



Headway North Cumbria

www.headwaynorthcumbria.org.uk

the brain injury association

HEADWAY NORTH CUMBRIA HOW TO APPLY FOR A BLUE BADGE

INTRODUCTION

1. If you are disabled, a Blue Badge permit allows you to park legally near to places you need to visit. The permit is for any eligible disabled person whether you are travelling as a driver, or as a passenger. It allows you to park for free in some pay and display car parks and on single and double yellow lines in most streets for up to three hours.
2. Although this is a national scheme that operates throughout the UK and is recognised in Europe, it is delivered locally by County Councils. Within Cumbria badges are only issued in accordance with the guidelines and regulations provided by the Department for Transport (DfT).

AIM OF THE INSTRUCTION

3. The aim of this instruction is to explain the process by which eligible Headway North Cumbria members can obtain a Blue Badge.

ELIGIBILITY FOR A BLUE BADGE

4. Blue Badges are issued to residents of Cumbria who meet one or more of a range of eligibility criteria.
5. **People who automatically get a Blue Badge.** You automatically qualify for a Blue Badge if you are over 2 years old and at least one of the following applies:
 - a. you receive the higher rate of the mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance.
 - b. you receive a Personal Independence Payment because you can't walk more than 50 metres (a score of 8 points or more under the 'moving around' activity of the mobility component).
 - c. you are registered blind (severely sight impaired).

- d. you receive a War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement.
- e. you have received a lump sum benefit within tariff levels 1-8 of the Armed Forces and Reserve Forces (Compensation) Scheme and have been certified as having a permanent and substantial disability which causes inability to walk or very considerable difficulty in walking.
- f. you receive the mobility component of PIP and have obtained 10 points specifically for descriptor E under the 'planning and following journeys' activity, on the grounds that you are unable to undertake any journey because it would cause you overwhelming psychological distress¹.

6. People who may get a Blue Badge. You may be eligible for a badge if one or more of the following applies:

- a. you cannot walk at all.
- b. you cannot walk without help from someone else or using mobility aids you find walking very difficult due to pain, breathlessness or the time it takes walking is dangerous to your health and safety.
- c. you have a terminal illness, which means you cannot walk or find walking very difficult and have a DS1500 form.
- d. you have a severe disability in both arms and drive regularly, but cannot operate pay-and-display parking machines.
- e. you have a child under the age of 3 with a medical condition that means the child always needs to be accompanied by bulky medical equipment.
- f. you have a child under the age of 3 with a medical condition that means the child must always be kept near a vehicle in case they need emergency medical treatment.
- g. you are constantly a significant risk to yourself or others near vehicles, in traffic or car parks.
- h. you struggle severely to plan or follow a journey.

¹ If you have any score other than 10 points under descriptor E, in the 'planning and following journeys' activity of PIP you may still be eligible for a Blue Badge, but you do not automatically qualify. This includes if you have a higher score of 12. You will have to provide evidence to demonstrate your eligibility which will be assessed as part of your application.

- i. you find it difficult or impossible to control your actions and lack awareness of the impact you could have on others.
- j. you regularly have intense and overwhelming responses to situations causing temporary loss of behavioural control.
- k. you frequently become extremely anxious or fearful of public/open spaces.

DECISIONS OVER ELIGIBILITY

7. Cumbria County Council² will decide if an applicant is eligible for a blue badge. They cannot start the assessment process until they have all the necessary evidence. It may take 12 weeks or longer to assess an application. If they decide that an applicant is not eligible and it is thought that they did not take account of all the facts, then they can be asked to consider the application again.

WHAT IS NEEDED TO APPLY FOR A BLUE BADGE

8. An applicant will need to provide:
 - a. Proof of identity. Examples are:
 - birth or adoption certificate
 - passport
 - driving licence
 - marriage or civil partnership certificate
 - divorce or dissolution certificate
 - b. Proof of address. Examples are:
 - a recent council tax bill
 - a recent letter from a government department such as Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
 - driving licence
 - a recent letter from a school (if you are under 16)
 - c. A recent head and shoulders digital photo.
 - d. National insurance number.

