



Changing the Blue Badge scheme

Tell us what you think



March 2010

Easy Read

This booklet asks what you think about planned changes to the Blue Badge scheme for disabled people.

If you have any questions, you can contact

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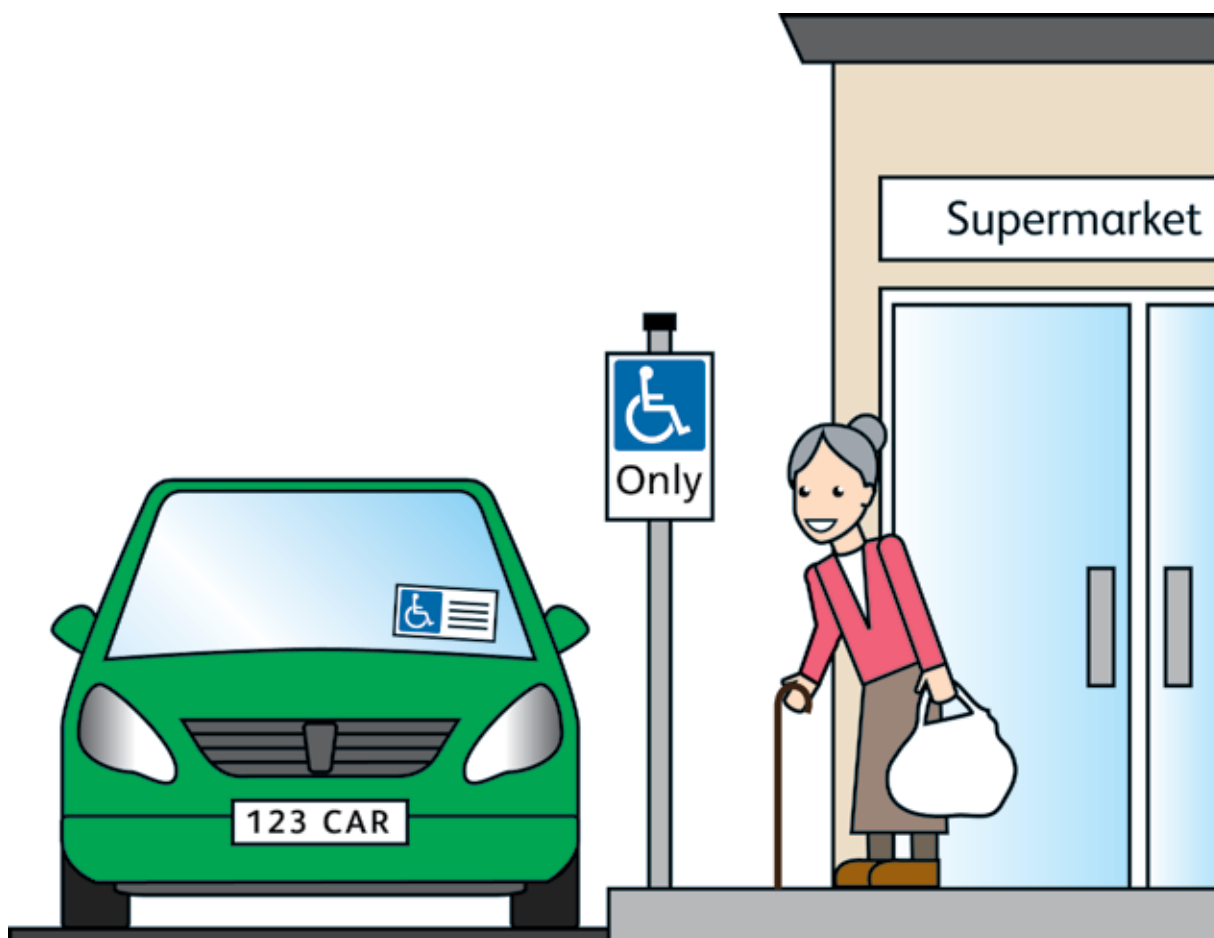
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About the Blue Badge scheme

In England, the Blue Badge scheme lets disabled people park their cars in places where other people are not allowed to park.

