

The National Disabled Persons’s Blue Badge scheme

Enforcement of Misuse and Abuse policy

Nottingham City Council

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Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to safeguard the integrity of the Blue Badge scheme, ensuring it remains accessible to those who genuinely need it. Nottingham City Council is committed to supporting disabled residents while deterring misuse and fraud.

Our guiding principles are fairness, proportionality, transparency, and full compliance with all relevant legislation. These principles underpin every aspect of administration and enforcement.

Key objectives of this policy include:

1. Maintaining public confidence in the scheme.
2. Protecting accessibility for disabled people.
3. Ensuring effective enforcement to prevent misuse and fraud.

1.0 **The Blue Badge scheme**

The Blue Badge (Disabled Persons' Parking) Scheme was introduced in 1971 under [Section 21](#) of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 ('the 1970 Act').

The aim of the scheme is to help people with severe mobility problems caused by visible and non-visible ('hidden') disabilities to access goods and services, by allowing them to park close to their destination. The scheme is open to eligible people irrespective of whether they are travelling as a driver or as a passenger.

The scheme provides a national range of on-street parking concessions to Blue Badge holders. It allows them to park without charge or time limit in otherwise restricted on-street parking environments and allows them to park on yellow lines for up to three hours, unless a loading ban is in place. A list of concessions given to Blue Badge holders in England is summarised at [Appendix A](#).

1.1 **Role of local authorities**

Local authorities are responsible for the day-to-day administration and enforcement of the Blue Badge scheme. This includes determining and implementing administrative, assessment, and enforcement procedures in line with governing legislation. Whatever the local arrangements, effective communication between badge issuing teams and on-street enforcement teams is essential to ensure consistency and compliance.

Each local authority must ensure that badges are issued only to residents who meet one or more of the eligibility criteria set out in legislation. Under no circumstances should a badge be issued to anyone who does not meet these criteria.

All staff who regularly interact with applicants and badge holders should complete the authority's Disability and Equality Awareness training. This training helps staff understand the importance of the scheme for those who rely on it to access essential goods and services.

Demand for Blue Badges in Nottingham has grown significantly - tripling over the past 20 years - and projections suggest an additional 650,000 badge holders nationally within the next decade. Nottingham City Council currently manages over 9,000 active badges across the city.

The scheme was designed to improve access for disabled people, but the high monetary value of a Blue Badge in certain areas has created incentives for misuse and fraud.

Such abuse:

- a) Undermines the benefits of the scheme.
- b) Disrupts local traffic management.
- c) Creates resentment among legitimate badge holders and the wider public.

Preventing Misuse

Misuse can occur at any stage - from initial applications and replacement requests to on-street use. For this reason, Nottingham City Council's Parking Regulation and Compliance team, working with Community Protection and Nottinghamshire Police, must remain vigilant and take proactive steps to prevent abuse before it occurs.

Robust administration and enforcement are essential to tackling systematic misuse. Nottingham City Council has a statutory duty under the [Traffic Management Act 2004](#) to maintain the expeditious movement of traffic and enforcing Blue Badge rules is a key part of this responsibility.

Both issuing officers and Civil Enforcement Officers play a critical role in:

- a) Ensuring compliance.
- b) Protecting accessible parking spaces for those who genuinely need them.
- c) Maintaining public confidence in the scheme.

1.2 Issuing a Blue Badge

The Blue Badge scheme is a nationally governed system designed to support people with severe mobility difficulties, including hidden disabilities, by allowing them easier access to parking near their destination. Local authorities administer the scheme in line with Department for Transport (DfT) guidance.

Eligibility Overview

Applicants may qualify for a Blue Badge if they:

- Meet automatic eligibility criteria, such as receiving qualifying mobility-related benefits or being registered severely sight-impaired. [surewise.com]
- Demonstrate significant and long-term difficulty walking, including non-visible conditions.

Badges may also be issued to:

- People with severe upper-limb disabilities affecting their ability to use parking meters.
- Young children (aged 0–3) with medical conditions requiring proximity to a vehicle.

Application Process

Applicants must:

- Apply via [GOV.UK](#) or directly to the local authority.
- Provide evidence relating to identity, residence, and eligibility.
- Undergo further assessment where required, which may include reviewing medical information or attending a mobility assessment.

