

Blue Badge Scheme Factsheet



This Factsheet is about the Blue Badge Scheme, which provides a national arrangement of on-street parking concessions. It should be read together with our general information leaflet about our service.

A Blue Badge may be issued to people with certain disabilities. The Blue Badge is for use in a vehicle in which the badge holder is travelling, either as driver or passenger, and allows you to park in certain restricted areas for a limited period. The fact that you currently hold, have previously held, or might previously have been eligible for, a Blue Badge does not necessarily mean that you will remain eligible. Some local authorities may provide parking bays for Blue Badge holders near their homes. However, this is subject to the local policy and conditions, and to the availability of funding. Car park operators, including local authorities, are not required to offer any concession or reduced charges to Blue Badge holders, though some do. Applications for a Blue Badge should be made directly to your local council or via the www.gov.uk/apply-blue-badge website.

What the Ombudsman can do

If you think that a decision by the Council to refuse a Blue Badge for you, your relative or a person you look after, is flawed, the Ombudsman may be able to help you. He can usually look at your complaint if:

- an application for a Blue Badge has been unreasonably delayed;
- the process of assessment of your application was significantly flawed – for example, it did not follow the legislation or guidance in relation to eligibility;
- the Council does not have a review or reassessment procedure for applicants who have been refused a Blue Badge or if it has failed to properly apply its procedure.

What the Ombudsman cannot do

The Ombudsman cannot:

- question the eligibility criteria set out in the legislation;
- undertake an assessment of your health care needs and eligibility for a Blue Badge;
- help you make a request for a Blue Badge (there are other organisations who may do this – see 'further information' below);
- tell you whether a Blue Badge should have been granted or replace the Council's decision and direct them to give you a Blue Badge;

- under normal circumstances consider complaints where a statutory right of appeal is available. If a Blue Badge has been refused because of a relevant conviction for past misuse or where the Council requires a Blue Badge to be returned because it believes an applicant to have obtained it by false representation, there is a right of appeal to the Welsh Government. The Ombudsman is therefore unlikely to be able to consider complaints about such refusals.
- If the Ombudsman upholds your complaint he may make recommendations to the Council about what they should do. This may include a request to carry out a reassessment of your application.
- You do not need to make your complaint to the Ombudsman using a solicitor or any other advocate; his service is free and impartial and we aim to make the process as easy to follow for complainants as possible.

Further information

You may like to consider contacting the following organisations for advice:

The Citizens Advice Bureau provides free advice and assistance to members of the public and specific information about the Blue Badge Scheme can be found on their website:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/wales/consumer/cars-and-other-vehicles/driving-and-parking/driving-and-parking-for-disabled-people/the-blue-badge-scheme/>

The Welsh Government has also issued information and guidance about the Blue Badge Scheme on its website:

<http://gov.wales/topics/transport/road-users/bluebadgeschemeinfo/?lang=en>

<http://gov.wales/docs/det/publications/150109-blue-badge-la-en.pdf>

Examples of cases that the Ombudsman has looked at can be found on our website. Please see www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk

If you are unsure whether the Ombudsman would be able to look into your complaint, please contact us:

- **phone** 0300 790 0203;
- **e-mail** ask@ombudsman-wales.org.uk;
- **visit the website at** www.ombudsman-wales.org.uk;
- **follow us on Twitter:** @OmbudsmanWales;
- **write to:** The Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
1 Ffordd yr Hen Gae, Pencoed CF35 5LJ