



Department for Transport

Blue Badge Scheme Statistics: England 2016

About this release

'Blue Badges' are parking badges for disabled people. They are issued by local authorities to individuals and organisations concerned with the care of disabled people. Upon issue, a Blue Badge is valid for a period of three years.

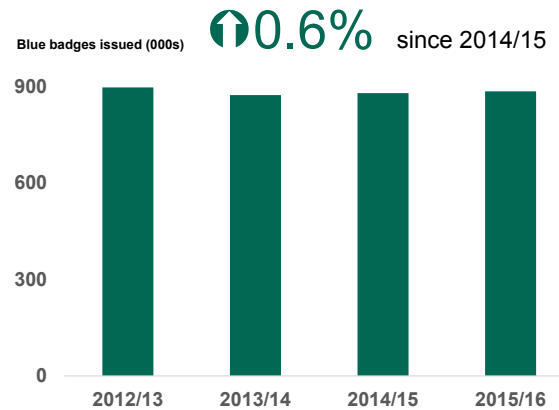
The statistics in this publication are derived from the Blue Badge Improvement Service (BBIS) online database. Statistics are based on the number of badges held as at 31 March and issued each year as well as badges reported as lost or stolen.

In this publication

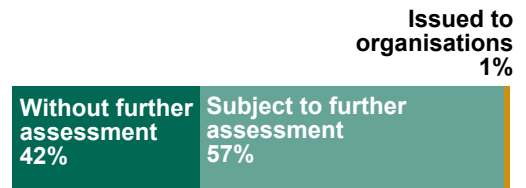
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The number of valid Blue Badges issued in England increased by 0.6% in the year to end March 2016.

There were 885,000 Blue Badges issued between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016, a 0.6% increase when compared with the previous year.



Out of the badges issued, 57% were subject to further assessment, 42% were issued without further assessment and 1% issued to organisations.



There were 2.38 million Blue Badges held in England in 2016, a 0.7% decrease since 2015. The number of badges held has declined every year since reforms of the Blue Badge application process in 2011/12.

2.38million

Blue Badges held

↓ 0.7% since 2015

In 2016, 4.3% of the population held a Blue Badge, a decrease from 4.4% in the previous year.

4.3%

of the population held a Blue Badge

4.4% in 2015

Summary

Table 1 summarises the latest Blue Badge figures. The number of Blue Badges issued in 2015/16 and the number of badges held as at 31 March 2016 in each region are shown.

Table 1: Summary of the Blue Badge figures (2015/16) compared with the previous year (2014/15)

	Badges issued in 2015/16			Badges held on 31 March 2016		
	Thousands/	% change since 2014/15		Thousands/	% change since 2014/15	
England	885	0.6%	↑	2,377	-0.7%	↓
North East	51	1.0%	↑	135	-0.4%	↓
North West	135	-2.1%	↓	368	-1.3%	↓
Yorkshire and the Humber	94	3.4%	↑	246	0.1%	↑
East Midlands	88	4.7%	↑	230	0.1%	↑
West Midlands	97	2.6%	↑	263	-0.8%	↓
East of England	98	-1.4%	↓	260	-0.1%	↓
London	90	2.5%	↑	239	-0.6%	↓
South East	130	-1.7%	↓	352	-1.5%	↓
South West	104	-0.5%	↓	284	-0.7%	↓

Blue Badges issued 2015/16

There were 885,000 Blue Badges issued in 2015/16, an increase of 0.6% on the previous year. However, the overall trend is flat with the number of Blue Badges issued at a lower level than the 2010/11 peak, which was the year before the Blue Badge application process was modified (see chart 1).

Chart 1: Blue Badges issued annually: England, since 2008/09 (DIS0111)

