

You Said We Did: Blue Badge Applications

In June 2019, Swindon SEND Families Voice was signposted to SBC's head of business support as there were concerns over the process for applying for a Blue Badge on the Council website. This was timely as the service was about to launch new eligibility for "hidden disabilities".

Jo Barker the service lead took full account of the comments when re-designing the website pages and the impact was immediately evident from parent feedback:

"I applied for a blue badge on the 4th Sept, attached various documents and I got an email today asking for payment as the application was successful. My grounds were anxiety and ADHD for my son. So pleased with this and was quicker than expected."

"It was super easy to navigate and complete. I had 22 pages of evidence so I contacted the blue badge team and was advised to email it to them which I have done. Basic questions are asked and you are given a very large space to write as much as you need to answer the question. I applied 10th of September and was awarded one this morning. Very easy."

Jo confirmed that the team had received extremely high volumes of applications due to the new criteria and that the team was managing this by dealing with the more straightforward applications first.

Jacqui, chair of Swindon SEND Families Voice, was able to share this information with members and reassure them that although this meant some applications would take longer than the promised 6 weeks, all applications would be processed by the end of October. Jacqui's final suggestion around clarifying eligibility criteria further to help parents have clear and reasonable expectations of the scheme is now being considered.

"We will keep our promises and keep you updated, especially if anything needs to change."

Children's Services Service Standard.