This helps disabled people get to places like their jobs, shops and other services.



There are 2½ million people with Blue Badges. Many of these people say they would not use their cars if they could not park close to where they need to be.

The Blue Badge scheme was set up in the 1970s.

The government has plans to make changes to the Blue Badge scheme because of the changes that have taken place over the last 40 years.

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The planned changes will make sure the scheme is run well and fairly.

In October 2008, the government wrote a report called Comprehensive Blue Badge (Disabled Parking) Reform Strategy (England).

This report said the government wanted to make these changes to the Blue Badge scheme.

- Make sure the people who most need a Blue Badge can get one.
- Make sure disabled people use the Blue Badge scheme properly. And stop other people using the scheme when they should not be using it.
- Make the scheme work better.



What the government wants to do

The government wants to do these things.

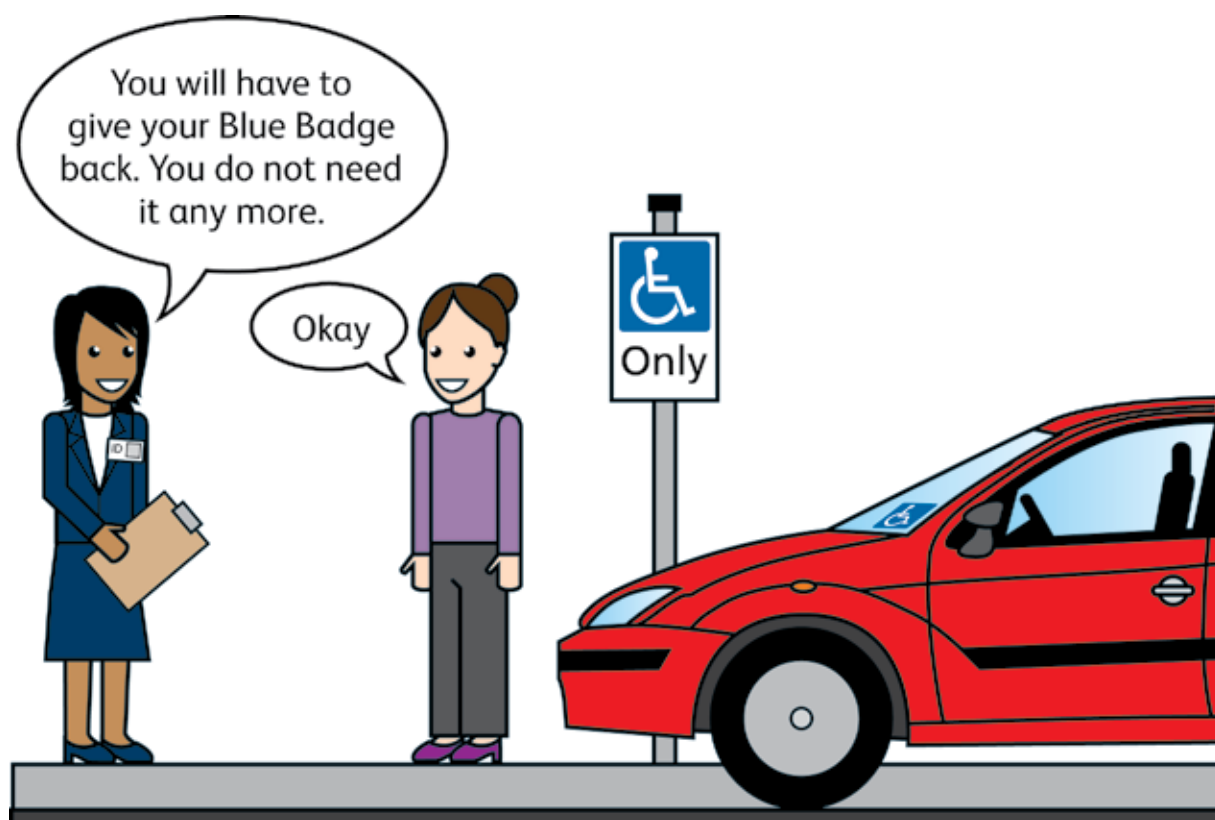
- Make the scheme cover more people, including these people.
 - People who cannot walk very much and whose condition will last for at least 1 year.
 - People who find it very hard to understand things and are not safe near roads.
 - More children, under the age of 3, with certain medical conditions.
 - People who have been badly injured and disabled while working for the armed forces, like the army, the navy or the air force.



