

Consultation Document

Blue Badges consultation – give your views on proposal for change

Background

The Blue Badge scheme is a national parking concession scheme, enabling people with severe mobility problems to park close to where they need to go. A Blue Badge is issued for 3 years, to people who meet the eligibility criteria, and can be used across the UK.

This is a national scheme, with the government setting the operational arrangements, and Sutton Council responsible for administering the scheme to its residents.

Over the last year, the Government has introduced a number of changes to the national Blue Badge scheme including

- Online application process making it easier for people to access a Blue Badge
- A new mobility assessment requirement, making the application of eligibility criteria fairer and more consistent, and
- A new badge format to prevent and reduce fraudulent application, use and abuse of the system, so that the scarce resource is available to those who need it most.

Fraud prevention measures include three key elements

- Automated checks that can be made at the application stage to prevent fraudulent applications
- Use of sophisticated anti fraud technologies and more security in the supply, storage and distribution of the badge
- Quick and easy enforcement checks by officers anywhere in the country on badges issued by any local authority

The Blue Badge fee

The government also reviewed the fee that a Council can charge for a Blue Badge – it had been set 30 years ago and not changed since - to help Councils with new and rising costs of administering the scheme. In Sutton, the scheme costs £64,500 each year to run.

The government has raised the maximum fee that can be charged for a badge to £10. Over the three years that a badge is valid for, this is equivalent to a cost of 0.9p per day.

A survey by Transport for London has indicated that in London, over a three year period, a person with a Blue Badge on average saves about £300 on parking costs. A survey of 15 London Authorities showed that all but 2 charge a £10 fee.

Consultation Proposal

We propose, in light of government changes, that from 1st October 2012, a fee of £10 is introduced for a Blue Badge, payable when the badge is issued, and for renewals or if the badge is lost or damaged and requires replacement. This will be a one off charge for the period for which the badge is valid, usually three years.

We are now holding a public consultation so that Blue Badge holders, disability organisations and members of the public can have a say about the proposed fee increase.

This consultation will run from 9th May 2012 until 8th June 2012. The Council will then consider the findings of this consultation and make a decision on the way forward.

Further information about the reform of the Blue Badge scheme can be found on the [Department for Transport website](#) or on the Northgate website at www.northgate-ispublicservices.com.

**If you have a query about Blue Badges please contact Concessionary Fares Team,
Tel: 020 8770 5070; or by email: liberty@sutton.gov.uk**

Thank you for your interest, your views are important.

**Julia Penfound
Executive Head of Service Promoting Independence and Prevention Services**

**Blue Badge Consultation:
Have your say - please answer all questions, we want to know what you think
Thank you**

1. Do you currently have a Blue Badge?

Yes

No

I am a carer for someone who does

I am responding from an organisation on behalf of people who may be eligible for a badge

2. Enough is currently being done to prevent and detect the misuse of Blue Badges

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know

If you disagree, what do you think could be done to stop misuse?

3. There enough disabled parking bays in Sutton for you to use when you need to get to the Shops/other places you want to go?

Yes/No

Are there places you regularly have difficulty parking? Yes/No If so, say where

4. Do you think that sometimes people use disabled parking bays who should not do so?

Yes/No

5. The new measures will help to reduce fraud

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know

What else do you think could be done to stop misuse?

6. The Blue Badge parking concession is a valuable benefit and help to people with disabilities

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know

7. £10 is a reasonable fee for a Blue Badge that lasts for up to three years

Strongly agree

Agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Disagree

Strongly disagree

Don't know

8. We are proposing to introduce a charge for each £10 Blue Badge issued. How will this proposal affect you, or someone you care for, or Blue Badge users generally?

(Free text)

9. Do you have any other comments about these proposed changes and how they will affect you?

Thank you for your contribution

