

# The Blue Badge Scheme



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**Parking concessions for  
 disabled and blind people**

This leaflet is available in large print, Braille and audio tape formats. Contact 020-7944 6800 or see page 15 for details.

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## **1** WHAT IS THE BLUE BADGE SCHEME?

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The Blue Badge Scheme provides a national arrangement of parking concessions for people with severe walking difficulties who travel either as drivers or passengers. The Scheme also applies to registered blind people, and people with very severe upper limb disabilities who regularly drive a vehicle but cannot turn a steering wheel by hand. It allows badge holders to park close to their destination, but the national concessions apply only to **on-street** parking. Details are set out in section 9 of this leaflet. In addition, other concessions may be available to badge holders – see section 17.

## **2**

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The Blue Badge Scheme is effectively a replacement for the Orange Badge Scheme. The new European style Blue Badge will be introduced from 1 April 2000, as existing badges come up for renewal, or as new applications are processed. Orange Badges will therefore continue to be recognised until 31 March 2003.

## **3** YOU CAN GET A BADGE IF:

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- you receive the higher rate of the mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance
- you receive a War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement
- you use a motor vehicle supplied for disabled people by a Government Health Department
- you are registered blind
- you have a severe disability in both upper limbs, regularly drive a motor vehicle but cannot turn the steering wheel of a motor vehicle by hand even if that wheel is fitted with a turning knob
- you have a permanent and substantial disability which means you are unable to walk or have very considerable difficulty in walking. In this case you may be asked to answer a series of questions to help the local

authority determine whether you are eligible for a badge. People with a psychological disorder will not normally qualify unless their impairment causes very considerable, and not intermittent, difficulty in walking.

*(Note: Children under two years of age do not qualify for a badge because they would not normally be expected to be able to walk independently. Organisations caring for disabled people meeting one or more of the above criteria may be able to get a badge, but this is entirely at the local authorities' discretion and the conditions for using such a badge must be strictly observed – see point 3 in section 11.)*

## **4** WHERE TO APPLY

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If you think you may be entitled to a badge you should apply:

### **In England and Wales**

To the Social Services Department of your County, Unitary, Metropolitan District or London Borough Council.

### **In Scotland**

To the Chief Executive or Social Work Department of your local Council.

Your local authority will decide if you are eligible for a badge. There is no right of appeal against their decision if you do not meet the eligibility conditions.

## **5** PHOTOGRAPHS

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The Blue Badge is a two-sided card with space for a photograph of the badge holder on the back of the card. Your application should, therefore, be accompanied by 2 reasonably recent photographs, which you should sign on the back. You may send passport-type photographs taken from self-service booths or any suitable photographs cut down to a passport photo size.

## 6 WHERE THE SCHEME DOES NOT APPLY

- The Scheme does not apply on private roads.
- The Scheme does not apply in off-street car parks. However, some may provide spaces for disabled people. You should check the signs to see what concessions are available, and whether Blue Badge holders have to pay. Always display your Blue Badge when occupying one of these spaces.
- The Scheme does not apply in certain town centres, where access is prohibited or limited to vehicles with special permits issued locally.
- The Scheme does not apply in Central London, but some facilities are provided (see sections 7 & 8).
- The Scheme does not apply on the road systems at some airports (e.g. Heathrow, Gatwick and Manchester). You should therefore contact the airport concerned in advance to check the car parking arrangements.

## 7 CENTRAL LONDON

- The Scheme does not apply in the following areas in Central London – the City of London, the City of Westminster, the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and the part of the London Borough of Camden south of, and including, the Euston Road. This is because these areas experience particularly acute parking problems. The four authorities do, however, operate their own independent concessionary schemes for disabled people who live or work in their areas.
- They also offer a limited range of concessions to other disabled people. These generally consist of parking spaces reserved for Blue Badge holders and some form of concessionary parking at meters in Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea after the initial period of parking has been paid for.