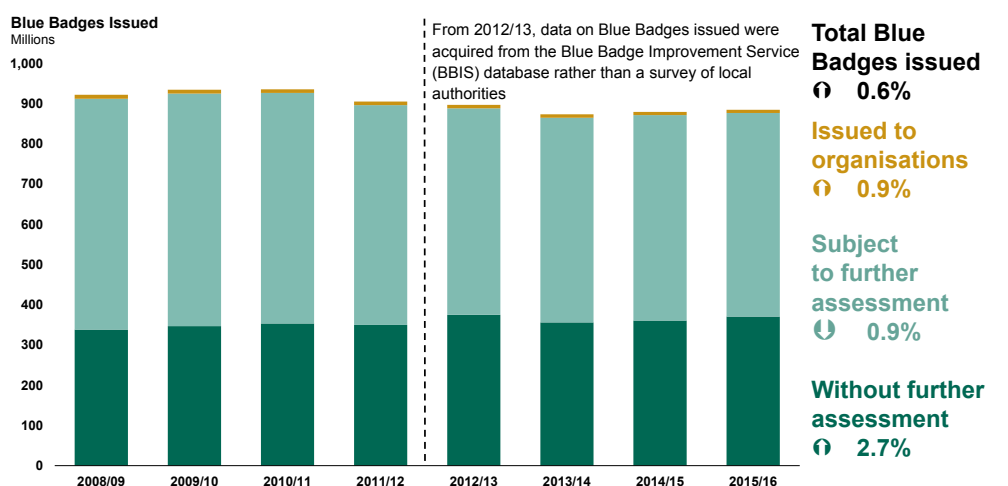


Chart 1 shows that out of the 885,000 Blue Badges issued in 2015/16, 371,000 were issued without further assessment (42%), 506,000 subject to further assessment (57%) and 7,900 to organisations (1%). The proportion of badges issued subject to further assessment has declined since a peak of 62% was reached in 2008/09.

Eligibility for a Blue Badge

There are two main categories for eligibility for a Blue Badge, those that are eligible “**without further assessment**” (previously known as the automatic criteria) and those that are eligible “**subject to further assessment**” (previously known as the discretionary criteria). Badges are also issued to organisations for use in vehicles when used to carry disabled people who would themselves be eligible for a badge. Upon issue, a Blue Badge is valid for a period of three years. For further details, please refer to the [notes and definitions](#).

Detailed statistics

on Blue Badges issued in England in 2015/16 by region, category and local authority can be found in tables [DIS0107](#), [DIS0108](#) and [DIS0111](#) respectively.

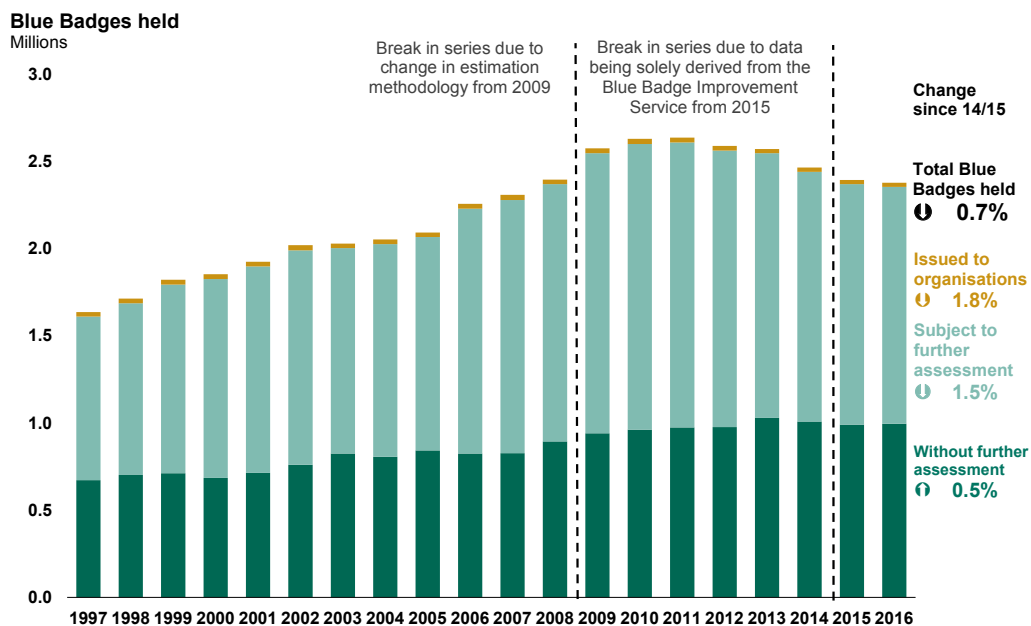
2011/12 Blue Badge application process change

meant that an individual applying because of a ‘permanent and substantial disability that causes inability to walk or considerable difficulty in walking’ (in the badges issued subject to further assessment category) required confirmation by an independent medical assessor and not the applicant’s GP.