Local authorities are responsible for ensuring badges are issued only to eligible residents and must refuse applications where criteria are not met.

When a Blue Badge is issued, information is sent called The Blue Badge scheme: rights and responsibilities. This information can also be found online: www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-blue-badge-scheme-rights-and-responsibilities-in-england

2.0 **Types of Abuse or Misuse**

Blue Badges can be misused in various ways, and Nottingham City Council must remain vigilant throughout both the issuing and enforcement processes. The examples below are not exhaustive but illustrate common forms of abuse, ranging from minor breaches to serious fraud.

By the Badge Holder

- Parking in prohibited locations or exceeding permitted time limits (e.g., setting the arrival time on the parking clock later than the actual arrival time).
- Using a badge that is expired or no longer valid.
- Using a badge that has been reported as lost or stolen.
- Allowing a friend or relative to use the badge.
- Using a copied or counterfeit badge.
- Altering badge details, such as the expiry date.
- Submitting a fraudulent application (e.g., providing false information) or using a badge obtained through fraudulent means.

By a Third Party

- Using someone else's badge without the badge holder being present during the journey.
- Using a badge belonging to a deceased person.
- Copying, altering, or producing fake badges.
- Displaying a counterfeit badge.

2.1 **Fraudulent Applications and Badge Recovery**

Where an applicant submits a fraudulent application by providing false information, Nottingham City Council may pursue prosecution under [Section 2](#) of the Fraud Act 2006. This offence - fraud by false representation - is an either-way offence and carries a maximum penalty of 10 years' imprisonment on indictment or, on summary conviction, up to 12 months' imprisonment and/or a fine (currently unlimited).

If a badge has already been issued as a result of fraud, the Council has the authority to require its return under [Regulation 9\(2\)\(b\)](#) of the Disabled Persons (Badges for Motor Vehicles) (England) Regulations 2000 which allows the issuing authority to revoke a badge obtained by false representation

2.2 Blue Badge design

The design and issuance of the current UK Blue Badge are governed by a framework of legislation and administrative regulations. The design is underpinned by three key principles, security and fraud prevention, standardisation to support enforcement and accessibility for users and officials

The legislative basis for the current badge format is set out in:

- The Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970, which established the Blue Badge scheme.
- The Disabled Persons (Badges for Motor Vehicles) (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended), which define the legal requirements governing badge design, validity, use, and the administrative responsibilities of local authorities.

Two types of Blue Badge are recognised across the UK:

1. Individual (personal) badge
2. Organisational badge

The physical badge incorporates a range of security features designed to prevent unauthorised replication, alteration, or misuse. Its standardised design ensures that enforcement officers can quickly and easily verify its authenticity.

Badges must be clearly displayed on a vehicle's dashboard or fascia so that they are visible from outside the vehicle. This supports effective enforcement and compliance with scheme requirements.

To ensure consistency nationwide, the badge design is uniform across all issuing local authorities within the UK.

Badges and Permits issued by other Countries

The ECMT Resolution 97/4 has not been implemented into UK legislation, and there are currently no plans to do so; therefore, only badges issued by EU countries are accepted. Most authorities will grant permission if contacted before the visit. In Nottingham City, we allow the use of non-EU permits when certain information is provided.

Badges issued by the following countries are generally accepted without permissions:

Austria	France (FR)	Malta (MT)
Belgium (BE)	Germany (DE)	Netherlands (NL)
Bulgaria (BG)	Greece (EL)	Poland (PL)
Croatia (HR)	Hungary (HU)	Portugal (PT)
Cyprus (CY)	Ireland (IE) Italy (IT)	Romania (RO)
Czech Republic (CZ)	Latvia (LV)	Slovakia (SK)
Denmark (DK)	Lithuania (LT)	Slovenia (SI)
Estonia (EE)	Luxembourg (LU)	Spain (ES)
Finland (FI)		Sweden (SE)

2.3 Enforcement actions for misuse of Blue Badges

If a motorist uses an expired badge, an illegible badge, a badge reported lost or stolen for which a replacement has been issued, or a badge they are no longer entitled to use, Nottingham City Council may take the following actions:

- Prosecution under [Section 117](#) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 wrongful use of a disabled person's badge is a criminal offence. On conviction, the individual may face a fine of up to £1,000.
- Penalty Charge Notice (PCN); in areas where Nottingham City Council operates civil parking enforcement, a PCN may be issued for the parking contravention.
- Seizure of the Badge under [Section 21\(4D\)](#) of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970, enforcement officers have the power to inspect and retain a badge if they have reasonable grounds to believe it is being misused, is fake, or should have been returned.
- Withdrawal of the Badge under [Regulation 9](#) of the Disabled Persons (Badges for Motor Vehicles) (England) Regulations 2000, a badge can be withdrawn following a relevant conviction or if it was obtained by false representation.

For a relevant conviction, it will be proven that the non-badge holder used the badge with the badge holder's knowledge.

If there is no significant proof which may make it difficult to withdraw a badge that is being systematically abused by a friend or family member, Nottingham City Council may refuse to reissue a badge if there are reasonable grounds to believe the applicant would permit another person to use it, in accordance with Regulation 8(2)(d)(ii).

- Prosecution under Section 2 of the Fraud Act 2006 in serious cases involving fraud by false representation, offenders may face up to 12 months' imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine on summary conviction, or up to 10 years' imprisonment on indictment.

Third-Party Use of a Badge

If a badge holder allows another person to use their Blue Badge, Nottingham City Council may withdraw the badge under Regulation 9(2)(a) of the Disabled Persons (Badges for Motor Vehicles) (England) Regulations 2000, but only after a relevant conviction has been obtained.

Actions against third-party misuse of a Blue Badge

If an individual uses someone else's Blue Badge for their own benefit, Nottingham City Council may take the following enforcement actions:

- Prosecution under Section 117 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984
Wrongful use of a disabled person's badge is a criminal offence and may result in a fine of up to £1,000 upon conviction.
- Consideration of Prosecution under the Fraud Act 2006
Persistent or serious offenders may be prosecuted for fraud by false representation, which carries more severe penalties, including imprisonment.
- Issuing a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN)
A PCN may be issued for any parking contravention committed during the misuse.
- Seizure of the Badge under Section 21(4D) of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970.
Enforcement officers have the authority to inspect and retain a badge if they have reasonable grounds to believe it is being misused or should have been returned.

Actions involving copying, altering, or forging a Blue Badge

Where an offence involves copying, altering, or creating a fake or forged Blue Badge, the following legislation may apply depending on the circumstances:

- Section 115 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984
Offenders may be prosecuted and face a fine of up to £5,000 on summary conviction, and up to two years' imprisonment on indictment.
- Fraud Act 2006 and Forgery and Counterfeiting Act 1981
These Acts carry more severe penalties and may be used for serious cases involving fraud or forgery.
- Section 117 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984
Using a forged badge is an offence that can result in a fine of up to £1,000 upon conviction.
- Penalty Charge Notice (PCN)
A PCN may be issued for any parking contravention committed during the misuse.

Other Related Offences

- Theft Act 1968 (Sections [1](#) and [22](#))
May be used to prosecute individuals for stealing badges, handling stolen badges, or using stolen badges.
- Proceeds of Crime Act 2002 ([Section 329\(1\)\(c\)](#))

Where a stolen badge is being used but there is insufficient evidence for a Theft Act conviction, this provision may offer an alternative route to prosecution.

- Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000 (Section 146)
In certain circumstances, courts may disqualify persistent offenders from driving for a specified period.

The badge remains the legal property of the issuing local authority, so it is unlawful for someone else to sell a badge. The rightful owner can act to recover the goods through the civil courts. It may also be possible to prosecute the person offering the badge for sale under section 7 of the Fraud Act 2006.

Where a badge holder might attempt to sell (or gift) a badge, it will be possible to withdraw the badge, under regulation 9(2)(b) (as amended), where the authority is satisfied that the holder “purported to transfer the badge to another person”, it is possible that Section 11 of the Fraud Act 2006 (relating to obtaining services dishonestly) could be used when someone is seeking to fraudulently use a Blue Badge to gain parking concessions in an off-road parking area.

