is eligible for a badge is aware of the Scheme. That is why the Department has produced the leaflet 'Can I get a Blue Badge?', which can be issued to anyone enquiring about whether they are entitled to a badge, or can be placed in public places, such as local libraries, to be picked up by members of the public. This leaflet is available in Braille, audio tape and CD formats. See [Appendix B](#) for details of how to order copies of this leaflet and the booklet 'The Blue Badge Scheme: rights and responsibilities'.

The aim is to raise levels of awareness of the Scheme, not only to badge holders, but to those trying to enforce and administer it, as well as to members of the general public, who may not understand when a badge is being used properly and when it is being misused. This will help to ensure that the Scheme continues as a vital and effective mechanism for enabling disabled people to enjoy maximum mobility. More publicity, for example, could dissuade non-badge holders from parking in disabled persons' bays, particularly if coupled with some high profile cases of prosecution. Local authorities can assist in this aim by considering the most appropriate and effective methodologies to employ, perhaps making use of modern technology, in order to reach their target audience.

Ways to do this include:

- posters for display in public places such as the council's offices, libraries, residential homes and day centres;
- providing the information in several languages and in large print, Braille and on audio tape;
- partnerships with local organisations such as the Citizens' Advice Bureaux (CABx), charities, amenity groups, law centres and solicitors;
- providing information on CD-Rom (which might be available in libraries and at centres such as the CAB);
- publicity in the council's news-sheets;
- the council's website – web pages on particular services should include a reference to the Scheme.

### **6.3. WHERE TO GO FOR FURTHER ADVICE**

Further advice on this guidance can be obtained by contacting the Blue Badge Helpline:  
tel. 0207 944 2914

# APPENDIX A

## List of legislation relating to the Blue Badge Scheme in England

The disabled persons' parking badge scheme came into operation on 1 December 1971 by means of Regulations made under Section 21 of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 (Badges for display on motor vehicles used by disabled persons).

The Scheme as it currently stands is governed by the following Regulations:

- the Disabled Persons (Badges for Motor Vehicles) (England) Regulations 2000 (SI 2000/682);
- the Disabled Persons (Badges for Motor Vehicles) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2000 (SI 2000/1507);
- the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Exemptions for Disabled Persons) (England) Regulations 2000 (SI 2000/683);
- the Disabled Persons (Badges for Motor Vehicles) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2007 (SI 2007/2531);
- the Disabled Persons (Badges for Motor Vehicles) (England) (Amendment No. 2) Regulations 2007 (SI 2007/2600).

Other relevant legislation:

- Section 21A (Recognition of badges issued outside Great Britain) of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
- Section 117 (Wrongful use of disabled person's badge) and 142(1)(General interpretation of Act) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (provides powers to tackle parking related abuse of the Scheme).

All of the above Statutory Instruments (and some of the Acts) can be viewed on the website of the Office of Public Sector Information at [www.opsi.gov.uk](http://www.opsi.gov.uk).

## APPENDIX B

### Useful guidance/publications relevant to the Blue Badge Scheme and to the parking needs of disabled people

The Department has produced the following leaflets about the Blue Badge Scheme:

- **Can I get a Blue Badge?**
- **The Blue Badge Scheme: rights and responsibilities**

Stocks of the above publications can be obtained from:

DfT Free Literature  
PO Box 236  
Wetherby LS23 7NB

Tel: 0870 1226 236  
Text phone: 0870 1207 405  
Fax: 0870 1226 237  
E-mail: [dftinf@capita.co.uk](mailto:dftinf@capita.co.uk)

- **Blue Badges, laminate sleeves and parking discs** are available from The Stationery Office ('TSO') at:

TSO Orders  
PO Box 29  
Norwich NR3 1GN

Tel: 0870 600 5522  
Fax: 0870 600 5533  
Web-site: [www.tsoshop.co.uk](http://www.tsoshop.co.uk)

The Department has also produced the following publications and factsheets:

- **Traffic Advisory Leaflet (5/95) Parking for disabled people**
- **Inclusive Mobility**
- **Parking in Central London for Blue Badge holders**
- **Measures to tackle abuse of the Scheme**
- **Blue Badge Scheme – misuse of off-street disabled persons' parking spaces**
- **Arrangements for travelling to other countries outside the European Union**

Copies of the above publications can be obtained from: The Blue Badge Helpline, tel. 020 7944 6550 or downloaded from [www.dft.gov.uk](http://www.dft.gov.uk)

The Automobile Association (the AA) has also produced the following booklet, which can be obtained direct from the AA by calling 01256 493016 or viewed on their website at: [www.aatrust.com](http://www.aatrust.com):

- **European Parking Card for People with Disabilities – how, when and where to use it in 29 countries**

Department of Health's following paper can be viewed at [www.csed.org.uk](http://www.csed.org.uk):

- **Care Services Efficiency Delivery Programme (2006) – Blue Badge Initiative**

The following Cabinet Office report, published in June 2002, can be viewed at [www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/regulation/documents/pst/pdf/redgppaper2.pdf](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/regulation/documents/pst/pdf/redgppaper2.pdf):

- **Making a difference: reducing burdens on general practitioners (GPs)**

# APPENDIX C

## Summary of Blue Badge Scheme parking concessions

<i>Parking benefits</i>	<i>Conditions</i>
Badge holders may park free of charge and without time limit at parking meters on-street and in 'pay-and-display' on-street parking <b>unless</b> there is a sign specifying a time limit for holders of disabled parking badges, or a ban, e.g. on loading, in force (check local signs for information).	A valid Blue Badge must be displayed.  Where a time limit is in force, the special blue parking disc (time clock) must also be displayed showing the time of arrival. Check local signs for information.
Badge holders may be exempt from limits on parking times imposed on other users (check local signs for information).	A valid Blue Badge must be displayed.
Badge holders may usually park on single or double yellow lines for up to three hours in England. Where there is a ban on loading or unloading, you cannot park during the hours that the ban is in force. You also cannot park at a few locations where local schemes apply.	A valid Blue Badge must be displayed, and in England a valid parking disc must also be displayed showing the time of arrival.  There must be an interval of at least one hour from a previous period of waiting before the same vehicle can be parked in the same road on the same day.

It is important to note that these concessions apply only on the public highway ('on-street') and not to car-parks or on private land. Nor do they apply at a few locations where local schemes apply – e.g. certain areas of Central London.

Badge holders must be encouraged always to check signs to see what the rules are when parking in such areas. They should also display the parking disc if in any doubt.

# APPENDIX D

## Model application forms

### Blue Badge Scheme – model application form

❖ Please tick box  as appropriate.

Please complete ALL PARTS in block capitals.

#### SECTION A

**Personal details (If completing form on behalf of a child under 16 years of age, please provide their details in appropriate sections and sign form on their behalf)**

**(Applicants for an organisational badge should go to Section D)**

Surname  Title (Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms)

Forename(s)  Date of Birth   
(DD/MM/YEAR)

Gender Male  Female

National Insurance number Letters  Numbers  Letter

(National Insurance numbers start with two letters, followed by six numbers, then another letter)

Address   
 Postcode  
Tel  Email

**Previous address, if different in the last three years**

Postcode  
Tel  Email

**Renewals only**

Badge number  Expiry date of current Badge

**Confirmation of address**

Please supply a copy of one of the following as proof that you live in the county/borough.

Utility bill  Rent book  Council Tax bill

Whichever one you provide, it must contain a date within the last three months to show that you are living in the county/borough.

**Confirmation of identity**

You must attach a photocopy of two of the following as proof of your identity.

Birth certificate/adoption certificate   
Valid driving licence  Passport

**Photographs**

Please enclose two recent passport-style photographs of yourself (if you are the applicant) or of the person applying for a badge.  
Please ensure that you print your name on the back of each photograph and, if you are able, also sign the back of each photograph.

