

Blue Badge Automatic

User research discussion guide

Visit to Sheffield Council First Contact

31st October 2019

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Research goals:

- Gain further understanding of the work of the Blue Badge team at Sheffield
- To expose the prototype in order to observe and understand:
 - how users enter customer NINO
 - how users understand information displayed
 - what users do with the information displayed

Research Method:

1. Informal group discussion about roles, responsibilities and the current picture of Blue Badge applications
2. User Testing of the prototype – individually

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Introduction to participants:

- Thanks again for helping
- We're keen to find out more about what you do on a daily basis
- Testing a version of what Blue Badge might look like for Local Authorities - no right or wrong answer
- I'll be quiet throughout the session as we want to hear from you
- Consent to research form
- Any questions before we start?

Overview of the Blue Badge process from LA processor perspective

The last time my colleagues were here, they mentioned that you keep an eye on the DfT system and the CRM every day.

Is that still the case?

Would you mind walking me through the process?

Has anything changed since the DfT guidance was issued in the summer? (hidden disabilities)

Optional questions:

How do you find out about a new Blue Badge application / case? What next?

How long does the whole process take?

What are the difficulties in processing an application?

Anything annoying or frustrating?

Who has the final say on an application?

Sheffield Citizens - you mentioned in the last session that they apply in a variety of ways - are you able to give a rough proportion of

How do you refer to "citizens" i.e. customers, applicants, etc. etc.

Time – 15-20 mins for this discussion

Notes:

Notes following Sheffield session

General feeling - that Sheffield wanted to see the final product. Recommended that we don't do user testing with Sheffield again until we're ready to go ahead with Private Beta. We've probably pressed them a bit too much.

Discussion notes

Ruth

Attendees - Penny, Zaida, Sue, Lisa, Tracey

As we were getting set up Tracey was talking about one of the blue badge discretionary cases she was dealing with for hidden disabilities - a mother applying for her child who had severe behavioural issues and would kick and scream when she got him out of the car. She said she had reams of paper to read. She was worried that the mother won't be getting the help she required.

She said there are "like 12 pages to get through" and you could be looking for one particular phrase.

Present were the senior processors who would likely deal with the discretionary awards.

Lisa said that there had been a tenfold increase in the amount of work coming through since the guidance on hidden disabilities was released

They refer to “citizens” as “customers” since they are in customer services

They deal with all of the cases in date order (rather than in triage) so what if it’s a DS1500?

Ian

The seniors work full-time on travel permits. They allocate work to people in the team. They are also there to provide support

They do senior reviews, ie discretionary ones and ring up the customers. These can be complex and not straight forward.

Access to DWP would be great - not just for BB but also carer’s permits and Short Break Grants (for parents of kids with severe disabilities, respite, etc.)

Free School Meals has ECS checker - links up to HMRC but sometimes UC angle. If for example that person has just gone onto UC then it will say “pending, keep checking”

Free School Meals don’t backdate so family could accrue debts as a result

Process: application comes in, check info qualifies, process onto system. straightforward = immediate

Missing info = write to person for required info. It’s the customer’s job to provide that information. Delays for example asking for PIP letter and customers only sending one page.

Since August there has been a tenfold increase due to hidden disabilities and there is limited guidance and clarity. Opened the floodgates. people sending in a mammoth amount of evidence but not necessarily what Sheffield City Council need. Taking longer. Got to read it all to find what they need before asking for more info. The team has no medical background - there is an impact on the straightforward ones too because it takes longer to get to them because they are processed in date order.

Provision of NINO - one processor said around 50% and another said around 80-90% provide NINO because it looks like it’s mandatory on the form. But if it’s not provided then they just carry on with the application.

Internal Audit reviews discussion - that this is viewed positively. The Fraud team look at how many blue badges have been returned (also parking permits) Logo to government system.

1 member of the team has EAS token to Tell Us Once

If this wasn’t covered above, ask:

Do Blue Badge applicants (or appointees) provide a National Insurance Number?
What if NINO isn't provided?

How do you verify that that NINO matches the person?

Notes:

Nino isn't verified

Last time we visited you mentioned that you don't ring DWP for benefit claim information.

How do you currently evidence PIP/DLA scores?

How / where do you record that evidence? Why? (this will be covered again when testing the prototype)

Notes:

Couple of rare times they ring DWP they are just sat on the phone all day

~~How do you audit who did what on Blue Badge claims?~~
~~Why?~~
~~When?~~
~~Who is the auditor?~~

Notes:

Can you give an example of a secure system you use ?

Who has access? Do you have to request access to systems? Why? How?

For example, how would a new employee get access?