2.4 **Withdrawal of a badge**

A Blue Badge may be withdrawn after a successful prosecution of the badge holder or a third party for any of the following offences:

- [Section 21\(4B\)](#) of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970
Covers misuse of a genuine badge or use of a fake or altered badge while the vehicle is being driven.
- Sections 115 or 117 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984
Covers misuse of a genuine badge or use of a fake or altered badge when the vehicle is parked.
- Dishonesty or deception under other UK legislation
Includes offences under the Fraud Act 2006, Theft Act 1968, Forgery and Counterfeiting Act 1981, and similar laws relating to fraudulent or dishonest use of a badge.

Where the offence was committed by a third party using the badge holder’s badge, Nottingham City Council must demonstrate that the badge holder knew the third party was using the badge before it can be withdrawn.

The inclusion of offences under [Section 21\(4B\)](#) of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 and Sections 115 and 117 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as relevant convictions is intended to address misuse of a genuine badge by a third party or use of a fake or altered badge by either the badge holder or a third party.

However, it is not intended that a badge holder should be prosecuted or have their badge withdrawn solely for incorrect display of a badge.

3.0 **Inspecting Blue Badges**

Under [Section 21\(4BA\)](#) of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970, enforcement officers have the power to approach a person in a vehicle displaying a Blue Badge - or someone who appears to have been in or is about to enter the vehicle - and require them to produce the badge for inspection. This inspection typically involves checking the badge details and the photograph on the reverse side to confirm that the badge is being used by the correct person.

Failure to produce a badge when lawfully required, without reasonable excuse, is an offence under [Section 21\(4BD\)](#) of the same Act. A person convicted of this offence may be liable to a fine.

Nottingham City Council Inspection Procedure summary

- a. Approach and Identification: Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) will approach the vehicle and identify themselves clearly.
- b. Request for Badge: The officer will politely request the driver or occupant to produce the Blue Badge for inspection.
- c. Verification: The officer will check the badge details and photograph to confirm that the badge holder is present and entitled to use the badge.
- d. Recording Evidence: If misuse is suspected, officers will record details such as badge number, vehicle registration, and circumstances of use.
- e. Escalation: Where misuse is confirmed or the badge is not produced, the officer may issue a Penalty Charge Notice, seize the badge under statutory powers, and refer the matter for further investigation or prosecution.

A person using a Blue Badge can call the Compliance and Fraud Officer or a Parking Enforcement Senior to confirm the identity of the Officer where necessary.

3.1 **Retention of Blue Badges**

The Disabled Persons' Parking Badges Act 2013 gives enforcement officers the power to inspect and retain a Blue Badge without the presence of the police, provided they have reasonable grounds to believe that the badge:

- a. Is a fake or counterfeit.
- b. Has been cancelled (e.g., reported lost or stolen).

- c. Should have been returned to the issuing authority (e.g., expired, holder deceased, holder no longer eligible, replacement issued, badge damaged or faded, or following a relevant conviction or false representation).
- d. Is being misused (including use by someone other than the badge holder when the holder is not involved in the journey).

Establishing Reasonable Grounds

Nottingham City Council expects authorised officers take appropriate steps before retaining a badge. These steps may include:

- e. Checking the National Blue Badge Digital Service database.
- f. Contacting Nottingham City Council's issuing team or Compliance and Fraud Officer, to confirm badge details.
- g. Interviewing the person using the badge at the roadside.
- h. Where necessary, telephoning the badge holder using contact details provided on the application form to confirm their whereabouts.

Retention and Return of Badges

Invalid badges retained under scenarios (a)–(c) above should be destroyed in due course.

If the badge has been issued by another local authority, we will liaise with the issuing authority before disposal.

Valid badges retained under scenario (d) (misuse by a third party) should normally be returned to the badge holder. Retention does not equate to permanent withdrawal or confiscation.

Permanent withdrawal can only occur following a relevant conviction under [Regulation 9\(2\)](#) of the Disabled Persons (Badges for Motor Vehicles) (England) Regulations 2000 or if the badge was obtained by false representation.