- If you are planning to visit Central London and intend to use your badge you may wish to check first with the authorities concerned. Details of the concessions provided in each authority can be obtained from:

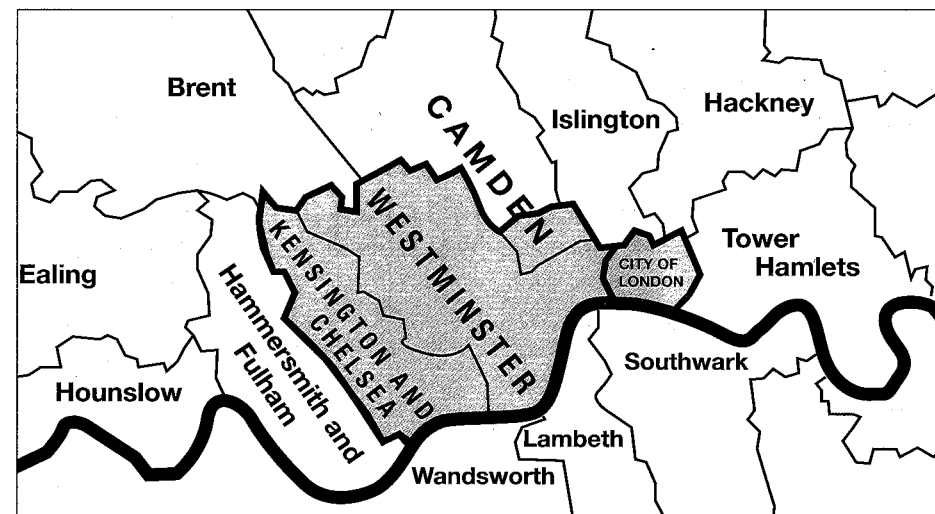
Corporation of London  
Parking Services  
Department of Technical Services  
Corporation of London  
2 White Lyon Court  
Barbican, London EC2Y 8PS  
Tel: 020-7332 3360 or 1548

Kensington & Chelsea  
Information Office  
Parking shop  
19-27 Young Street  
London W8 5EH  
Tel: 020-7361 4258

Camden  
Disabled Permits Section  
PO Box 20219  
London NW1 1WS  
Tel: 020-7681 4655

Westminster  
Disabled Parking Office  
PO Box 6100  
London SW1E 6XB  
Tel: 020-7641 1785

More information about parking in London for Blue Badge holders can be obtained from the Transport Committee for London on 020-7747 4700.



## 8 RED ROUTES

- Red routes are main roads in Greater London where stopping (for parking or loading) is not allowed except at designated times and in specially marked places. Some of these places are specifically reserved for Blue Badge holders, but you should always check the signs to see what concessions are available. A vehicle displaying a Blue Badge may stop, but only to pick up or set down the badge holder.
- The Traffic Director for London has general information on concessions for Blue Badge holders on roads subject to priority (Red) route controls. This can be obtained by telephoning 020-7222 4545.

## 9 WHERE TO PARK

Parking Benefits	Conditions
Badge holders may park free of charge and without time limit at parking meters on-street and "pay-and-display" on-street parking unless a local traffic order, specifying a time limit for holders of disabled parking Badges, is in force.	The Blue Badge must be displayed.
Badge holders may be exempt from limits on parking times imposed on other users. (Check local signs for information).	The Blue Badge must be displayed.
Badge holders may usually park on single or double yellow lines for up to three hours in England and Wales, or without any time limit in Scotland except where there is a ban on loading or unloading, and at a few locations where local schemes apply – e.g. the area of Central London coloured light blue in the map in section 7.	<p>The Blue Badge must be displayed, and in England and Wales the special blue parking disc must also be displayed showing the time of arrival.</p> <p>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 or part of a road on the same day.</p>

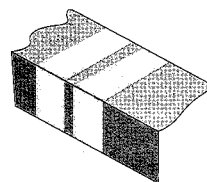
IF IN DOUBT, DISPLAY THE PARKING DISC (see section 12).

## 10 WHERE NOT TO PARK

The Blue Badge is not a licence to park anywhere. You must NOT park:

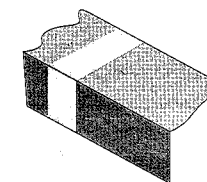
- during the time a ban on loading or unloading is in force (normally indicated by one or two yellow marks on the kerb at the times shown on post mounted plates).

