



Driver & Vehicle
Licensing
Agency

The closure of DVLA local offices – everything you need to know

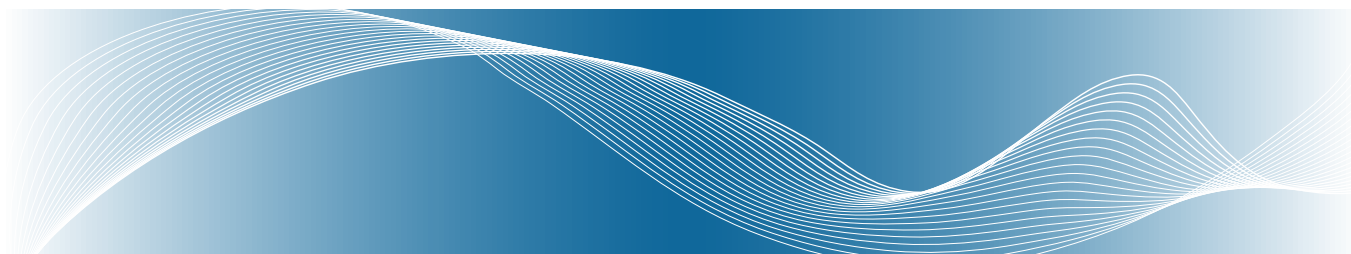


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Introduction

This document provides information and guidance about the closure of DVLA's 39 local offices. These regional offices will all close by the end of December 2013 and DVLA will no longer provide a face to face service.

If you previously used the local offices for any of the services provided, this document will help explain what to do after they close. The history of the local offices and the reason they are closing is outlined in **Annex 1** and **2**.

This document does not cover any changes to services available to motorists in Northern Ireland.

The '**Transforming DVLA Services' consultation** highlighted that customers really want more online services. The closure of the local offices is the first step in the journey towards a digital business at DVLA. A number of services that we have moved to paper channels in Swansea will be the subject of new developments in digital services. Personalised Registrations is one of the 25 government **digital exemplars** to be delivered and ensures we work closely with **Government Digital Services**.

Keep up-to-date and follow us on:

- Twitter **@dvlagovuk**
- **YouTube**
- **DVLA Digital Services Blog**
- **Facebook**
- **Linkedin**

If during this period of transition you have any questions about how the local office closures may affect you, you can contact the MNS Project team on **mns.project@dvla.gsi.gov.uk**

When will the local offices close?

Friday 25th October 2013	Friday 22nd November 2013	Friday 13th December 2013
Aberdeen	Bangor	Birmingham
Bournemouth	Beverley	Borehamwood
Brighton	Chester	Bristol
Carlisle	Dundee	Cardiff
Chelmsford	Exeter	Glasgow
Edinburgh	Inverness	Leeds
Ipswich	Maidstone	Manchester
Lincoln	Peterborough	Newcastle
Norwich	Sidcup	Northampton
Oxford	Theale	Nottingham
Sheffield	Truro	Portsmouth
Shrewsbury	Worcester	Preston
Stockton		Wimbledon
Swansea		

DVLA has worked closely with staff, customer groups and representatives of motor industry organisations to ensure the closures will have the minimal impact on the general public and commercial businesses.

What will happen when the local offices close?

DVLA has now made all services previously provided by local offices available in alternative channels.