To reinforce this, regulations require that a valid badge retained due to misuse is returned as soon as reasonably practicable, unless there are pre-existing grounds for withdrawal.

In practice, this means the badge will first be returned to the issuing authority and then to the holder. The issuing authority may choose to issue a warning about the seriousness of misuse when returning the badge.

Returning the badge does not prevent prosecution for any offence committed.

Nottingham City Council procedure summary

- I. Initial Assessment
 - a. Confirm reasonable grounds for retention using BBDS and local records.
 - b. Record vehicle registration, badge number, and circumstances.

- II. Badge Inspection and Retention
 - a. Politely request the badge for inspection.
 - b. If misuse or invalidity is confirmed, retain the badge.
- III. Evidence Collection
 - a. Take photographs of the badge and vehicle.
 - b. Document statements from the person using the badge.
- IV. Notification and Liaison
 - a. Inform the issuing authority immediately.
 - b. Arrange for the badge to be returned to the issuing authority for destruction or reissue.
- V. Follow-Up
 - a. If misuse is confirmed, consider issuing a Penalty Charge Notice and referring the case for prosecution.
 - b. When returning a valid badge, include a warning letter about the seriousness of misuse.

4.0 Penalty Charge Notices (PCN)

A Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) may be issued when a vehicle is parked in contravention of local parking restrictions and there is evidence of misuse or abuse of a Blue Badge.

The appropriate [contravention code](#) will be applied in accordance with the restriction under which the vehicle has been left. PCNs are issued under the provisions of the Traffic Management Act 2004 and enforced in accordance with the relevant Traffic Regulation Order.

Any [representations or challenges](#) against a PCN must be submitted in accordance with the instructions provided on the notice.

A PCN may be issued where a Blue Badge is displayed and:

- a. The badge has been altered or defaced.
- b. The badge has been cancelled or replaced.
- c. The badge has expired.
- d. The badge is being used by a person who is not entitled to its use.
- e. The badge is not clearly displayed and cannot be validated.
- f. A time clock has not been displayed or has been incorrectly set.
- g. The badge is displayed where the vehicle causes danger, obstruction, or inconvenience to pedestrians or other road users.

A PCN may also be issued where a vehicle is:

- h. Parked over a dropped kerb.
- i. Parked where loading/unloading restrictions apply (indicated by kerb markings).
- j. Parked in a loading-only bay.
- k. Parked in a permit holder-only bay without a valid permit.

- l. Parked on a no-stopping restriction.
- m. Parked on zig-zag markings at a pedestrian crossing.

Items resembling a Blue Badge

A PCN will be issued if an item displayed in a vehicle resembles a disabled person's Blue Badge of the prescribed design, as described in Part 3, Regulation 11 of the Disabled Persons (Badges for Motor Vehicles) (England) Regulations 2000. This also applies to items resembling disabled parking permits, cards, or badges issued in other countries.

Council Discretion

The Council reserves the right to uphold the contravention and refuse a challenge or representation on the first occasion where extenuating circumstances exist. These may include, but are not limited to:

- n. Safety risks.
- o. Abuse or aggression towards staff.
- p. Misuse or abuse of the terms and conditions of the Blue Badge scheme.
- q. Failure to comply with other applicable parking restrictions.

Any investigation into badge misuse or abuse is separate from any Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) that may have been issued for a parking contravention. Evidence provided during an investigation will not be considered as part of any appeal or challenge to a PCN.

4.1 **Vehicle removal**

Nottingham City Council operates a secure [vehicle pound](#) for the removal and storage of vehicles in accordance with the Traffic Management Act 2004 and the relevant Traffic Regulation Orders.

A vehicle may be removed when a disabled person's Blue Badge is displayed and:

- a. The badge has been altered or defaced.
- b. The item is a copy or fake version of a 'badge'.
- c. The badge has been cancelled or replaced.
- d. The badge is being used by a person who is not entitled to its use.

A vehicle displaying a Blue Badge may be relocated where it is:

- e. Parked in a manner that causes danger, obstruction, or inconvenience to pedestrians or other road users.
- f. Parked over a dropped kerb.
- g. Parked where loading or unloading restrictions apply (indicated by kerb markings).
- h. Parked in a loading-only bay.
- i. Parked on a no-stopping restriction.
- j. Parked on zig-zag markings at a pedestrian crossing.