(i.e. do your IT team grant you access to these systems)


Notes:

All team has access to EAS. Each has a token. They don't care how they get in, as long as they can get in!

That said, they didn't know what EAS was exactly.

MVP Prototype

1.

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View benefit information

ALPHA This is a new service – your [feedback](#) will help us to improve it. [Sign out](#)

Search for PIP or DLA information

Enter National Insurance number

Search

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Observe user

Possible question - what do you expect to happen after this page?

Notes:

User 1: after this page I'm expecting to see other info e.g. name, DoB, perhaps

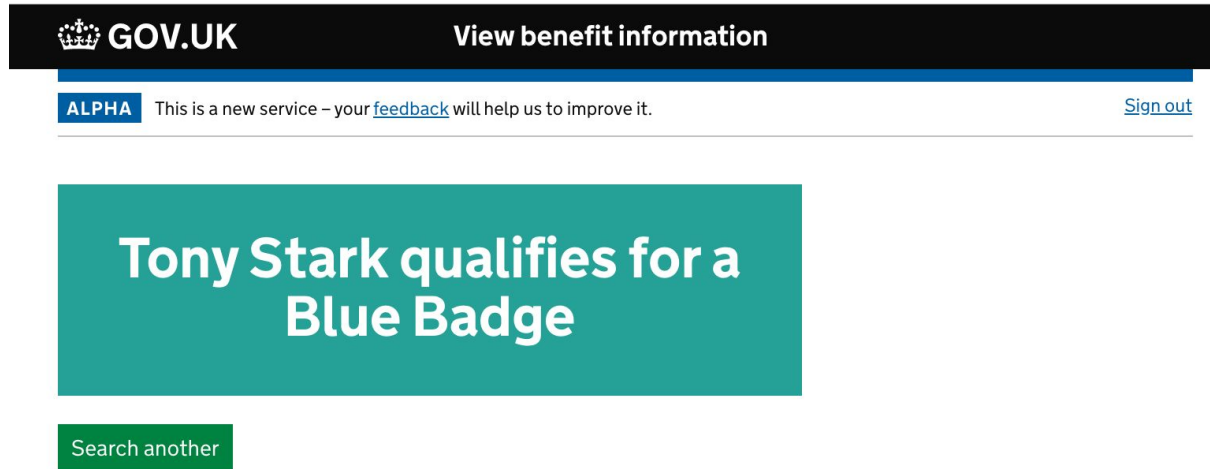
User 2: Expecting to see the customer benefits PIP / DLA and address. Need latter to verify Sheffield address and matches BB claim

User 3: Want to see Name and Dob and maybe address on the next screen

2.

Reference: TS123456G

Automatic award - green box but no further info



Questions - what do you understand from this screen? What are your thoughts here?

What do you need to do to complete the Blue Badge application?

(Do you trust this message?)


Notes:

User 1: Doesn't tell me enough. How does he qualify? Expecting to be asked more questions here.

User 2: Why does he? I want to see for myself. Want to see the breakdown of points. Also don't like someone else making a decision on their (our, Sheffield City Council) criteria

User 3: As above. Don't feel confident that DWP know what qualifies for a BB. Need Name, Address, the 2 elements - Daily and moving around std or enhanced. Don't need to know the amount or how much.

3. BW123456G



View benefit information

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Bruce Wayne qualifies for a Blue Badge

Date of birth	7 April 1980
Benefit type	Personal Independence Payment
Moving around score	C (8 points)
Planning and following a journey	E (10 points)
End date	1 January 2022

Search another

What do you understand from this page?
What are your thoughts?
What do you need to do next?
How would you transfer this information?

Notes:

User 1: This is a bit better. Still want more info on planning and following a journey. Need to know why got 10 points on that. In this case it wouldn't matter as much as it qualifies on moving around

Transfer this info to case - I would fill it in with this info


User 2:

DoB good but there's still no address. Everything else is what I want to see. Might not matter if separately provided proof of address. A lot of people use PIP letter for that too

User 3:

Fine for Blue Badge. But Sheffield City Council do a travel permit too so daily living info (points) is useful for that. Then I would record the info on the Sheffield City Council system. (user ignored the Blue Box, determined qualification herself)

Bruce Banner BB123456G

 **GOV.UK**

View benefit information

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Bruce Banner

Automatic Blue Badge?	No
Date of birth	16 March 1950
Benefit	No qualifying benefit

Search another

What do you understand from this page?
What do you need to do with this information?

Notes:

User 1: Not qualifying so fair enough. Still like to know why he applied for a Blue Badge. It depends how far we want to go. Not turning down automatically as still discretionary option

User 3: At first wanted more. Then realised it says No Qualifying Benefit so fine, assuming they don't have PIP / DLA
The person who applied may think they are entitled to one, however.