For example:



No loading  
at any time

**Loading prohibited  
24 hours a day,  
7 days a week, for at least  
4 consecutive months.**



No loading  
Mon - Fri  
8.00 - 9.30 am  
4.30 - 6.30 pm  
←

**Loading prohibited for any  
lesser period. The arrow  
indicates the direction  
in which the prohibition starts.**

However, in pedestrian areas, waiting and loading restrictions may be in force even where there are no yellow lines shown on the road or kerb. Details of any restrictions in force will be shown on plates displayed at the kerb side of the road.

- where there are double white lines in the centre of the road even if one of the lines is broken
- in a bus or tram lane during its hours of operation
- in a cycle lane
- on any clearway, double or single red lines during their hours of operation
- on Zebra, Pelican or Toucan crossings

- on zig-zag markings before and after Zebra, Pelican or Toucan crossings
- in parking places reserved for specific users e.g. loading bays, taxis, cycles
- on a residents parking bay, unless there are signs showing that you may do so, or you have checked with the local authority's Highway Department that you may do so
- in suspended meter bays or when use of the meter is prohibited
- where temporary restrictions on parking are in force along a length of road e.g. as indicated by no-waiting cones
- on school "keep clear" markings during the hours shown on a yellow no-stopping plate.

You must also **NOT** park where it would be obstructive or cause a danger to others. The following are likely examples:

- at school entrances, bus stops, on a bend, or near the brow of a hill or hump bridge
- where it would make it difficult for others to see clearly e.g. close to a junction
- where it would make the road narrow e.g. by a traffic island or where roadwork is in progress
- where it would hold up traffic e.g. in narrow stretches of road or blocking vehicle entrances
- where emergency vehicles stop or go in and out e.g. hospital entrances
- where the kerb has been lowered or the road raised to form a pedestrian crossing
- on a pavement unless signs permit it.

## REMEMBER

- If you park where it would cause an obstruction or danger to other road users your vehicle could be removed by the police. You could also be prosecuted and your badge withdrawn.
- Vehicles cannot legally be wheelclamped on the public highway for parking offences provided a valid Blue Badge is correctly displayed on the vehicle. But you should be aware that if you park improperly on privately owned land you may risk having your vehicle wheelclamped.
- The vehicle must be moved if a police officer or a traffic warden in uniform requests it.

## 11 HOW TO USE THE BADGE

- You must display the badge on top of the dashboard or fascia panel of a vehicle with the front of the badge (i.e. the side showing the wheelchair-user symbol) facing forward so that the relevant details are legible from outside of the vehicle when using the parking benefits. If the vehicle does not have a dashboard or fascia panel you must exhibit the badge in a conspicuous position on the vehicle so that the relevant details are legible from outside the vehicle when using the parking benefits.
- The badge should only be displayed when using the parking benefits under the Scheme, except if the vehicle is being driven by someone other than the badge holder for the purpose of entering or leaving an area (which is accessible only to vehicles displaying a Blue Badge) in order to pick up or drop off the badge holder (see section 15).
- Similar badges given to organisations caring for disabled people must not be used by non-disabled members for their own benefit. These badges must not be on display except when the vehicle is being used for the benefit of disabled people.
- Badges last for three years only. When you need a new one apply to the issuing authority for reassessment some weeks before the badge expires.
- You must return the badge to the issuing authority if you no longer need it.

## 12 HOW TO USE THE SPECIAL PARKING DISC

In England and Wales you will need a parking disc (which you can get from the authority issuing the badge) when you park on yellow lines or in a reserved parking place for badge holders which has a time limit. The disc must be displayed every time you park and set to show the time of arrival. Disabled people living in Scotland who intend to visit England or Wales should be able to get this disc from their local Council.