Release and Storage Fees

To recover a removed vehicle, the following charges apply:

- Penalty Charge Notice (PCN): £70 (higher-level contraventions) or £50 (lower-level contraventions), discounted to £35 or £25 if paid within the statutory discount period.
- Removal Fee: £105.
- Storage Fee: £12 per day, applicable after the first 24 hours the vehicle remains at the pound.

Payment must be made in full before the vehicle is released.

Proof of identity, proof of address, and vehicle ownership documents are required at the time of collection.

The Blue Badge or fraudulent version of a Blue Badge will be retained.

5.0 **Enforcement Officers** – including Civil Enforcement Officers

Under the Disabled Persons' Parking Badges Act 2013, an enforcement officer is defined as a person employed by a local authority, or a person with whom the authority has made arrangements, for the purpose of inspecting and retaining Blue Badges. This may include direct employees of the local authority or contracted personnel.

Enforcement officers are not required to wear a uniform; however, they must be formally authorised in writing by the authority to carry out badge inspections and retentions.

An officer can produce appropriate evidence of their authority when exercising these powers. This is primarily their Nottingham City Council Employee Identification. In the absence of such evidence, there is no obligation on an individual to surrender their badge.

Nottingham City Council maintains written records of authorised officers and ensures that all officers carry identification confirming their authority to inspect and retain badges.

Comprehensive training and procedural guidance are provided to all enforcement officers exercising these powers.

When misuse or abuse of a badge is suspected, authorised officers will engage with the badge holder in a professional and sensitive manner. Officers must not make assumptions or question the reasons for badge issuance, as this falls outside their remit. It is important to recognise that some disabilities may not be immediately visible.

Authorised Officers include:

- Compliance and Fraud Officer (CaFO)
- Civil Enforcement Officers (CEO)

- Nottingham Vehicle Pound Removal Officers and Pound Administrators
- Community Protection Officers (CPO)
- NHS Parking Enforcement Officers (under partnership agreements)
- Nottinghamshire Police Officers

6.0 Investigations

Investigations into Blue Badge misuse or abuse may be conducted in accordance with the [Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 \(PACE\)](#).

Interview Procedures

- Interviews may be carried out face-to-face, by post, telephone, or online.
- In-person or telephone interviews may be recorded, following PACE regulations.
- Individuals have the right to seek independent legal advice, which is not provided by Nottingham City Council.

Evidence Gathering

The most common misuse involves friends or family using a badge without the badge holder being present. Before taking enforcement action or pursuing prosecution, Nottingham City Council will ensure a) misuse is occurring and b) sufficient evidence has been obtained.

Methods of Investigation

- Undercover surveillance - in cases of suspected systematic abuse, surveillance may be carried out under the [Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 \(RIPA\)](#) to gather admissible evidence.
- Verification of badge holder's presence
 - a. We may telephone the badge holder to confirm their whereabouts (calls are recorded).
 - b. We may visit the badge holder's home while another officer observes the vehicle.
 - c. Officers may monitor both the start and end of a journey to confirm whether the badge holder is present.
 - d. Hotspot monitoring - Nottingham City Council will identify and monitor locations where blue badge misuse is prevalent.
 - e. Roadside questioning - officers may question the person using the badge during inspection to establish entitlement.

7.0 Data

Data may be accessed for the following purpose:

1. Prevention or detection of crime, or
2. Apprehension or prosecution of offenders.

Sources of Data include, but not limited to:

- Department for Transport (DfT)
- Back-office software provider
- Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)
- National Fraud Initiative (NFI)
- Nottinghamshire Police
- Local Authorities
- Citizens

Routine access to Blue Badge application information is not required for the stated purpose. If such data becomes necessary, a formal request will be submitted to the local authority's Data Controller.

All data entered into the DfT service will be processed by Nottingham City Council in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018. Data may be shared within the Council, with other local authorities, the police, and enforcement officers to detect and prevent fraud.

The National Fraud Initiative (NFI) matches electronic data across public and private sector bodies to prevent and detect fraud. Public sector bodies, including councils, police authorities, and other agencies, are required to submit data regularly.