**Fee (where applicable)**

Please enclose a cheque/postal order for £2  
Cheques should be made payable to .....  
**Cash should not be sent through the post.**

**SECTION B****Eligibility criteria**Eligible without Further Assessment**1. *Registered Severely Sight Impaired (Blind)***

Are you registered as severely sight impaired (blind) under the National Assistance Act 1948?

Yes  No 

If YES, please specify the local authority with which you are registered.

**2. *Higher Rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance***Do you receive Disability Living Allowance at the Higher Rate for mobility?Yes  No 

If YES, please provide recent evidence (e.g. an official letter confirming an award of the allowance, a Post Office Order Book for payment of the allowance).

**3. *War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement***

Do you receive War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement?

Yes  No 

If YES, please provide recent evidence (e.g. an official letter confirming award of War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement).

If you answered YES to any question in Section B, please go to Section E.  
If you answered NO to all the questions in Section B, please go to Section C.

**SECTION C**

**Important notes for Section C – please read before completing.**

If you have answered NO to all questions in Section B and are applying as an individual, you will only qualify for a badge if you or the person on whose behalf you are applying:

- is over two years of age and has a severe disability affecting both arms, drives regularly and cannot use or finds it hard to use parking meters;
- is over two years of age and is unable to walk or has considerable difficulty walking due to a permanent and substantial disability;
- is a child under the age of two, who has a medical condition requiring bulky medical equipment or immediate access to a vehicle for treatment;

Please read the attached notes for further guidance if you are unsure if this applies to you.

**Eligible subject to further assessment**

**1. Severe disability in both arms**

1(a) Do you satisfy all of the following?

- Drive regularly Yes  No
- Have a severe disability in both arms; and Yes  No
- Unable to operate or have considerable difficulty operating all or some types of parking meter. Yes  No

Please describe your medical condition:


1(b) If you drive an adapted car, please give details of adaptation.


1(c) Please explain the difficulties you have operating parking meters and pay and display machines.


**2. Unable to walk or experience considerable difficulty in walking due to a permanent and substantial disability**

2(a) Are you able to walk?  
(Please tick 'No' if you cannot walk at all)

Yes  No

**2(b) Do you have physical problems that restrict your walking?**

NB For more information, please read section 2 of the guidance notes.

Yes

No

**If yes, please give details below:**


**2(c) How far can you normally walk (including any short stops) before you feel severe discomfort?**

If you are not sure how far you can walk or how long it takes you, it may be useful to measure this so you can give accurate information.

**Metres**

**2(d) How long, on average, would it take you to walk this far?**

**Minutes**

**2(e) How many minutes can you walk for before you feel severe discomfort?**

If you are not sure how long you can walk for, it may be useful to time this so you can give us accurate information. By severe discomfort, we mean things like shortness of breath, pain, extreme tiredness, or muscle spasms.

**Minutes**

**2(f) Please tick the box that best describes your walking speed**

**Normal or moderate**  (about 51 metres or more a minute)

**Slow**  (about 40 to 50 metres a minute)

**Very slow**  (less than 40 metres a minute)

If there is not a box that describes your walking speed, tell us in your own words about your walking speed:


**2(g) Please tick the box that best describes the way you walk**

- Normal
- Adequate  For example, you walk with a slight limp.
- Poor  For example, you walk with a heavy limp, a stiff leg or shuffle, or have problems with balance
- Extremely poor  For example, you drag your leg, stagger, use swing through crutches or need physical support.