Service	Transactions	Old channel	New channel
Vehicle Registrations page 6	The first registration of vehicles including new vehicles, rebuilt vehicles and specialist vehicles	Intermediary (AFRL)	Intermediary (AFRL) Send to DVLA Swansea SA99 1BE
Personalised Registrations page 8	The assignment, retention and transfer of registration marks to and from vehicles	Face to face	Send to DVLA Swansea SA99 1DS
Vehicle tax page 9	Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) through Road Fund Licence including Statutory Off Road Notification (SORN)	Online Intermediary	Online Intermediary Send to DVLA Swansea SA99 1DZ
Trade licensing page 12	Applying for and renewing trade licences (for motor traders)	Face to face	Send to DVLA Swansea SA99 1DZ
Vehicle inspections and approvals page 13	Applying for vehicles to be inspected by authorised personnel as part of a vehicle transaction	Face to face	Intermediary
Vehicle customer services page 14	Low volume services such as vehicle import and exports	Face to face	Email Send to DVLA Swansea
Driver customer services page 15	Premium Checking Service of driving licence applications	Face to face	Removed

Though customers may stop using the local offices long before they close they need to be aware that local offices will not process any work following the final day of business as DVLA staff will be preparing to vacate the offices. All mail or correspondence sent to local offices will be redirected to Swansea for processing.

Vehicle registration

What is this process?

First registration and licensing creates a record for a vehicle on DVLA's vehicles database and a tax disc is issued. This must be done as soon as you have bought, built, rebuilt/alterd or imported a vehicle and it is ready for the road.

There are two ways to register a vehicle: you can apply through a motor trader who uses the Automated First Registration and Licensing (**AFRL**) scheme; or you can apply using one of the First Registration and Licensing application forms (**V55**). There are four V55 forms:

- V55/1 used specifically by dealers/manufacturers to register **a new vehicle**
- V55/2 used specifically by dealers/manufacturers to register **an imported vehicle**
- V55/4 to register **a new vehicle**, including new imported vehicles and newly-built (kit) cars
- V55/5 to register **a used vehicle**, including rebuilt vehicles, used imported vehicles and older vehicles that have never been registered.

The cost of first registration is £55.00 which covers the administrative costs of DVLA setting up and maintaining a vehicle record through the life of the vehicle. All applications will require supporting documentation, such as, identification documents, and photocopies are now accepted.

How do I apply?

To register a vehicle for the first time please send your V55 application and supporting documents to **DVLA, Swansea, SA99 1BE**. Your documents will be returned within 14 working days (please allow postage time). If you have not received a response within this time, you can contact DVLA on 0300 790 6802.

What's changed?

1. The role of the dealership?

- Our application forms now include contact details for motor dealers. This allows DVLA to contact the dealer if there are any issues and avoids unnecessary delays from rejecting incorrect or incomplete applications.
- Dealers now offer an advanced registration scheme to register a vehicle for up to 14 days before the date of registration. For example, if you want your new vehicle for 1 August, the dealer can process the paperwork from 18 July. This will help you to plan your purchase earlier and ensure dealers can sort out all the documentation before you pick up your new vehicle.
- There are 3 vehicle registration schemes for the motor trade. They are the;
 - non-secure registration scheme
 - secure registration scheme, and
 - Automated First Registration and Licensing (AFRL) system.

2. Sending the tax disc by post

- DVLA Swansea will now send the tax disc by post (previously dealers could get tax discs from the local offices and arrange to display the disc before you collected the vehicle).
- You can choose where the tax disc should be posted (the dealer will advise you on this). DVLA can send the tax discs either to the address of the registered keeper, the dealer or the Fleet Company (if that is appropriate).

3. Using a vehicle without displaying a tax disc

- When DVLA confirms to the dealer that they have registered the vehicle, you can use the vehicle on the road for up to 14 days without the need to display the tax disc from the date of first registration.
- This will allow you to use your vehicle while you are waiting for the tax disc to come through the post.
- V55/5 applicants are an exception as you need to wait for receipt of either the tax disc or the Vehicle Registration Certificate (V5/C) and will not know the new registration number until this point; however you can use the V5/C to get your registration number plates made up.
- If you buy a vehicle from an AFRL dealer, they may give you an information leaflet to explain changes made in the law which allow you to drive the vehicle without the need to display the tax disc for up to 14 calendar days from the date of registration.