Blue Badges held as at 31 March 2016

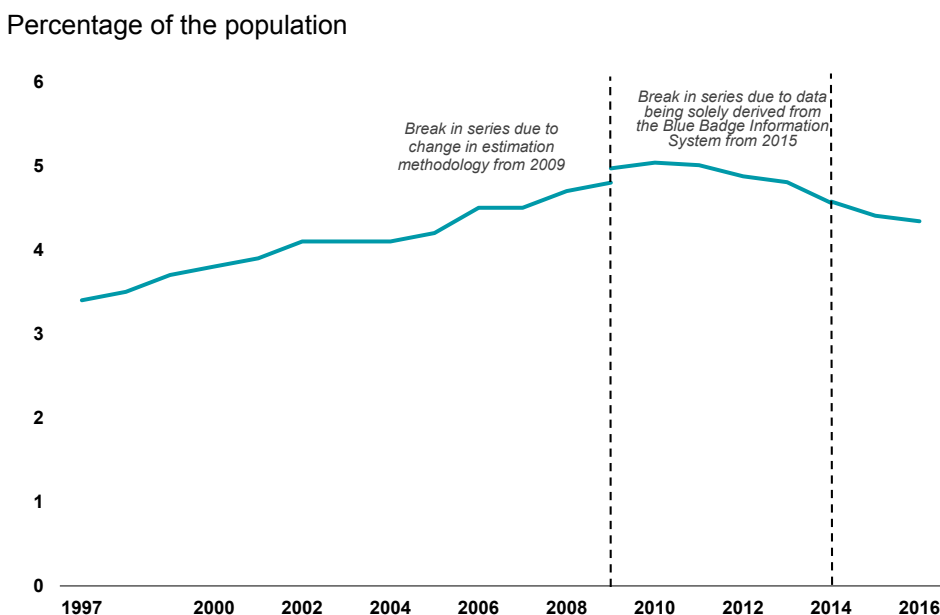
There were 2.38 million valid Blue Badges held as at 31 March 2016, a decrease of 0.7% (16,000 badges) when compared with the previous year. This decrease was mostly due to a decrease of 1.5% in badges held subject to further assessment (see chart 2). This decrease continues the declining trend in the number of badges held with an overall decrease of 9.8% since 2011 (see chart 2).

Chart 2: Blue Badges held: England, annually since 1997 (DIS0101)



On 31 March 2016, 4.3% of the population in England held a valid Blue Badge, a decrease from 4.4% compared to the previous year. In 2010, the proportion was 5.0% (see chart 3).

Chart 3: % of population that hold a Blue Badge: England, annually since 1997 (DIS0102)



Detailed statistics

on Blue Badges held by category in England can be found in table [DIS0101](#).

Without further assessment (previously known as the automatic criteria)

Persons meeting one of these criteria are automatically entitled to a Blue Badge:

- receiving the higher rate of the Disability Living Allowance/Personal Independence Payment;
- receiving a War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement;
- being registered blind; or
- being on the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces Compensation scheme.

For further details, please refer to the [notes and definitions](#).