### DISABLED PERSON'S PARKING DISC.

- For use by the registered holder only
- This disc can only be used with a valid Blue Badge
- Check traffic signs and loading restrictions
- Set the disc at time of arrival

### To obtain exemption from on-street waiting restrictions:

- YOU MUST
  - display the disc with your Blue Badge
  - remove your vehicle within the permitted exemption period
- DO NOT
  - set a false arrival time
  - reset the disc after parking

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## 13 YOUR DUTIES AS A BADGE HOLDER

The purpose of the Scheme is to allow you to visit shops and other places. You must ensure that you use your badge with care and attention to the rules.

- **It is your responsibility to ensure that the badge is used properly.** It is in your own interest that the badge should retain the respect of other motorists. Please play your part.
- **You must not allow other people to use the badge.** To reduce the risk of this happening accidentally, you should remove the badge whenever you are not using the parking concessions except in the circumstances listed at the end of section 15.
- **You must ensure that the details on the front of the badge remain legible.** If they become unreadable, the badge must be returned to the local authority for re-issue.

- You should not use the badge to allow non-disabled people to take advantage of the benefits while you sit in the car. Although it is not illegal for a badge holder, or a non-disabled person waiting for the badge holder to return, to remain in the vehicle while the Blue Badge is displayed, consideration should be given to using a car park wherever possible.

## 14 IF YOU ARE A DISABLED DRIVER

Remember that if you are a disabled driver and your disability is such that it is likely or may become likely to affect your ability to drive (even if your car is adapted) the law requires you to inform the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, Swansea SA99 1TU.

## 15 MISUSE OF A BADGE

Misuse of a Blue Badge is a serious offence.

- Your badge can be withdrawn if you misuse it or allow others to misuse it.
- It is a **criminal offence** for non-disabled people to use a badge. If they do so, they are liable to a fine of up to £1,000.
- It is a **criminal offence** to drive a vehicle displaying a Blue Badge unless the badge holder is in the vehicle, or the vehicle is being driven by someone other than the badge holder for the purpose of entering or leaving an area (which is accessible only to vehicles displaying a Blue Badge) in order to pick up or drop off the holder.

## 16 MISUSE OF A DESIGNATED BLUE BADGE BAY

Non-disabled people who park in a bay designated for Blue Badge holders are liable to a parking fine.

## 17 OTHER CONCESSIONS FOR BADGE HOLDERS

- In many areas local authorities provide reserved parking places for badge holders. You should use these spaces in preference to parking on yellow lines. Local authorities may impose a time limit on the use of such spaces. You must always display a valid badge when occupying one of these spaces, and if a time limit is in force a parking disc must also be displayed.
- Some local authorities also waive charges in their own off-street car parks. You are advised to check the notices in the car park to see if, and where, you can park free of charge.
- Badge holders are exempted from tolls at certain river crossings. Further details of these concessions may be obtained by writing to the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions, Disability Policy Branch, Mobility Unit, Zone 1/11, Great Minster House, 76 Marsham Street, London SW1P 4DR, or by calling 020-7944 6800.
- With the introduction of the new European-style blue badge, badge holders will be able to take advantage of the applicable disabled motorists parking privileges wherever they are in the European Union. Further details of the benefits available may be obtained by contacting the Department as shown below.

Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions  
Disability Policy Branch, Mobility Unit  
Zone 1/11, Great Minster House  
76 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DR.

or by calling 020-7944 6800.

## 18 NEW TRAFFIC SIGNS

Revised Traffic Signs Regulations are in the process of being introduced, which include new sign designs – this means any new or replacement signs erected after the revised Regulations come into effect will have to incorporate the blue badge symbol, but **existing orange badge signs will continue to be valid until 1 January 2010.**

**This leaflet can also be made available in Braille, large print and audio cassette formats. You can contact the Department at the address below for further details.**

Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions  
Disability Policy Branch, Mobility Unit  
Zone 1/11, Great Minster House  
76 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DR.

or by calling 020-7944 6800.

For enquiries in respect of Scotland and Wales, please contact:

National Assembly for Wales  
Transport Policy Division  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff CF10 3NQ.

or by calling 02920 826501

Scottish Executive Development Department  
Transport & Local Roads Division  
Area 2E  
Victoria Quay  
Leith  
Edinburgh EH6 6QQ.

or by calling 0131 244 0860/0869