4. Getting your tax disc through the post

- You will receive your tax disc through the post separately to your V5/C (in some cases, the V5/C may arrive first).
- If you do not receive the tax disc within 8 days of the date of registration, you can apply for a free duplicate from one of 400 Post Office® branches issuing duplicate tax discs (you can find your nearest branch by visiting www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder You will need to enter the specific service required and your postcode) You will need to have the V5/C with you.
- If you know the registration number and want to find out if DVLA have processed your application you can check the Vehicle Enquiry System (VES) by visiting www.gov.uk/get-vehicle-information-from-dvla and search using this registration number.

For more information go to www.gov.uk/vehicle-registration

Personalised vehicle registration numbers

When you buy a personalised number you buy the right to assign the number to a vehicle and display it on its number plates. The vehicle can be registered in your name or in the name of someone else ('the nominee').

What's the Personalised Registration (PR) process?

There are three transactions:

- putting a registration number onto a vehicle (**assignment**)
- taking a registration number off a vehicle (**retention**), and
- moving a registration number from one vehicle to another (**cherished transfer**).

Due to the complex nature of some transactions, you should check the advice on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) to see what fees and supporting materials are required before you send in your application.

How do I apply?

Please send your application to **DVLA, Swansea, SA99 1DS**. You can expect your application to be processed by DVLA within 7 working days of receipt (please allow time for postage). If you do not receive your documents after 10 working days, please contact DVLA on 0300 790 6802.

What's changed?

- You will get your tax disc through the post separately to your V5/C (in some cases, the V5/C may arrive first).
- If you know the registration number and want to find out if DVLA have processed your application you can check the **Vehicle Enquiry System** (VES) by visiting www.gov.uk/get-vehicle-information-from-dvla and search by quoting the registration number.
- Our application forms now include contact details for motor dealers. This allows us to contact the dealer if there are any issues and avoids unnecessary delays from rejecting incorrect or incomplete applications.

For more information on the PR process go to www.gov.uk/buy-a-personalised-registration-number

Taxing your vehicle

What is this process?

Any vehicle used on the public road must have a valid tax disc (vehicle licence) unless you have told DVLA that you are not using it on the road (by declaring a Statutory Off Road Notification or SORN). Some vehicles are exempt from paying road tax such as disability vehicles and electric cars. For more information on SORN go to www.gov.uk/sorn

The cost of a vehicle tax disc varies. To work out your vehicle tax and how much you need to pay go to www.gov.uk/calculate-vehicle-tax-rates

How do I apply?

You can tax your vehicle:

- online at www.gov.uk/tax-disc
- by phone on 0300 123 4321 Text phone 0300 790 6201, and
- at your local vehicle licensing Post Office®.

What's changed?

The range of vehicles you can tax at the Post Office® has been extended so that you can now tax almost all types of vehicles. There are exceptions and these applications should be sent to DVLA Swansea for processing:

Vehicles you cannot tax at the Post Office®

1. Where changing your tax affects the DVLA database

Vehicles where the tax you need to pay depends on you changing one of the fields recorded on the DVLA database.

For example a change:

- to a plating certificate affecting the tax
- in trailer weight, or
- in engine capacity for PLG vehicles.

Note: any changes to colour, name and address or any field that doesn't affect the rate of tax or tax class will not stop the Post Office® processing the tax application.

2. Changing the vehicle into or out of some tax classes

- any of the emergency service or NHS tax classes (such as Police, fire, ambulance)
- or out of the historic tax class
- the agricultural or limited use tax classes
- out of special vehicles (tax class 14)

- out of Recovery vehicle
- out of Small island vehicles
- disabled passenger vehicle
- out of Trailer HGV or reduced pollution Trailer HGV (changing between the two will be processed at the Post Office® as will changes out of these into Private HGV)
- combined transport or reduced pollution Combined transport*
- special types or reduced pollution Special types*, or
- general haulage or reduced pollution General haulage*.

* = the Post Office® will process changes between the two options but not into or out of the two options from other types of tax class.