If there is not a box that describes the way you walk, tell us in your own words about the way you walk:


**2(h) Please tick the walking aid(s) you use:**

- Wheelchair
- Manual or powered
- Walking stick
- Walking frame
- Crutches
- Swing through two crutches
- Artificial limbs

Please give details below of use:


2(i) Please provide details of registered health professional who could be asked to assess your mobility (e.g. occupational therapist, physiotherapist, GP)

Name	
Address	
	Tel. (if known):
Official title (if known)	

**2 (j) Apart from your GP, in the last 12 months, have you seen anyone in connection with your illness or disability?**

For example, a hospital doctor or consultant, district or specialist nurse, community psychiatric nurse, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, audiologist. Please tell us their professional address where you see them, such as health centre or hospital.

Yes  No

**Their name:**  
(Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, Dr)

**Their profession or specialist area**

**The address where you see them**

**Their telephone number**  
(including the dialling code)

**Your hospital record number**  
(you can find this on your appointment letter or card)

**Which of your illnesses or disability do you see them for?**

**How often do you usually see them because of your illness or disability?**

**When did you last see them because of your illness or disability?**

If you have seen more than one professional, please tell us their contact details, what they treat you for and when you last saw them at Section F **Extra Information**.

**3. Are you applying on behalf of a child aged under two years who either:**

**3(a)** Has a condition requiring transportation of bulky medical equipment at all times?

Yes

No

*and/ or*

**3(b)** Has a condition that requires that they must be kept near a motor vehicle at all times in order to be treated for that condition in the vehicle, or to allow the child to be taken immediately to a place where they can be treated?

Yes

No

Please describe the child's medical condition:


**3(c)** Does this require regular transportation of bulky medical equipment?

Yes

No

If YES, what type of equipment?


**3(d)** It would be useful if you could provide a supporting letter from your child's paediatrician giving details of the child's medical condition and the type of medical equipment they need, or provide contact details below:

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**SECTION D**

**Organisational Application**

Name of Organisation

Main contact – name

Address

Postcode

Tel

Email

Does your organisation care for disabled people?

Yes

No

If yes, please give details below:

As part of that care, does your organisation provide them with transportation?

Yes

No

If yes, give details of the type of vehicles used and how often they are used to transport disabled people.

Are any of your vehicles licensed under the Disabled Passenger Vehicle (DPV) taxation class?

Yes

No

If yes, please give details and attach a photocopy of the tax disc(s) to this application.

Number of people in organisation

Number of qualifying people (i.e. would meet one or more of the criteria in sections B or C) for which organisation is responsible

Charity number (if applicable)

- Describe why you are applying for a badge including how often it will be used and why.


**Renewals only**

Badge number

Expiry date of current badge

**SECTION E**

**Driver/passenger status and vehicle registration (to be answered by all Individual applicants)**

**Will you be a driver or passenger in a car when using a Blue Badge?**

Driver

Passenger

Both

**Vehicle registration number for principal car in which badge will be used**

(One number should be nominated, but other vehicles may be used and the badge transferred when necessary.)

**SECTION F**

**Please use this space to tell us anything else you think we should know about your claim that is not covered above:**

**Checklist**

Please enclose all the relevant documents.

- Completed    Section A
- Section B *or*
- Section C *or*
- Section D
- Section E (not applicable for organisational applications)
- Declaration
- Signature in the white box

- I have enclosed:
- Confirmation of address
  - Confirmation of identity
  - Enclosed evidence of Higher Rate of the Mobility Component of Disability Living Allowance or War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement (if applicable)
  - Enclosed 2 x recent passport type photographs with name printed and signed on back
  - Enclosed recent evidence in connection to application for children under two (if applicable)
  - Enclosed photocopy of DPV tax disc (to support applications made by organisations)
  - Enclosed a cheque/postal order of ...  
Cheques/postal orders should be made payable to \_\_\_\_\_.
- Cash should not be sent through the post.**