- Make a new Blue Badge that is harder for people to copy or alter.

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- Run the scheme better and make it fairer when working out if people can get a Blue Badge.
- Get local councils to share their best ways of working more often.
- Work with local councils to set up a system of sharing details about who has a Blue Badge. This will make sure people use the scheme properly. And it will help to stop people using the scheme when they should not use it.
- Give local councils the power to stop people using the Blue Badge scheme when they should not use it.



What is this consultation about?

Consultation

A consultation is when we ask people what they think about things, like our plans.

This **consultation** covers England only. Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland have their own Blue Badge schemes and they will make their own changes.

In this **consultation** we want to know what you think about these 4 things.

- 1 Making the way that people have to follow the rules of the Blue Badge scheme better. This could mean changing the law.
- 2 Changing the law that covers the Blue Badge scheme to do with things like appeals, how local councils use independent medical tests, how councils share information, and other things.
- 3 Letting certain children under 3 years of age and people who were badly disabled while working for the armed forces get a Blue Badge.
- 4 Changing the way the government gives money to local councils to help them set up independent medical tests.

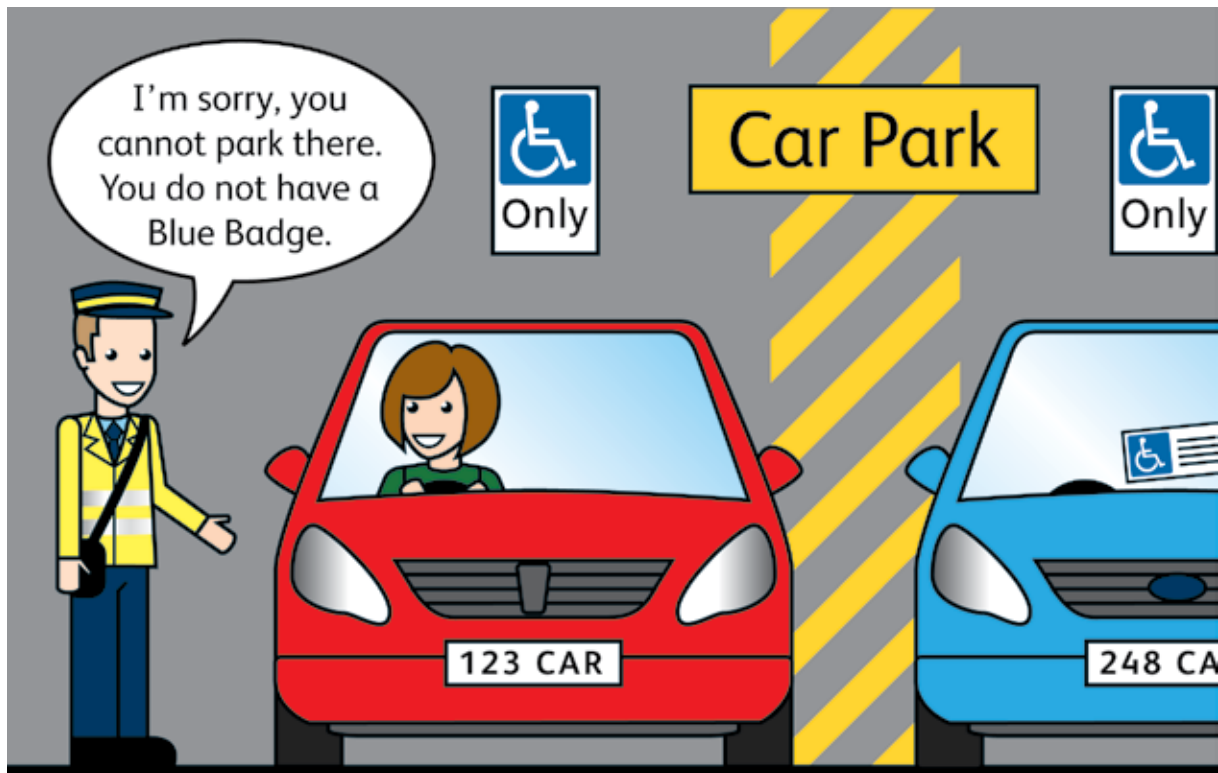
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The Department for Transport will have more **consultations** later this year and in 2011.