Benefits of this change

- By extending the range of tax transactions at the Post Office®, customers who have a greater need for face to face services will still benefit from these services.
- With 4,600 branches offering these services, customers will benefit from greater accessibility and convenience.

Documents you will need

- The Post Office® can tax vehicles using a valid reminder form (V11 or V85/1), the V5/C or new keepers supplement (V5C/2).
- If you do not have any of these, you will need to fill in an application for a V5/C, using a V62 and V10 (application for a tax disc), to allow you to tax your vehicle.

The ‘drop off and collect’ service at the Post Office®

If you wish to send a number of applications through the Post Office® at one time there will be a ‘drop off and collect’ service. The Post Office® can deal with:

- up to 5 applications immediately at the counter
- between 5 and 10 applications within an hour
- between 10 and 50 applications by the next day, or
- more than 50 applications within the week.

Where to send your application

Please send your application to DVLA, Swansea, SA99 1DZ. You can expect your application to be returned by DVLA within 7 working days of receipt (please allow time for postage). If you do not receive your documents after 10 working days, please contact DVLA on 0300 790 6802.

Sending us photocopied documents

Photocopies are accepted with all tax applications sent to Swansea, for example, plating certificates or reduced pollution certificates.

For more information about these changes including details on supporting documentation and steps in the process, go to **www.gov.uk/browse/driving/car-tax-discs**

Trade licensing

What is this process?

If you are a motor trader or vehicle tester, having a trade licence will save you having to register vehicles temporarily in your possession.

How do I apply?

You can write to DVLA Swansea for all first applications, renewals, surrender of a licence and duplicates or replacements.

Please send your application to **DVLA, Swansea, SA99 1DZ**. Your application will be returned within 4 weeks (please allow time for postage). If you do not receive your documents, after this period, please contact DVLA on 0300 300 1495.

What's changed?

- All trade licensing applications forms are available on [**www.gov.uk/trade-licence-plates**](https://www.gov.uk/trade-licence-plates)
- There is no longer a requirement for site inspections as part of the application for a first trade licence and you do not need to send identification documents to DVLA Swansea.

For more information about these changes including details on supporting documentation and steps in the process, you can go to [**www.gov.uk/trade-licence-plates**](https://www.gov.uk/trade-licence-plates)

Vehicle inspections and approvals

Vehicle inspections

In some cases when you apply to register a vehicle with DVLA, someone may need to physically inspect the vehicle. This is to confirm that the vehicle exists and meets the relevant specifications before DVLA can issue the appropriate documents. The Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA) is responsible for carrying out vehicle inspections on behalf of DVLA for an interim period.

How do I apply?

If your vehicle needs an inspection, DVLA will write to give you detailed instructions on how to arrange an appropriate inspection.

What's changed?

DVLA is currently undertaking an exercise to outsource this service to a third party supplier. In the meantime the process above is an interim process until the exercise is complete.

Vehicle approvals

Vehicles also need to be approved to make sure they meet certain safety and environmental standards. Normally, the manufacturer or importer will take care of this. However, your vehicle might not have approval, so you might need to apply for it.

For more information go to [**www.gov.uk/vehicle-approval**](https://www.gov.uk/vehicle-approval)

Vehicle customer services

What is this process?

Local offices also provided the facility for customers to apply for:

- a new V5/C (using a V62 form)
- a temporary registration certificate (using a V379)
- changes to a vehicle (using the V5/C)
- a refund of a tax disc (using forms V14 or a V33 depending on whether or not you have the original tax disc), and
- applying to export a vehicle from the country.

Many of these services were already available as postal service through DVLA Swansea. With the local office closures, Swansea will manage all of these services.

How do I apply?

If you want to make changes to a vehicle you will need to send the V5C to

DVLA
Swansea
SA99 1BA

Your application will be returned within 4 weeks (please allow time for postage). If you do not receive your document after this period please contact DVLA on 0300 790 6802.

