

The Blue Badge Scheme: Rights and Responsibilities in Wales



You must read
this leaflet
before using the
badge and keep
it in case you
need to refer to
it in the future.



The Blue Badge Scheme in Wales

MEMBER BRIEFING

OCTOBER 2023

Aim of Session

- ▶ To brief members on what happens when we receive and process blue badges, so that they are able to advise constituents who approach them with Blue Badge questions and complaints and then signpost them to the appropriate process.

How Badges are Funded

- ▶ Wales Blue Badge Scheme is funded via the RSG (Revenue Support Grant) provided to LAs as part of their annual local government settlement
- ▶ The RSG is used by local authorities to meet statutory duties and local priorities

Could We Consider Incurring a Charge for Blue Badge?

- ▶ Because funding to local authorities is provided via the Revenue Settlement Grant local authorities in Wales are not able to charge individual holders for their Blue Badge.
- ▶ Local authorities are able to charge a fee of up to £10.00 for an organisational or replacement badge. This charge is at the discretion of the local authority.

National Fraud Initiative (NFI) Wales 2020-21 Report (Audit Wales)

- ▶ In 2020-21 NFI revoked 2717 badges in Wales on the grounds of misuse/fraud
- ▶ This had an estimated cost of £1.4 Million resulting from lost revenue from parking charges

Misuse not only reduces parking revenue but limits available spaces for genuine badge holders

Blue badge abuse is often also linked to wider financial abuse of vulnerable people

Badge Applications Handled 2022-23

- ▶ Monmouthshire live badges (approved and Issued) 6043
(translates to around 6.5% of population in Monmouthshire)

Application criteria	
Organisations	68
Automatic	2589
Required further assessment	3238
Cognitive	148

Assessing Eligibility

All applications are assessed on grounds of a person's ability to mobilise

Age and illness are not grounds for application in their own right.

Types of Application

Fast Track – Special Cases Requested by Hospices

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graph TD; A[Fast Track – Special Cases Requested by Hospices] --> B[Discretionary]; B --> C[Automatic]; C --> D[Cognitive Impairment]; D --> E[Temporary Impairment];
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Discretionary

Automatic

Cognitive Impairment

Temporary Impairment

Fast Tracked Applications

- ▶ Can only be submitted by a hospice.
- ▶ Are given on grounds of terminal illness **MUST ALSO INCLUDE** accompanying evidence and information of decline in mobility.
- ▶ All applications must be supported by a form SR1. The SR1 form is an official form provided by a health specialist that can be used for claiming benefits under special rules for people who have a terminal illness.
- ▶ In most cases these badges if awarded are for up to one year.
- ▶ If prognosis is longer than one year a discretionary application is advised where mobility restricts normal day to day functioning.

Discretionary Applications (most common type)

- ▶ Has a permanent and substantial impairment which causes inability to walk or considerable difficulty in walking.
- ▶ Needs to drive a vehicle regularly and has an impairment in both arms so is unable to operate or has considerable difficulty operating all or some types of parking equipment.
- ▶ Child under 3, who on account of condition, must always travel with bulky medical equipment which cannot be carried around without great difficulty.
- ▶ Child under 3 who, on account of condition, must always be near a motor vehicle so that, if necessary, treatment for their condition can be given in the vehicle or the child can be taken quickly in the vehicle to a place where such treatment may be given.

The Discretionary Application Toolkit

- ▶ All discretionary applications are scored using the Wales Blue Badge Verification Toolkit
- ▶ To qualify must achieve at least 15 points
- ▶ The toolkit is available only to named personnel who are responsible for administration of Blue Badges
- ▶ Toolkit information is sensitive and cannot be publicised or shared – Wales Gov exempt access under FOI (Freedom of Information)

Automatic Applications

- ▶ Applicants in receipt of PIP 10+ points Moving Around and/or 8+ points Planning and Following a journey (we refer to this as the mobility component of the PIP award)
- ▶ Higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- ▶ People who receive War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement
- ▶ People who receive a benefit under the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces (Compensation) Scheme
- ▶ People who are blind or are severely sight impaired

Cognitive Applications

- ▶ People who are unable to plan and follow a journey as a result of having a cognitive Impairment
- ▶ All applications must be accompanied by a letter of support from a healthcare professional (excludes GP) such as:

Information required from (not exhaustive)	Examples of diagnosis
Paediatrician Psychiatrist Psychologist Memory clinic	Autism Alzheimers or dementia Stroke survivors People with learning disability People with complex mental health Head injury

Temporary Applications

- ▶ People unable to walk or have considerable difficulty walking following surgery or whilst experiencing a temporary illness
- ▶ Condition is likely to last for **no longer than 12 months**
- ▶ Applications must be supported by evidence from a recognised health professional who has been involved in the care or treatment of the temporary condition eg; surgeon, consultant...
- ▶ When assessing following medical procedures we would expect the applicant to have experienced 3 months recovery prior to seeking an application.

Appeals

- ▶ Applicants who are refused a badge have a right to appeal
 1. First line of appeal is Blue Badge manager
 2. If still not satisfied/resolved applicant will be referred to independent assessors – Able2 – this assessment is carried out by a qualified clinician and their decision is final.
 3. Applicants are advised not to reapply for a period of 6 months or if the condition substantially deteriorates.

Where to Find Information

- ▶ Blue Badge Scheme in Wales: guidance for local authorities 2021



Questions...