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## **The European Blue Parking Badge**

This letter is to inform you that the administration of European Blue Parking Badges for people with disabilities moved in April 2005 from Social Services Area Offices to new Customer Centres. These Centres are based across the county and represent a joint venture between Worcestershire County Council and the local District Councils and other organisations such as the Police. This joint venture is known as the Worcestershire Hub and aims to improve access to a range of services for the public.

The criteria for being awarded a Blue Badge have not changed with this move and people applying for a badge are still required to provide documentary evidence of their disability and its effect on their mobility. This is necessary to ensure only those who genuinely need a Blue Badge receive one.

Traditionally many people applying for a Blue Badge would seek documentary evidence from their GP and indeed Social Services would also request this information from GPs. This letter is to advise you that whilst a report or evidence from a GP would still be accepted with an application, it is no longer the only type of evidence acceptable. Social Services will no longer request or pay for reports from GPs, a move that should reduce unnecessary expense and bureaucracy. Patients who wish can pay privately for a medical report, if you are happy to enter into such an arrangement. Alternatively please direct any patients who ask you about Blue Badges to their nearest Customer Centre, see attached leaflet, where staff will be ready to advise them on the alternative evidence such as DSS benefit information, hospital appointment letters and other professional reports they can use.

Many thanks for your assistance in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Eddie Clarke

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