² Full details on the Cumbria County Council procedures for Blue Badges can be found online: <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/roads-transport/parking/bluebadges.asp>

e. Contact details (phone number, email and postal address)

9. An applicant will also need provide proof of benefits. The information to be provided will dependant on the type of benefit the applicant is in receipt of.

a. **Personal Independence Payment (PIP).** You'll need to know the scores from the mobility assessment and the award end date (if applicable). You'll also be asked to provide proof of the PIP award. This would be the 3 pages from the letter from DWP, which clearly shows:

- entitlement to PIP (front page)
- assessment scores (second to last page)
- mobility scores (last page)

b. **Disability Living Allowance (DLA).** You'll need to know which rate of the mobility component you receive and the award end date (if applicable). You'll also be asked to provide proof of the DLA award. This should be the most recent letter from DWP, which clearly shows:

- mobility rating
- certificate of entitlement to DLA
- the date of the letter

c. **Armed Forces Compensation Scheme.** You'll be asked to provide proof of the benefit. This should be the most recent letter from the Ministry of Defence, which clearly shows that you:

- were injured in service on or after 6 April 2005
- have been awarded a benefit by the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme, with a lump sum payment within Tariffs 1 to 8
- are certified as having a permanent, substantial disability which causes inability to walk or very considerable difficulty in walking

d. **War Pensioners' Mobility Scheme.** You'll be asked to provide proof of the benefit. This should be the most recent letter from the Ministry of Defence, which clearly shows that the applicant:

- was injured in service before 6 April 2005
- is in receipt of a War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement
- Proof of eligibility

10. If you are applying without one of the benefits, the application will need to be assessed by the issuing local council. To help assess the application, you'll be asked to provide extra information depending on the answers you give when you are checking eligibility.

- a. If you cannot walk, find walking difficult, or you have a non-visible (hidden) condition, you will be asked to provide information concerning:
- the nature of the condition.
 - relevant medication that is taken.
 - relevant treatments that you receive or are due to receive.
 - healthcare or associated professionals that have been involved with the treatment of your condition.
 - how your condition affects you.
- b. You will be asked if you want to upload supporting documents. This could be prescriptions, diagnosis letters or correspondence between professionals that treat your condition.
- c. If you cannot walk or find walking difficult, you will also be asked questions around how your condition affects your walking.
- d. If you have a non-visible (hidden) condition, you will also be asked questions around how journeys between your vehicle and destination are affected by your condition.

HOW TO APPLY FOR A BLUE BADGE

11. For Cumbria residents applications are made to Cumbria County Council³. This can be done by one of two routes:

a. **Apply online**⁴. Your application will be assessed and processed by the Blue Badge Team. To do this the following will be required for the application:

- the details of your current Blue Badge (if you have one).
- a digital photo.
- your National Insurance number.
- proof of identity (such as a valid passport or driving licence).
- proof of address (less than 12 months old).
- proof of benefits (if you get any).
- evidence of your condition (if applicable), for example hospital letters or care plans.
- card details to make payment (£10)

b. **Complete a Blue Badge Application Form**⁵. The application form can be found online at the Cumbria County Council website but can also be collected from any County Council Office or any Cumbria Library. Applicants should ensure all relevant sections are completed, including the declaration, and that the 'Supporting Document Checklist' (Section 7) is used to ensure that all of the required supporting documentation, including proof of address, identity and a recent photograph is provided. The application form can either be completed online and returned by email to blue.badge@cumbria.gov.uk, or printed and returned by post to:

Service Centre
Parkhouse Building
Kingmoor Business Park
Baron Way
Carlisle
CA6 4SJ

12. The application form has eight sections, only some of which will need to be completed dependant on the circumstances pertaining to the individual applicant.