These **consultations** will be about these things.

- Making a new Blue Badge.
- Letting people who find it very hard to understand things, and who are not safe near roads, to get a Blue Badge.
- Letting people who cannot walk very much and whose condition will last for at least 1 year get a Blue Badge.

This **consultation** does not cover off-street car parks, like supermarkets. But we will work with other organisations to try to stop non-disabled people parking in disabled people's parking areas in car parks.

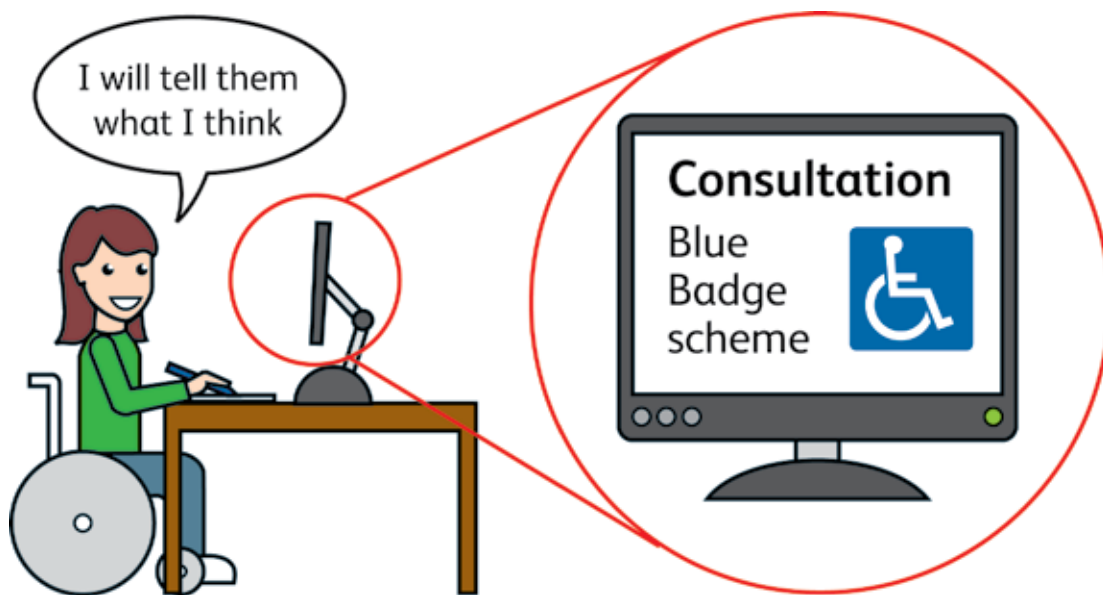


Telling us what you think

We would like anyone 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 people's groups.
- Parking enforcement officers and their groups or organisations.
- Local councils.
- People in the armed forces, like the army, the navy and the air force, and people who used to be in the armed forces and have been in wars.

