

Our Ref: FOI 7273

Date: 26 July 2012

Nicola Whitehill

Via email: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX@XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX.XXX

Dear Nicola

Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information

I am writing in respect of your recent enquiry for information held by the Authority under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please find the answers to your questions on the Blue Badge scheme:-

Process

Blue Badge schemes continue to run on a local basis. However a new style Blue Badge was introduced as a result of government reforms brought in on 1 January 2012. These reforms are aimed at preventing fraud and misuse of the Blue Badge Scheme operated by local authorities. The new-style badge includes a digital photo and hologram, making it easier to ensure the badge is being appropriately used by the person it is issued to.

Details of the Birmingham process are on the council website at:=

<http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/blue-badge-scheme>

And the national scheme is detailed here:=

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/MotoringAndTransport/Bluebadgescheme/DG_181208

Technically people do not have a 'renewal' since they have to apply again when the existing badge is due for expiry.

In Birmingham renewal reminders are now being sent out to alert the badge holder.

Fee

The new style badge is purchased by local authorities from a national provider appointed by the government. The national provider will also despatch the badges direct to approved applicants, once notification of approval is provided by the relevant local authority. While every effort has been made to absorb the increased costs of the improved security measures, many local authorities have had to increase their registration fees.

Birmingham City Council's fee of £2 has not increased since 1983, entitling approved users, in the majority of cases, to free parking for a period of up to 3 years. New applications and renewal of existing badges expiring prior to 1 August 2012 will pay the current £2 fee. New applications and badges expiring from 1 August will pay the new £10 fee to offset the administration costs and contribute towards the purchase of the new style badge from the approved external provider.

Please reply to me at:

Adults and Communities Directorate
Public Health team
PO Box 16468
Birmingham B2 2DS

Telephone : 0121 303 9462
Facsimile : 0121 303 2769

www.birmingham.gov.uk/adults

Peter Hay CBE Strategic Director, Adults and Communities

Whilst we have undertaken a thorough search of the information held by Birmingham City Council, it may be that, due to the size and amount of information held by Birmingham City Council, some information has been inadvertently missed. If you have any information which may assist us in determining or locating any missed information, we would be grateful if you would contact us with details of this information, so that we can make a further search.

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If you are not satisfied with the decision, you may ask for an internal review by officers not involved in the handling of this original request. Please contact Birmingham City Council's central FOI Team at this address:

Information Governance Team, Performance and Information (WS),
PO Box 16366, Birmingham B2 2YY
Tel: 0121 303 4876 email: xxxxxxxxxxxx@xxxxxxxxxx.xxx.xx

After that, if you are not satisfied with the Council's decision you may apply to the Information Commissioner for an independent review at this address:

The Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire SK9 5AF
Tel: 01625 545700 Web: www.ico.gov.uk

Yours sincerely

Philip Wilson
Freedom of Information Officer