Information within the NFI system is governed by:

- a) General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- b) Code of Data Matching Practice
- c) HMG Security Policy Framework (SPF)

Only authorised users may access this system. Any data accessed, exported, or printed must be handled in line with GDPR and Cabinet Office security requirements for personal and protectively marked information.

Data Information Requests

- [Schedule 2, Part 1, Paragraph 2](#) of the Data Protection Act 2018
 - Allows disclosure of personal data without consent where necessary for crime prevention or prosecution.
- [Article 6\(e\)](#) of GDPR
 - Processing is lawful when necessary for a task carried out in the public interest or under official authority vested in the controller.

Information Sharing

Effective communication between issuing authorities, enforcement teams, and other agencies is essential. Badge holders provide consent for data sharing at the application stage via the declaration section of the Blue Badge form or GOV.UK online application.

Nottingham City Council will provide enforcement teams with data on local badge holders, particularly badges reported lost or stolen, to assist in identifying misuse.

Enforcement officers may a) use handheld devices to check the Blue Badge Digital Service (BBDS) for badge status or b) contact the issuing authority directly if digital checks are not possible.

The BBDS enables checks on badges issued anywhere in England, Scotland, or Wales. Access to this system is authorised by the Blue Badge Digital Service Administrator at Nottingham City Council.

Nottingham City Council Privacy Notice: www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/footer-pages/privacy-statement

8.0 **Partnership Working with Landowners and Car Park Operators**

The Council recognises the importance of working in partnership with private landowners and car park operators to support the effective use and protection of the Blue Badge scheme. While the scheme primarily applies to on-street parking and local authority-controlled areas, misuse and abuse can also occur on privately managed land.

Collaborative working helps ensure a consistent approach to accessibility and enforcement across all parking environments.

The Council will seek to establish and maintain constructive relationships with landowners and operators of private car parks, including retail, hospital, and residential parking providers. This may include sharing guidance on the correct use of Blue Badges, promoting awareness of misuse, and encouraging the adoption of reasonable adjustments and best practice in line with national guidance.

Where appropriate, the Council may provide advice and support to partners in identifying and addressing suspected misuse of Blue Badges, including signposting enforcement options available to private operators within the legal framework governing private land. Information sharing will be undertaken in accordance with data protection legislation and any relevant information-sharing agreements.

Through partnership working, the Council aims to promote fairness, improve accessibility for disabled users, and ensure that the principles of the Blue Badge scheme are upheld consistently, regardless of land ownership.

9.0 **Complaints**

Any complaints about our service should be raised immediately to the Compliance and Fraud Officer at parkingfraud@nottinghamcity.gov.uk.

The Nottingham City Council Have Your Say service can be used where appropriate. This can be access online here: www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/your-council/contact-us/have-your-say-comments-compliments-and-complaints

Complaints or questions relating to the issue of a Blue Badge or the application process should be sent to the Blue Badge team at Blue.Badges@nottinghamcity.gov.uk or by using the Have Your Say service.

10.0 **Media and public awareness**

Sharing the work Nottingham City Council undertakes to protect the integrity of the Blue Badge scheme is essential. public awareness ensures that citizens and visitors understand the scheme's purpose and why it is vital for those who genuinely need it. Misuse not only disadvantages disabled people but also undermines public confidence in the system.

By communicating our enforcement efforts, we aim to:

1. Educate the public about the importance of the scheme and the consequences of misuse.
2. Deter potential offenders by demonstrating that misuse is actively monitored and enforced.
3. Promote transparency in how Nottingham City Council safeguards accessibility for disabled residents and visitors.
4. Reinforce community support for fair and lawful use of Blue Badges.

Communication Channels

- Social media: regular updates, educational posts, and enforcement success stories to reach a wide audience quickly.
- Local news outlets: press releases and articles highlighting enforcement actions and policy changes.
- Council website: dedicated pages explaining the scheme, reporting misuse, and outlining penalties.
- Public campaigns: targeted awareness initiatives in high-traffic areas and blue badge hotspots.