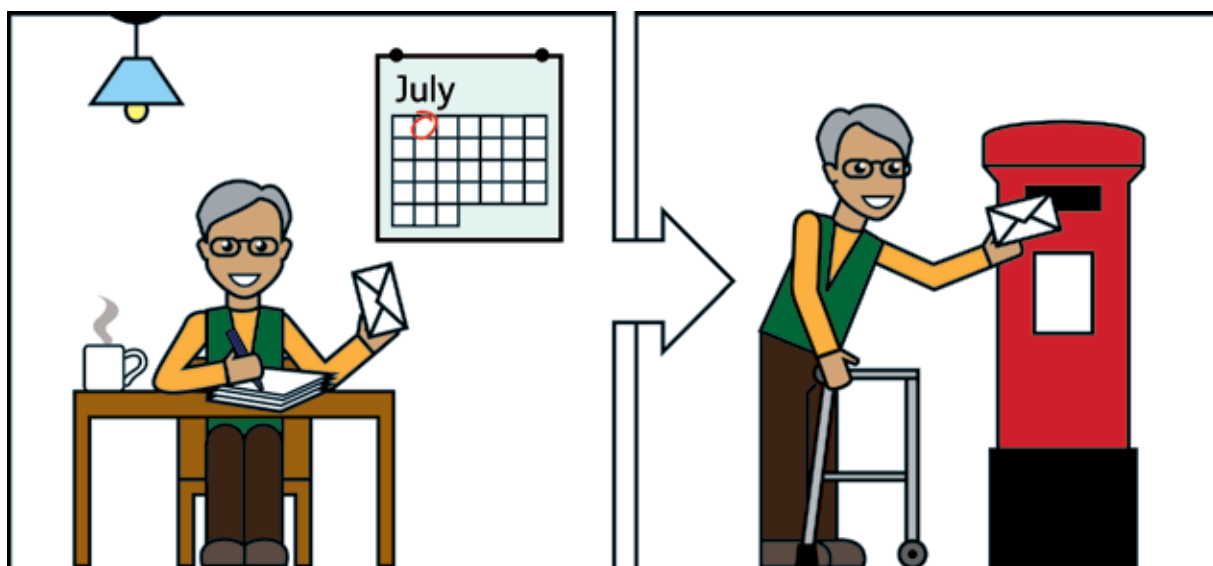


How to tell us what you think

Tell us what you think by sending a letter to this address.

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76 Marsham Street
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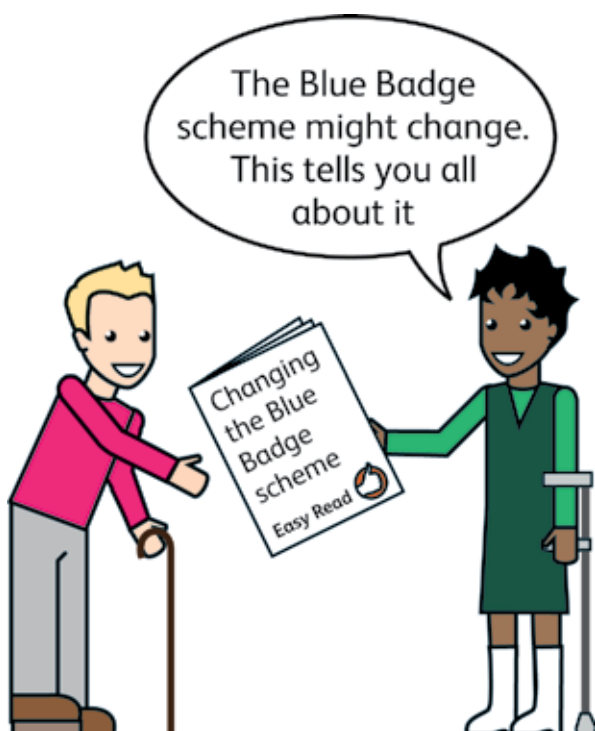
You need to tell us what you think by **2 July 2010**. This is the date the consultation ends.



Changing the Blue Badge scheme – tell us what you think

Please tell us if the views are your own or those of a group. If the views are those of a group, please tell us about the people in the group and how you brought together the views from the group.

If you know anyone who you think will want to be involved in this **consultation** please share this booklet with them. Or tell them to get in touch with us for a copy of the booklet. Our contact details are on page 8 and on the back cover of this booklet.