If you are exporting a vehicle out of the country for more than 12 months, you need to tell DVLA by filling in the V5C/4 'notification of permanent export' section of your V5/C and send it to:

DVLA
Swansea
SA99 1BD

What has changed?

You now need to send your application to DVLA Swansea instead of a local office.

For more information about this change as well as other vehicle-related services, you can search for the relevant service on [**www.gov.uk/browse/driving**](https://www.gov.uk/browse/driving)

For vehicle exports, go to [**www.gov.uk/taking-vehicles-out-of-uk**](https://www.gov.uk/taking-vehicles-out-of-uk) for more information

Drivers customer services

What has changed?

- Sending mail directly to DVLA

Most driver related services previously available at the local offices were 'post box' services. This meant that the application would be accepted over the counter and sent for processing to Swansea. These documents should now be sent direct to DVLA Swansea.

- The premium checking service for foreign licence holders

A number of local offices also provided a premium checking service for customers with foreign driving licences. EU licence holders and drivers from one of 16 designated countries with whom we have exchange licence arrangements in place could have their ID checked at one of four offices (Wimbledon, Nottingham, Glasgow and Swansea). They offered this service as part of applications to exchange foreign driving licence.

This service will no longer be available as these four offices will also close.

For more information about all of these changes as well as other driver-related services, you can search for the relevant service on www.gov.uk/browse/driving

Enforcements

What has changed?

DVLA previously processed enforcement actions such as processing Fixed Penalty Payments through 10 Area Enforcement Centres (AEC) which were co-located with local office. This work has since been centralised at DVLA Swansea.

All correspondence on enforcements will now be dealt with at Swansea.

Transacting with DVLA

How to pay for applications at the Post Office®

DVLA continues to ensure that customers have valid means of paying for their services. You can make vehicle tax transactions at an additional 4,600 Post Office® branches as well as 400 branches where you can apply for a duplicate tax disc. You can use the online Post Office branch finder to find your nearest branch. The Post Office® will accept the following payment methods for any DVLA transaction:

- cheques or postal orders made payable to Post Office Limited
- debit cards
- cash (but not by post)
- Post Office® budget cards
- sterling travellers cheques, and
- credit cards (a transaction fee may apply).

How to pay for applications posted to DVLA Swansea

DVLA will accept the following payment methods for all applications posted to Swansea for processing;

- cheques or postal orders made payable to DVLA
- banker's drafts
- sterling travellers cheques, and
- prefunded accounts (where these are in place with existing customers).

How to contact DVLA

For full details about how to contact DVLA, our corporate information and the latest information updates you can go to the DVLA website at

www.gov.uk/dvla

For enquiries, you can contact DVLA through the following contact details:

Vehicle Registration and Tax enquiries

Phone: 0300 790 6802

Text phone/minicom: 0300 123 1279

Fax: 0300 123 0798

Monday to Friday, 8am to 7pm

Saturday, 8am to 2pm

Driver Licensing Enquiries

Phone: 0300 790 6801

Text phone/minicom: 0300 123 1278

Fax: 0300 123 0784

Fax from outside the UK: +44 (0)1792 786 369

Monday to Friday, 8am to 7pm

Saturday, 8am to 2pm

Drivers Medical Enquiries

Phone: 0300 790 6806 (car or motorcycle)

0300 790 6807 (bus, coach or lorry)

Fax: 0845 850 0095

Monday to Friday, 8am to 5:30pm

Saturday, 8am to 1pm

If you wish to contact DVLA but English is not your first language, DVLA can provide translation services to assist you to communicate your enquiry.

Providing feedback to DVLA

If you wish to provide feedback to DVLA on any of our services, we would welcome your comments so we can continue to improve our services. You can go to the DVLA website for the latest contact information to provide feedback and you can also get details of our complaints procedure online at [**www.gov.uk/government/organisations/driver-and-vehicle-licensing-agency/about/complaints-procedure**](https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/driver-and-vehicle-licensing-agency/about/complaints-procedure)

We may contact you for your views on how we handled your complaint.