Appendix A

The parking concessions available to Blue Badge holders are governed by the provisions in the [Local Authorities' Traffic Orders \(Exemptions for Disabled Persons\)\(England\) Regulations 2000](#).

These Regulations cover traffic orders which are made by local authorities under various sections of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and which lay down parking restrictions or impose parking charges on motorists. The effect of the Regulations is to require local authorities to include in such orders certain exemptions in favour of vehicles displaying a Blue Badge.

This includes:

- a. allowing badge holders to park free of charge and without time limit at 'on street'
- b. parking meters and pay-and-display machines;
- c. allowing badge holders to park free of charge and without time limit at 'on-street'
- d. disabled parking bays unless signs say otherwise.
- e. allowing badge holders to park on single or double yellow lines for up to three
- f. hours in England, unless there is a ban on loading or unloading

Appendix B

Not used

Definitions

Authorised Officer	A person formally authorised by Nottingham City Council to inspect, retain, or take enforcement action relating to Blue Badges.
Blue Badge	A parking permit issued to eligible disabled people that allows them to park closer to their destination under national parking concessions.
Blue Badge Digital Service (BBDS)	The national online database used by local authorities and enforcement officers to check the validity and status of Blue Badges issued across England, Scotland, and Wales.
Badge Holder	The person to whom the Blue Badge has been legally issued. The badge is for their benefit only and may only be used when they are making the journey.
Caution	A formal warning issued where an individual admits an offence and accepts the caution instead of prosecution. It may be used where evidence exists, but prosecution is not considered proportionate.
Civil Enforcement Officer (CEO)	A council officer responsible for enforcing parking regulations, issuing Penalty Charge Notices, and checking and inspecting Blue Badges during on-street enforcement.
Community Protection Officer (CPO)	A council officer who supports community safety and may assist in identifying and reporting Blue Badge misuse.
Data Controller	The organisation responsible for deciding how personal data is collected, used, and stored. For Blue Badge enforcement, this is Nottingham City Council.
Enforcement Officer	A person authorised to carry out Blue Badge inspections, seize badges where legislation allows, and act against misuse. This may include CEOs, Community Protection Officers, or other designated staff.
Equality Act 2010	Legislation that protects individuals from discrimination. It requires public bodies, including the Council, to consider the needs of disabled people when delivering services.
Fraud	Intentional deception for personal gain. Within the Blue Badge scheme, this includes providing false information on applications or using/producing fake badges.
GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)	UK data protection rules that require personal information to be handled lawfully, fairly, and securely.

Issuing Authority	The local authority responsible for assessing applications and issuing, renewing, or withdrawing Blue Badges.
NHS	The National Health Service. Some NHS staff may work in partnership with the Council to enforce parking rules on NHS-managed land.
PACE (Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984)	Legislation that sets out how evidence must be obtained and how interviews must be conducted in a lawful and fair manner during investigations.
Penalty Charge Notice (PCN)	A civil penalty issued for breaching parking regulations. A PCN may be issued when a Blue Badge is misused or displayed incorrectly.
Prosecution	Formal legal action taken through the courts where evidence of a criminal offence is sufficient.
Regulations	Legal rules that govern how the Blue Badge scheme must operate, including how badges are issued, used, inspected, withdrawn, or enforced.
Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA)	Legislation that controls how public authorities may carry out surveillance or gather evidence during investigations.
Relevant Conviction	A conviction for an offence that legally permits a local authority to withdraw a Blue Badge under Regulation 9 of the 2000 Regulations.
Seizure (of a Blue Badge)	The legal act of retaining a Blue Badge under the Disabled Persons' Parking Badges Act 2013 where misuse or invalidity is suspected.
The 'Council' – Nottingham City Council	Refers to Nottingham City Council, the local authority responsible for administering and enforcing the Blue Badge scheme within the city boundary.
Third-Party Misuse	Use of a Blue Badge by someone other than the badge holder without the badge holder being part of the journey.
Validity Check	The process of verifying whether a Blue Badge is genuine, current, and issued to the correct holder, typically through BBDS or direct contact with the issuing authority.
Withdrawal (of a Blue Badge)	The formal removal of a badge from use following a relevant conviction or when obtained by false representation.

Contact: parkingfraud@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

Author: M Hall

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