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Karen Adam MSP
Convener
Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice
Committee

By email: EHCRCJ.committee@parliament.scot

14th of April 2025

Dear Convener,

European Disability Card and the European Parking Card

Thank you for your email of the 3rd April 2025 requesting an update to the committee regarding establishing the European Disability Card and European parking card for disabled people.

Scotland should be a place where all disabled people can live the lives they choose; with the support they need to do so. It should be a place where everybody is enabled to participate in society, access their rights, take advantage of opportunities, and thrive in their communities and I am personally committed to ensuring I do everything within my Ministerial portfolio to achieve this.

In Scotland, visitors from EU countries can use their European disability parking card instead of a Blue Badge Card and the UK Government already has an informal agreement that all UK Blue Badges should continue to be recognised in European Countries. This is reciprocated across the 4 Nations as visitors from EU / EEA member state may use their parking card in the UK. However, as with all parking concessions, we recommend that anyone with a parking card checks locally before they park their car.

Blue Badges issued across the 4 Nations already meet a high standard and include several security features to prevent misuse, which include, holograms, digital photographs, serial numbers, barcode or QR code (to be scanned by parking enforcement officials), raised tactile features and other printing techniques (UV/watermarks/microtext), expiry date and the ability to withstand being exposed to high temperatures on a dashboard (tested to withstand up to 120 degrees centigrade).

The aim of European Disability Card is to give disabled people legal certainty that their disability status will be recognised when accessing special conditions or preferential

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treatment offered by a wide variety of services, activities or facilities, including parking. As the Committee will be aware this would fall under the Equality Act 2010, which is reserved to the UK Government.

Nevertheless, in Scotland I am personally committed to ensuring that the policies that we create within the Scottish Government follow the social model of disability, where the overarching aim is to dismantle the barriers, whether they be physical, attitudinal or environmental to ensure that disabled people flourish within society.

We will shortly be publishing the Disability Equality Plan that contains a number of actions the Scottish Government will take to improve the lives of disabled people.

One of the key actions within the plan will be to develop a transformational disability skills programme, in co-production with Disabled People's Organisations to help ensure that across every level of the Scottish Government the needs of disabled people will be carefully considered.

I'd be happy to keep the committee updated as the programme is rolled out across government.

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