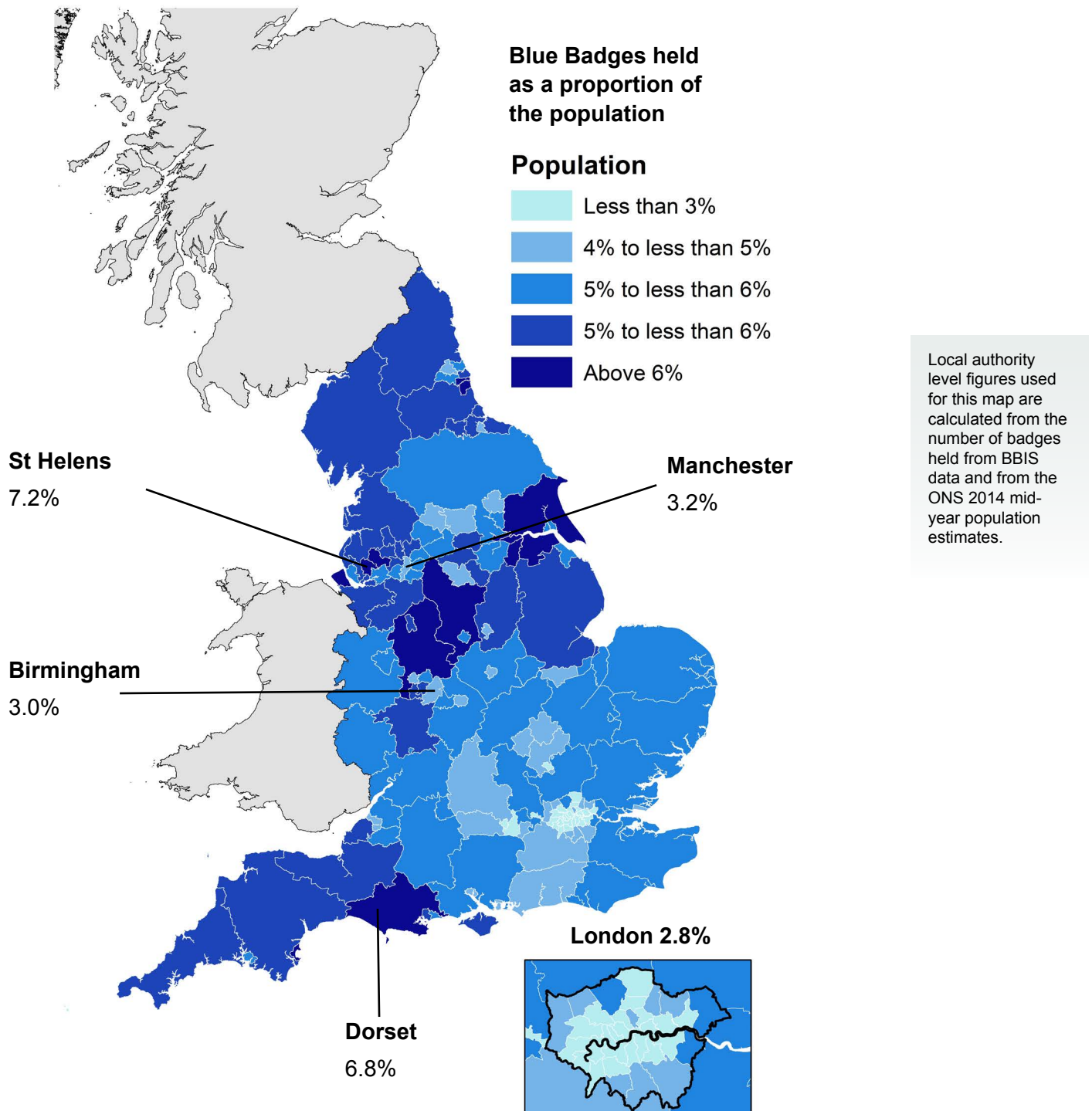
Detailed statistics

on Blue Badges held in England as proportion of the population and retired population can be found in table [DIS0102](#).

Blue Badges held by region as at 31 March 2016

Map 1 shows the number of Blue Badges held as a proportion of the population in each local authority in England. The regions with the most Blue Badge holders as a proportion of their population were the South West (5.2%), the North East (5.1%) and the North West (5.1%). The region with the lowest proportion of badge holders was London (2.8%), which also had the lowest regional proportion of retired people. Similarly, metropolitan areas such as Birmingham, Manchester and Newcastle also had comparatively low proportions of Blue Badge holders (see map 1).

Map 1: Blue Badges held as a proportion of the population: England, Local Authorities, 2016 ([DIS0108](#))