³ Headway North Cumbria members that are not resident in Cumbria will need to apply through their own County Council. The procedures will, however, be broadly similar.

⁴ <https://cumbria-apply.onmats.com/w/webpage/406CCBE1>

⁵ <https://www.cumbria.gov.uk/eLibrary/Content/Internet/327/891/43138133037.pdf>

- a. **Section 1 – Applicant Details**
Must be completed by all applicants.
- b. **Section 2 – Eligible without further assessment**
To be completed by applicants who meet one of a range of criteria and automatically qualify for a Blue Badge.
- c. **Section 3 – Eligible subject to further assessment due to walking difficulty**
To be completed by applicants who do not automatically qualify and when the main reason they need a badge is because of walking difficulties.
- d. **Section 4 – Eligible subject to further assessment due to a non-visible condition**
To be completed by applicants who do not automatically qualify and when the main reason they need a badge is because of an invisible condition which causes them to severely struggle with journeys between a vehicle and their destination.
- e. **Section 5 – Applicants with severe disabilities in both arms**
To be completed by applicants who hold a valid driving license and have a severe disability in both arms.
- f. **Section 6 – Children Under the age of three, subject to further assessment**
To be completed where the child is under the age of three and their condition requires transporting bulky medical equipment or where they need to be kept near a motor vehicle on account of their condition.
- g. **Section 7 – Checklist**
All applicants should use the checklist to ensure they provide correct supporting information.
- h. **Section 8 – Declaration**
Must be completed by all applicants.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A BLUE BADGE HOLDER

13. Once you have been issued a Blue Badge you must use the Blue Badge properly. The badge and its concessions are for your use only. It must only be displayed if you are travelling in the vehicle as a driver or passenger, or if someone is collecting you or dropping you off and needs to park at the place where you are being collected or dropped.

14. It is a criminal offence for you or anyone else to misuse the badge. This includes people other than the badge holder taking advantage of the parking concessions provided under the scheme. Doing so could lead to a £1,000 fine and confiscation of the badge. The badge remains the property of the issuing local council. They can ask for the badge to be returned if it is being misused. Making sure that the scheme is not abused will benefit genuine badge holders. In particular:

- a. If you are using the parking concessions as a passenger, it is your responsibility to make sure that the driver is aware of all the rules about the use of the Blue Badge.
- b. You must never use a copied badge to park or try to change the details on a badge
- c. Don't allow other people to use the badge to do something on your behalf, such as shopping or collecting something for you.
- d. You must never give the badge to friends or family to allow them to park for free, even if they are visiting you.
- e. You should not use the badge to allow non-disabled people to take advantage of the benefits while you sit in the car.

HOW TO DISPLAY THE BADGE

15. The badge must be displayed on the dashboard or facia panel, where it can be clearly read through the front windscreen. If there is no dashboard or facia panel in the vehicle, it the badge must be displayed in a place where it can be clearly read from outside the vehicle. The front of the badge should face upwards, showing the hologram. The side showing the photograph should not be visible through the windscreen.

16. The details on the front of the badge remain legible. If they become unreadable through fading or wear and tear, the badge must be returned to the local council so they can issue a new one. Displaying a badge that is illegible may result in a parking fine.

17. Blind people need to ensure that people displaying the badge or clock on their behalf understand how to display them correctly. Incorrect display of the badge may result in a parking fine or a penalty charge notice.

WHEN YOU NEED TO USE A PARKING CLOCK

18. When parking on yellow lines or in other places where there is a time restriction, a blue parking clock needs to be displayed showing the time of arrival. A clock should be sent to together with the Blue Badge. If not, a clock can be obtained from the same council that issued the badge.

19. If you need to use a parking clock, it must be displayed on the vehicle's dashboard or facia panel, so that the time can be seen clearly through the front windscreen. The clock should be set to show the quarter hour period during which you arrived. If there is no dashboard or facia panel in the vehicle, you must still display the clock in a place where it can be clearly read from outside the vehicle.