



Dear Family Carer

We told you about the consultation on Personal Independence Payment and eligibility for a Blue Badge in the Family Carer News Digest and in a previous email, which we hope you received.

The consultation will close on **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October**, which is less than a week away, so now is the time to have your opinion heard!

We will be responding to the consultation on how the introduction of the new Personal Independence Payment benefit will affect eligibility for a Blue Badge, and we would like to include as many Family Carer views as possible. You can send your views directly to the Department for Transport (DfT) or to us to include in our response, or both. If you would like us to include your views in our response, **please send your views to us by Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> September**. The details of where to send them are at the end of this document.

It is important for the DfT to hear how changes to eligibility for the Blue Badge could affect you and your relative, it would be helpful for you to explain what impact the changes could have on a day to day basis as it will be very beneficial in helping the Government to really understand how family carers and people who have a learning disability live their lives.

You will find the full consultation document attached to this email, or you can read it online here: <http://www.dft.gov.uk/consultations/dft-2012-30/>

#### **Background:**

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is the new disability benefit which will replace Disability Living Allowance (DLA).

The Government wants to reduce the number of people claiming PIP by around 20% of the number of people who currently claim DLA. This will result in around 500,000 people not being entitled to PIP, who were claiming DLA.

We have previously sent information about the change to PIP and consultations, and we would like to thank those of you who sent us your responses which we included in our response to the Department for Work and Pensions. If you would like to know more about PIP, you can read more here: <http://dwp.gov.uk/policy/disability/personal-independence-payment/> or you can ask us for more information and a copy of our response to the consultation.

PIP will have an impact on disability support due to its 'passporting arrangements', such as the Blue Badge and other 'passported' benefits. It is important to let the Government know what you think about how they suggest these 'passporting arrangements' might work when PIP is introduced, as it is likely to affect you and your relative.

#### A brief summary

PIP will have two components, similar to DLA; 'Daily Living' and 'Mobility'. Each component will have two levels, 'Standard' and 'Enhanced'. The way the levels will be assessed is based on a number of activities and how well a person can do the activities.

The Mobility component of PIP is made up of two activities: 'Planning and following a journey' and 'Moving around'. The 'Moving around' activity focuses on a person's physical ability to move around. 'Planning and following a journey' considers whether someone needs



supervision, prompting and assistance to do the activity, taking into account people who have a learning disability and/or mental health difficulties.

### **The consultation on PIP and eligibility for a Blue Badge gives three options:**

#### **Option 1:**

##### No link between eligibility for a Blue Badge and receipt of a PIP award.

Currently, people who are awarded the higher level of the mobility component for DLA are automatically entitled to a Blue Badge. If a person is awarded the mobility component of PIP, they would not automatically be entitled to a Blue Badge, and would have to apply separately to their Local Authority for a Blue Badge. The Local Authority would have to process the applications and do an independent mobility assessment if they were unsure whether somebody was eligible for the Blue Badge.

Eligibility for the Blue Badge would be based on a 'permanent and substantial disability which causes an inability to walk or considerable difficulty walking'. Therefore many people who have a learning disability but no substantial physical disability would not be eligible for a Blue Badge.

This option would mean that someone would have to have two separate assessments for PIP and the Blue Badge.

Badges could only be issued for a 3 year period.

This option would save the Government between £5 and £25 million although there may be a £1-2 million additional cost for Local Authorities.

#### **Option 2**

##### Establishing a legislative link between Blue Badge eligibility and the enhanced rate mobility component of PIP

Anyone who is awarded the enhanced level of the mobility component of PIP would be automatically eligible for a Blue Badge.

The mobility component of PIP, through its 'Planning and following a journey' activity, includes people who have a learning disability or mental health difficulty but do not have substantial physical disability. Therefore, more people who have a learning disability would be automatically eligible for the Blue Badge if they received the enhanced rate of the mobility component.

People would be assessed for PIP and would not need to have another assessment for the Blue Badge.

The Department for Transport (DfT) notes that this option would increase the number of Blue Badge holders, however it would 'dilute' the benefits of the scheme, as there are restrictions on the number of parking spaces for Blue Badge holders. It could become more difficult to find a disabled parking space.

The DfT also considers that the Blue Badge provides further concessions, such as discounts on the London congestion charge, tolls on roads and crossings, and off-street car parks. There would therefore be an impact on the organisations that offer these discounts. This



could mean that they change their rules or amount of discount they offer to people who hold a Blue Badge.

