

# Blue Badge Scheme in Wales: Changes to the Eligibility and Assessment 2016

## About the Blue Badge Scheme

The Blue Badge Scheme was started in 1971 for people who always have difficulty walking.

The badge lets people to park close to places they need to reach their jobs, shops and other services.



## What we want to do:

- Include people with temporary conditions\* that do not last forever,
- Make the application process simpler where we can, and
- Make sure people follow the rules when they use a badge.



**\*Temporary conditions** are those which do not last forever but do last at least a year – like a badly broken leg or head injury

## **We want you to tell us what you think**

This consultation only covers Wales. We want to know what you think about these things:

### **Including people with temporary conditions**

At the moment people are only allowed to have a badge if they have a disability which will last forever. But we want to include people with temporary conditions.

1. Do you agree that people with temporary conditions should be allowed to have a badge?
  
2. We think it will help these people, do you agree;
  - People with badly broken legs
  - People who have had a stroke or bad head injury
  - People with bad spine injuries
  - People who need new hip or knee joints.

3. Is there anything we have missed?
4. Who should tell us that a person needs a temporary badge?
5. How long do you think people should have a temporary badge for?

### **Making the application process simpler**

Local authorities use different methods to decide whether to issue a badge.

Some still ask the applicants GP but we have found out that this may not always be a good idea.

Some use special forms and some use the Blue Badge Verification Toolkit\* which the Welsh Government gave to local authorities to help them reach a decision.

Each badge holder needs to re-apply every 3 years when their badge runs out.



We want to make this easier for those who do not need to have another assessment each time.

**\*The Blue Badge Verification Toolkit** is a guidance tool to support local authorities through the application process and includes a scoring tool to score against evidence included in each application

We think that if current badge holders have had a thorough assessment by an independent health professional\* then they can re-apply without needing another assessment.

Our legal advice and guidance to local authorities will explain what previous assessments they should accept and from which independent health professional – like a consultant or Surgeon.



**\*An Independent health professional** is someone who is not involved in the day to day support of patient care

6. Do you agree that local authorities should be instructed to only use support from an independent health professional?

7. Do you think that this should always be the rule?

8. Do you agree that it should be made easier for people to re-apply when they have already had an assessment by an independent health professional?



### **Capturing the right level**

A person can get a badge automatically if they receive mobility benefits, such as HRMCDLA\* and PIP\*.

\*People who receive higher rate mobility component of disability living allowance (HRMCDLA) and Personal Independence Payment (PIP) have been assessed by an independent person.

For people who do not receive mobility benefits the same mobility measure is used to decide if they should get a badge.

So generally, if a person has been turned down for mobility benefits they would also be turned down for a badge.

9. Should local authorities be allowed to turn down an application for a badge if the person has been assessed and turned down for mobility benefits?

10. Do you think the assessment should have been in the last 12 months?

### **Better enforcement**

Welsh Government also wants to improve parking and enforcement.

We are worried about people not using their badge in the right way.

If a badge is not being used in the right way people like traffic wardens and enforcement officers can take the badge in the street. But at the moment it



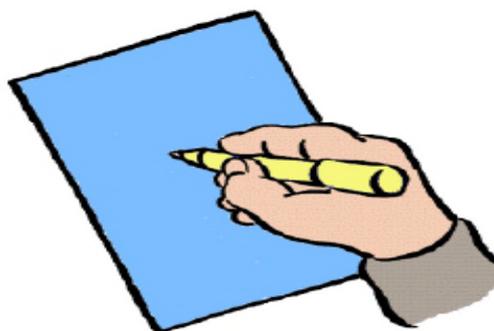
must be sent back to the person it belongs to.

11. Do you think that local authorities should be able to cancel a badge if a person keeps breaking the rules?
12. Should the person be allowed to ask for their badge back and why?
13. How many times should a replacement badge be given before the local authority can decide not to issue another badge?



## Telling us what you think

We would like any one who is interested in the issues that this consultation is looking at to tell us what they think.



We really want to hear from these people and groups:

- Disabled people and disabled peoples groups.
- Parking Enforcement officers and their groups or organisations.
- Local councils and any other interested party.

You can tell Welsh Government what you think by answering the questions and sending them by email or post to the details below.

By Post:  
Blue Badge Team  
Public Transport Division  
Transport Wales  
Welsh Government  
Cathays Park  
CARDIFF  
CF10 3NQ



Telephone: 029 2082 6586  
Email:  
[blue.badge@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:blue.badge@wales.gsi.gov.uk)

## **Freedom of information**

This consultation is covered by the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This means that if you tell us what you think about the government's ideas for changing the Blue Badge scheme, anyone can ask us to tell them what you and everyone else told us.

This includes things like your name. And these people may use this information in things they write. This means that if you tell us things like your name, you are also telling us we can give this information to people who ask us for it.

If you do not want us to do this, you could tell us less about yourself. For example, you might give us just your first name and the town you live in.

If you do not want us to tell other people what you think about the changes to the Blue Badge scheme please tell us why. Even then, unless you have a good reason, the Freedom of Information Act may mean that we have to tell people.

If you get in touch with us by email we cannot be sure that other people will not see your email.

## **What happens next?**

Welsh Government will look at what you say and put it on their website.

Because this is a Welsh Government consultation we have to ask for some information about you.

## About you



Name:

Telephone:

Email:

Address:

Do you represent a group?

Yes  No

Please tell us the name of the group:

Can we share your answers with the public?

Yes  No

Can we share your name with the public?

Yes  No

Can we get in touch with you again if we want to talk to you, about your answers?

Yes  No

**Question 1:** Do you agree that people with temporary conditions should be allowed to have a badge?

Yes	No

<b>Comments</b>
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**Question 2:** We think it will help;

- People with badly broken legs
- People who have had a stroke or bad head injury
- People with bad spine injuries
- People who need new hip or knee joints.

Do you agree?

Yes	No

<b>Comments</b>
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**Question 3:** Is there anything we have missed?

Yes	No

Comments

**Question 4:** Who should tell us that a person needs a temporary badge?

Comments

**Question 5:** How long do you think people should have a temporary badge for?

1 year	2 years	3 years

Comments

**Question 6:** Do you agree that local authorities should be instructed to only use support from an independent health professional?

Yes	No

Comments
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**Question 7:** Do you think that this should always be the rule?

Yes	No

Comments
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**Question 8:** Do you agree that it should be made easier for people to re-apply when they have already had an assessment by an independent health professional?

Yes	No

Comments
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**Question 9:** Should local authorities be allowed to turn down an application for a badge if the person has been assessed and turned down for mobility benefits?

Yes	No

Comments
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**Question 10:** Do you think the assessment should have been in the last 12 months?

Yes	No

Comments
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**Question 11:** Do you think that local authorities should be able to cancel a badge if a person keeps breaking the rules?

Yes	No

Comments
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**Question 12:** Should the person be allowed to ask for their badge back and why?

Yes	No

Comments
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**Question 13:** How many times should a replacement badge be given before the local authority can decide not to issue any more to an individual?

Yes	No

Comments
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