**Declaration (to be completed by all applicants)**

- I declare that, to the best of my knowledge, all the information I have provided is correct.
  - I understand that I must promptly inform my local issuing authority of any changes that may affect my entitlement to a badge.
  - I agree to the local authority contacting an accredited health professional if necessary, for the purpose of obtaining information to support my application.
  - I agree to the local authority sharing information in this form with other local authorities responsible for the Blue Badge Scheme and with parking enforcement agencies for the purpose of preventing and detecting crime
- Data Protection Act 1998**
- I understand that the information supplied by me on this form will be maintained by the local authority and will not be disclosed to any other party save those who are responsible for the enforcement of parking restrictions, those responsible for discounts for congestion charging or otherwise as the law allows
  - I further understand that the medical information I have supplied to support this application is deemed to be 'sensitive personal data' and I consent to its disclosure only to a third party who is responsible for the operation and administration of the Blue Badge Scheme and other Government Departments or agencies, to validate proof of entitlement.

Signed	<input type="text"/>
Date (DD/MM/YEAR)	<input type="text"/>
Name	<input type="text"/>

**Please ensure you sign in the white box in the bottom right corner. It will form an essential part of your badge as proof of identity. The badge cannot be issued if this box is not signed.**

## Blue Badge Scheme – notes for use by applicants completing an application form (form BB1)

The application form for a Blue Badge (Form BB1) reflects all the criteria under which people may qualify for a badge. These notes are for the use of applicants in completing application forms.

### Section A Personal details

This asks for your personal details including name, date of birth, National Insurance number, address, telephone number and email address (where applicable) and as many fields as possible should be filled in.

This will ask you to provide proof of identity and address.

There is a subsection for those seeking to renew previously issued badges. The expiry date should be in the relatively near future, and two badges will not be valid for one applicant at the same time.

### Section B Eligible without further assessment

You will be eligible for a badge without further assessment if you are more than two years old and meet at least one of the **eligibility criteria in Section B**.

**You will need to provide the appropriate documentation to prove eligibility under one of the criteria.** An example of proof of entitlement is proof of payment of the allowance.

**Section B1:** for registered severely sight impaired (blind) people – asks you to state the name of the local authority or borough with which you are registered. In England and Wales, you should state the county, metropolitan district or London borough councils. In Scotland you should indicate the regional or island council.

In many cases, you will be registered with the same authority to which the application for a badge is being made. If this is not the case, local authorities will check with the named authority that you are registered as severely sight impaired (blind).

**The formal notification required to register as severely sight impaired (blind) is a Certificate of Vision Impairment (CVI), signed by a Consultant Ophthalmologist. However, registration is voluntary.**

**Section B 2:** for those who receive the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance (HRMCDLA). An applicant receiving HRMCDLA will have had an award notice letter from the Disability and Carers Service (DCS) or a vehicle with excise duty exemption. If you have lost this the DCS can provide another copy.

**Section B 3:** for those who receive a War Pensioners Mobility Supplement (WPMS). An applicant receiving WPMS will have an official letter from the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency demonstrating receipt of the grant.

**Any documents sent in as proof of entitlement will be returned to the applicant as quickly as possible, once they are no longer needed by the issuing authority.**

### **Section C Assessed eligibility criteria**

**Section C1:** is for applicants over the age of two, with a severe disability affecting both arms. You should be a driver in the car, and satisfy all three conditions in order to obtain a badge i.e. drive regularly; have a severe disability in both arms and are unable, or find it hard, to use parking meters. Local authorities may make arrangements to meet applicants.

**Section C2:** is to be completed if you have a permanent and substantial disability (i.e. a condition that is likely to last at least three years), which means you cannot walk or which makes walking very difficult. People with a behavioural or psychological disorder will not normally qualify unless their impairment causes very considerable difficulty in walking all the time.

Applicants are asked to describe the nature of their disability and give an estimate of the maximum distance they can walk without assistance or severe discomfort.

We understand how difficult it can be to accurately work out the distance you can walk. There are several things that can help you:

- ▶ Ask someone to walk with you and pace the distance you walk. The average adult step is just under one metre. For example, if the person walking with you took 100 steps, you would have walked about 90 metres.
- ▶ A size 9 shoe is about a third of a metre.
- ▶ The average double-decker bus is about 11 metres long.
- ▶ A full-size football pitch is about 100 metres long.