This option would cost the Government an extra £15-25 million.

### **Option 3**

#### Establishing a legislative link between Blue Badge eligibility and an award of the 'standard' level of the 'Moving around' activity of PIP

This is currently the Department for Transport's (DfT) preferred option, because it says it is the most similar to the current system.

This option focuses more on people who have a physical disability, by only considering the 'Moving around' activity in the 'Mobility' section of PIP.

This would mean people who have a learning disability but not a substantial physical disability, would be unlikely to be eligible for a Blue Badge.

People who are not automatically entitled to a Blue Badge through their PIP award could apply for the Blue Badge directly to the Local Authority, however, their assessment would also be focused on a physical ability rather than a learning disability.

This option is estimated to cost the same as the existing system.

### **The Consultation Questions**

This is your opportunity to tell the Department for Transport what you think of the three options, which you think would work best, or if you have suggestions for a completely different way to manage the impact of PIP on Blue Badge eligibility.

The questions are for guidance. You do not need to answer all the questions, and you do not have to answer the questions directly; you can write your views in the way you wish. You may also telephone us to tell us what you think. Contact details are at the end of this document.

### **Questions:**

#### 1. What do you think should be the eligibility criteria for a Blue Badge?

a) Do you think the Blue Badge scheme should be available for people with a mental health condition, intellectual or cognitive impairment but who are able to walk? Please explain your reason.

b) Do you think the Blue Badge scheme should be targeted at people who are unable to walk or have very considerable difficulty walking? Please explain your reason.

c) Do you think that there should be both automatic eligibility criteria and criteria that require further assessment and consideration? Or do you think that all applicants should be assessed on the same basis?

2. What are your views on Option 1 – no legislative link between Blue Badge eligibility and PIP?

- a) Do you think that everyone between the ages of 16 and 64 should apply directly for a badge to a local authority under the 'with further assessment' criteria? Please explain your reason.
- b) If this option is taken forward, who do you think will be affected in that they will no longer be automatically eligible for a badge? Do you think that they would be eligible under the 'with further assessment' criteria?
- c) How many people do you think will be affected by this option in terms of their eligibility?
- d) Do you think this option should be extended to people under 16 and over 65 years of age so that they too would apply under the 'with further assessment' criteria? Please explain your reason.

3. What are your views on Option 2 – establishing a legislative link between Blue Badge eligibility and the enhanced mobility component of PIP?

- a) Do you think that everyone who receives the enhanced mobility component of PIP should be automatically eligible for a Blue Badge? Please explain your reason.
- b) If this option is taken forward, who do you think will be affected in that they will become automatically eligible for a badge?
- c) How many people do you think will be affected by this option in terms of their eligibility?
- d) How do you think this option will affect existing badge holders, local authorities and the future sustainability of the Blue Badge scheme?
- e) How do you think this option would affect access to other linked benefits, eg. preferential parking provision in off-street car parks, concessionary travel scheme and the London congestion charge?

4. What are your views on Option 3 – establishing a legislative link between Blue Badge eligibility and a score of 8 or more under the 'Moving Around' activity within PIP?

- a) Do you think that everyone who scores 8 or more under Activity 11 – Moving Around – within PIP should be automatically eligible for a Blue Badge? Please explain your reason.
- b) If this option is taken forward, who do you think will be affected in that they will no longer be automatically eligible for a badge? Do you think that they would be eligible under the 'with further assessment' criteria?
- c) How many people do you think will be affected by this option?



5. Are there any other practical and sustainable solutions that should be considered?

a) What would be the impacts and effects of these options on eligibility, impacts on existing badge holders, local authority costs and the operation of the Blue Badge scheme?

6.

a) What is your view of the potential costs and benefits of the options that are summarised in Annex A?

b) What is your view of the assumptions used to estimate these costs and benefits?

c) Do you have any relevant data or information to send to the DfT to help with the analysis of options?

**Where to send your response to the consultation:**

Please note the Department for Transport's deadline for responses is **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October.** Please send any responses to Hft by **Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> September.**

You can send your response to us at Hft by email to: [rhianon.gale@hft.org.uk](mailto:rhianon.gale@hft.org.uk), by telephoning Rhianon on 0117 906 1751 or by post to:

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Or directly to the Department for Transport by email to: [bbes@dft.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:bbes@dft.gsi.gov.uk) or by post to:

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