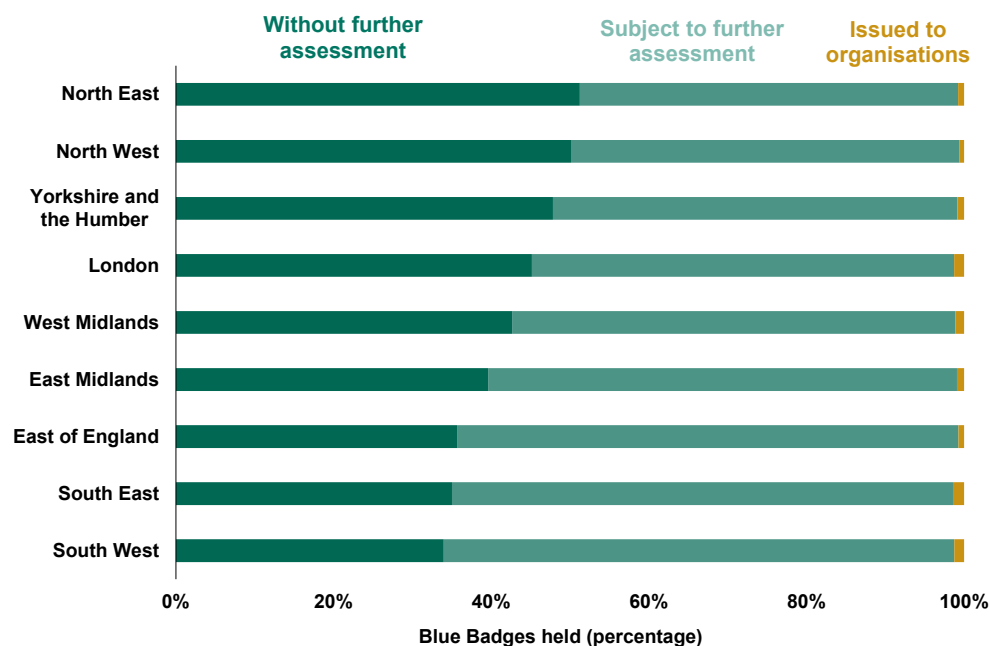


Blue Badges held by type and region on 31 March 2016

Of the badges held, 57% were issued subject to further assessment, 42% without further assessment and 1% to organisations (see chart 2).

The region with the highest proportions of badges held without further assessment was the North East (51%), and the lowest was the South West (34%), as shown in Chart 4.

Chart 4: Blue Badges held by category: English regions, March 2016
([DIS0104](#))



Entitlement and prosecutions

In 2016, 3.0% of the population in England was automatically entitled to a Blue Badge. Out of the 1.66 million people who were eligible for a Blue Badge without further assessment (previously known as automatically entitled), 60% held a Blue Badge.

There were a total of 896 individuals prosecuted between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016 in relation to Blue Badges amongst the 138 (out of 152) authorities who provided data. A large proportion of these prosecutions were carried out by Leeds (215) and Hammersmith and Fulham (146). The majority of prosecutions (98%) were targeted at a non-badge holder using another persons blue badge.

Detailed statistics

on Blue Badges held by category and region in England can be found in table [DIS0104](#).

Further Statistics

These statistics cover England only. Statistics on disabled parking badges held by individuals living in Scotland can be found here: http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/statistics/j357783-04.htm#tb1_21

Related information

Information on prosecutions for abuse of the Blue Badge scheme in each local authority in 2015/16 were collected in the annual Department for Transport Blue Badge prosecution survey. The data on prosecutions for the abuse of the Blue Badge scheme are in [DIS0301](#). The number of lost and stolen badges have been updated and are also available in table [DIS0301](#). The figures in this table fall outside the scope of National Statistics.

Background notes

Uses and users of these statistics

These statistics are collected to provide information on disabled parking badges in England. The statistics are used to monitor trends in the number of badges held and the number of badges issued in the year. Within the Department for Transport they are used as background information in the development of Blue Badge policy and to answer public enquiries. In recent years the data has been used in modelling the impact of reforms to the system, and they are likely to be used in monitoring the impacts of the changes. Outside DfT, users are likely to include local authorities and organisations representing disabled motorists.

Data source

In 2016, data about Blue Badges held and issued were collected directly from the Blue Badge Improvement Service (BBIS). Data covers 100% of local authorities and has done so since 2012/13. BBIS is a service that has been available to all local authorities in England since 1 January 2012. It provides a number of core services, including a central database of all Blue Badges on issue. For further information please see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/blue-badge-statistics-from-2012-onwards>.

Validation of figures

In previous years, data about Blue Badges were collected by surveying local authorities in England. This is the second year that BBIS was the sole source for data on badges held. Further data validation is carried out for example comparing related data items (badges issued in one year should be around a third of total badges held) and year-on-year figures for each area.

Background notes

Full guidance on the methods used to compile these statistics can be found in the 'notes and guidance' section here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disabled-parking-badges-statistics-guidance>.

National Statistics are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure they meet customer needs.

Details of ministers and officials who receive pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/disabled-parking-badges-statistics-pre-release-access-list>.

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The next Blue Badge Scheme Statistics are due to be published in Winter 2017.