If you still find it difficult to work out the distance you can walk in metres, please tell us:

- ▶ The number of steps you can take, and how long, in minutes, it would take you to walk this distance (Section C2(c)–(e)).
- ▶ About your walking speed (Section C2(f)).
- ▶ The way that you walk (Section C2(g)), for example, shuffling or small steps etc.

You may have had a mobility assessment in the last 12 months that covered your walking ability, and you can give details of this in Section C2(j).

**Your local authority may ask you to be assessed by a medical professional, such as a physiotherapist or occupational therapist.**

**Section C 3:** this covers children under two years of age who have a medical condition which means that they must always be accompanied by bulky medical equipment which cannot be carried around, or need to be kept near a vehicle at all times, either for treatment, or for transportation to a location where treatment can be performed

A parent or guardian must apply on behalf of a child under the age of two.

The list of bulky medical equipment referred to above may include:

- ventilators;
- suction machines;
- feed pumps;
- parenteral equipment;
- syringe drivers;
- oxygen administration equipment;
- continuous oxygen saturation monitoring equipment; and
- casts and associated medical equipment for the correction of hip dysplasia.

A local authority will issue a badge if the equipment is always needed and cannot be carried without great difficulty.

Examples of highly unstable medical conditions that mean children who have them may need quick access to transport to hospital or home are:

- tracheostomies;
- severe epilepsy/fitting;
- highly unstable diabetes; and
- terminal illnesses that prevent children from spending any more than brief moments outside and who need a quick route home.

**Please note that the above lists are not exhaustive, to allow for new advances in technology and treatment equipment.**

### Section D Organisational badges

This is to be completed if you are representing an organisation applying for an organisational badge.

An organisational badge will be issued to organisations whose responsibility includes the care and transportation of disabled people, who would meet the eligibility criteria for a badge should they apply individually.

In all circumstances, badges will be supplied to organisations or departments (e.g. Social Service Department) rather than to individual staff members.

### Section E Driver/passenger status

In this section you should state whether you will be a driver or passenger, as well as the registration number of the main vehicle in which the badge will be used; although the badge can be used in any vehicle in which you are travelling.

We ask you to provide details of a medical professional that can be contacted in order to assess your mobility. It is preferred that independent medical practitioners such as physiotherapists or occupational therapists are asked, rather than GPs.

### Section F For further information

This section should be used to add any further relevant information that has not already been covered elsewhere.

### Declaration

All applicants must sign and date the form.

### Checklist

**Photographs:** these are necessary in order to ensure correct use of the Scheme. It is not required that photographs be taken in a photo-booth, but they must be of roughly the same dimensions, showing the applicant's face clearly.

A local authority may refuse to issue a badge if they have reason to believe that the applicant is not who they claim to be or that the badge would be used by someone other than the person to whom it has been issued.

**Signature in the white box:** We ask that you sign in the white box provided at the end of the form. The badge cannot be provided if this box is not signed.



**Front - Display this side up**

Date of expiry:

Issued by:

Serial No:



**ORGANISATIONAL  
BADGE**

SERIAL NUMBER



**EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES  
MODEL**

**Parking Card for  
Disabled People**

Parkeeringkaart  
Parkingskort  
Parkingskort  
Parkingskort  
Contrassegno  
Parkeering  
Cartão de estacionamento  
Pysykilupa  
Parkingskort  
Carte de stationnement

This card entitles the holder to special local parking facilities available in the Member State concerned.

When in use, the card is to be displayed at the front of the vehicle in such a way that the front of the card is clearly visible for checking purposes.

*stamp or logo of organisation*

Name of organisation:

**SERIAL NUMBER**

**MISUSE OF THIS CARD  
MAY CONSTITUTE A  
CRIMINAL OFFENCE  
(MAXIMUM PENALTY  
£1000)**

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