The Department for Transport will set up an event in June 2010 when people will be able to talk to people from the Department for Transport about the issues in the **consultation**.

If you would like to go to this event send an email to katherine.lancaster@dft.gsi.gov.uk giving your name and address.

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 will happen next

After this **consultation**, the Department for Transport will look at all the replies and write a report about the replies by September 2010.

This report will be put on the Department for Transport website at www.dft.gov.uk but you can get a paper copy if you want one.

If the law needs to be changed, this will be looked at as quickly as possible.

The questions in the consultation

There are 24 questions. You do not have to answer them all. If you need more room to write your answers, use a separate sheet of paper.

Question 1

What would be the good things and the bad things about local councils being able to cancel Blue Badges if

- they are reported lost or stolen?
- they are out of date?
- they are taken away from a person because they are not being used properly?

Question 2

What would be the good things and the bad things about local councils being able to take a Blue Badge away from a person on the street if

- the Blue Badge has been cancelled?
- the Blue Badge is being used by another person who is not disabled?

Question 3

When should local councils be able to take a Blue Badge away from someone on the street?

Question 4

If local councils are allowed to take a Blue Badge away from someone on the street, what rules should the government make about the way local councils do this?

Question 5

What is the best way to get Blue Badges back that people should not have any more?

Question 6

Do you think local councils should be able to take away cars

- that have cancelled or out of date Blue Badges?
- when a non-disabled person is using a Blue Badge that they are not allowed to use?

Question 7

If a person is found guilty 3 times by a court for not obeying the Blue Badge rules they cannot have a Blue Badge again.

What would be the good things and the bad things about getting rid of this rule?

Question 8

Should there be any other reasons for not giving a Blue Badge to someone. What would they be?

Question 9

Should there be any other reasons for taking a Blue Badge off someone. What would they be?

Question 10

What would be the best way for people to appeal against decisions that take back Blue Badges or do not issue a Blue Badge?

Question 11

Do you think the government should have more say on the way we work out if people should get a Blue Badge? How do you think this should be done?

Question 12

What would be the good things and the bad things about making local councils share their information with each other?

Question 13

How do you think we could let people who do not live in England have a Blue Badge? For example, people in the armed forces or their families who live in another country.

Question 14

What do you think about letting groups or organisations have Blue Badges? How could we stop people using the Blue Badges wrongly?

Question 15

Do you agree that we should give Blue Badges to certain disabled children under 3 years old? Why do you think this?

Question 16

If the law is changed, some replacement Blue Badges may only be issued for short periods of time. What do you think about this? What would you do?

Question 17

What do you think about giving Blue Badges to people who are badly injured and disabled while in the armed forces, and to people who used to be in the armed forces? What would be the good things and the bad things about doing this?

Question 18

There are 2 ways the government could give money to local councils to pay for medical checks to see if someone should get a Blue Badge.

One way is called the Revenue Support Grant. This is worked out by looking at how many people there are in an area and how they live. It also takes account of services in the area. The council then gets their share of the money.

The other way is called the Area Based Grant. This is worked out by doing a sum. The answer to the sum shows how much of the grant the council needs.

Which way do you think is best and why?

Question 19

If we decide to use the Area Based Grant do you think we should work out the sum by looking at the number of people over the age of 65 and the number of people who get the higher rate of the mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance?

Question 20

If you do not think that question 19 is a good idea why not?

How do you think we should work out how much money each council gets to pay for the medical checks?

Question 21

Do you think we should give more money to local councils who have lots of people who live far away from town centres? Why do you think this?

Question 22

If you think we should give more money to local councils who have lots of people who live far away from town centres, should we use the same sum the Department for Communities and Local Government uses for the Revenue Support Grant?

Question 23

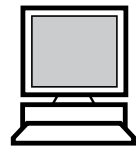
Do you think there should be minimum payments and maximum payments to local councils.

Question 24

If you do think there should be minimum payments and maximum payments to local councils, why do you think this? Do you have any information or details to explain your reasons?

How to contact us

Email katherine.lancaster@dft.gsi.gov.uk



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