User 2. Assume No Qualifying Benefit means PIP / DLA so just look at this on a discretionary basis.

Refer to ppt - at this point bring in DS1500

Discretionary

Diana Prince

DP123456G

View benefit information

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Diana Prince

Automatic Blue Badge?	No
Date of birth	7 August 1974
Benefit type	Personal Independence Payment
Moving around score	B (4 points)
Planning and following a journey	C (8 points)
End date	1 October 2021

Search another

What do you understand from this page?

What would you do next?


Notes:

user 1: similar to second case. Essential to see more info on planning and following a journey - 8 points can qualify if there is a reason there. Can't say whether or not it qualifies from this info. Didn't pot the top row, is this based on 8 points? Question of trust in model 10 points = threshold. No ref to DoB info

user 3: Telling me everything I need to know. If Planning and Following a Journey 10 points will need the reason. The nice thing about the letter is the assessment info as we ask similar questions in our assessment. In this case would then call customer and do phone assessment.

User 2: Adding up points, wondering if enhanced rate mobility = auto BB. This would be automatic - local decision technically a sheffield city council discretionary award because 12 points customer gets a mobility vehicle and with that they get a blue badge

Citizen not found
QQ123456G

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View benefit information

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No record for QQ123456C

Search another

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Has this happened before (when using other databases) ?

Why do you think this has happened? Any scenarios?

What do you need to do next?

(Do you need any additional information here?)

Notes:

user 1: would go back to the customer for more info or just not bother

user 3: "NINO doesn't exist" Then go through phone assessment

user 2: Fine, just ring them

Service unavailable



View benefit information

ALPHA

This is a new service – your [feedback](#) will help us to improve it.

Sorry, the service is unavailable

You will be able to use the service from 9am on Monday DD Month YYYY.

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What do you understand here?

What are your expectations?

What would you do next?

user 3: I would assume there is a glitch at the DWP end.

Might try later. Useful to know how long it's down for as there's a pile building up in the meantime. Otherwise revert to paper or phone.

User 2: If this happened in the morning then I would try again in the afternoon. Would just park the case and move on. Good to know when it's due to be back up.

Other questions:

Searchlight:

Special categories

what would you do if you stumbled across a sensitive case? how is this indicated on your system?

Do you ever sign in and then find you are available to see the record?

Do you have any user guides you could share with us?

.....

Nationally sensitive case - Tracey referred to cases re. social services and she can request access to certain pages but only for a limited period of time

Summary

- more info the better (but is this a user want or need)
- very ltd info - helpful to have Daily Living Element and mobility info
- need standard or enhanced rate
- will there be a support network if system unavailable? Current gov system is awful (DfTone) Constant back and forth and build up of work. As a manager I need access to a portal to report problems.
- There is a business manager assigned to Sheffield City Council but he's always really busy
- WANT IT ASAP!! Haven't been promised it by a date but if it is developed then they are happy to champion it

Affinity map

Sensitive cases

They don't know about sensitive DWP cases. If social services case, they're given short term access to system to get info but only on certain screens

For Private Beta

Will there be a support function service available?

Tell Us Once - team members have access via EAS

Bruce Wayne - need description for planning a journey (however there was some confusion over the rules)

Diana Prince - if it's 10 points I need to see the wording

Recording / evidencing

All said they'd make a note in their CRM system

Bruce Wayne - all understood what to do next - issue a Blue Badge

LA rules - discretion

If they have moving around 4 points plus planning a journey 8 points
That's enhanced rate, We'd award Blue Badge (discretionary)

Terminology

Applicants are called customers

Post August 2019

Amount of evidence they provide is mammoth a lot is irrelevant
"we're not medical professionals"

Lack of guidance / clarity re. hidden disabilities

Applications have increased 10 fold

It just takes ages to read through everything

Confidence

Bruce Wayne - want a way to search by name, dob, address or postcode

I wouldn't trust the box at the top - I would still want to check all the benefit details

Helpful to have more info for discretionary awards and travel permits eg daily living component info

Wants not needs

Felt there's a need for address to check if it's a Sheffield case (but that would be available from proof of address)

No qualifying benefit - next steps

If NINO doesn't exist I'd ask the customer to check their NINO

If correct, customer has to give evidence of their benefit

If they were turned down (for PIP) why were they turned down? They might still qualify for discretionary Blue Badge

In the case of No Qualifying Benefit I'd ring the customer

NQB - what if they've made a PIP claim but it's not in payment yet?

Use cases

Don't like being told if customer qualifies, it doesn't tell me enough

For travel permit decisions need daily living points

Also deal with Short term family grants

NINO

We don't need the NINO for existing process