Key DVLA addresses

Some of the important postal addresses for sending applications to DVLA Swansea

I want to...	Address	Post Code
deal with an enforcement action	DVLA, Swansea	SA99 1AH
license or SORN my vehicle (V890)	DVLA, Swansea	SA99 1AR
change details on the registration certificate (V5C)	DVLA, Swansea	SA99 1BA
tell DVLA the vehicle has been sold to a trader (V5C/3)	DVLA, Swansea	SA99 1BD
apply for the first registration and licensing for a vehicle	DVLA, Swansea	SA99 1BE
request a replacement driving licence DVLA, Swansea	DVLA, Swansea	SA99 1AB
make an enquiry of vehicle and drivers records	DVLA, Swansea	SA99 1BP
renew my driving licence (Ten Year Renewals)	DVLA, Swansea	SA99 1DH
make a Personalised Registration transaction	DVLA, Swansea	SA99 1DS
apply for a trade licence	DVLA, Swansea	SA99 1DZ

Glossary of terms

Common terminology and descriptions when transacting with DVLA

Term/Acronym	Description
AEC	Area Enforcement Centres
AFRL	Automated First Registration and Licensing
CT	Cherished Transfer
DVLA	Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency
EU	European Union
GB	Great Britain
GDS	Government Digital Services
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
ID	Identification Document
IVA	Individual Vehicle Approval
LO	Local Office
LSN	Local Services Network
LVLO	Local Vehicle Licensing Office
MNS	Modernisation of Network Services
MSVA	Motorcycle Single Vehicle Approval
NHS	National Health Service
NI	Northern Ireland
PLG	Private Light Goods
PR	Personalised Registration
SORN	Statutory Off Road Notification
SVA	Single Vehicle Approval
V11	Renewal reminder to get a tax disc or make a Statutory Off Road Notification
V14	Application for a refund of vehicle tax OR return of a nil value tax disc
V317	Application to transfer or retain a vehicle registration number
V33	Application for a vehicle tax refund (without a tax disc)
V379	Temporary Registration Certificate
V55/1	Application for a first tax disc and registration of a new motor vehicle
V55/2	Application for a first tax disc and registration of a new imported vehicle
V55/4	Application for a first tax disc and registration of a new motor vehicle
V55/5	Application for a 1st tax disc and registration of a used motor vehicle

V5C	Vehicle Registration Certificate
V62	Application for a Vehicle Registration Certificate
V750	Certificate of Entitlement
V778	Retention Document
V85/1	Renewal reminder for a tax disc or Statutory Off Road Notification (SORN) for a Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV)
V996	Application for de-registration
V997	Tax disc delivery form
VED	Vehicle Excise Duty
VES	Vehicle Enquiry Service
VRO	Vehicle Registration Office

Annex 1

Background of DVLA local offices

The agency is supported in its role by a network of local offices. Originally, there were 81 Local Vehicle Licensing Offices (LVLOs), responsible for the registration of new and imported vehicles and licensing transactions not handled by Post Offices®. The LVLOs also dealt with export licensing arrangements, trade registration plates, cherished transfers and carried out the local Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) enforcement duties.

In 1974, about 2,500 Post Office® branches were able to issue VED 'tax discs'.

Since 1974, many of the agency's internal processes have been automated and other services can be provided online. As a result, the structure of DVLA's local services network has changed and its size has been steadily reduced.

In 1985, the number of LVLOs were reduced to 53. By then, about 95% of all VED licensing transactions were completed at one of more than 4,000 Post Offices®. To reflect the changing nature of their work the LVLOs were renamed Vehicle Registration Offices (VROs).

In 1995, DVLA introduced Automated First Registration and Licensing (AFRL), which enabled car manufacturers and dealers to register vehicles electronically, without the need to involve a VRO.

The local network was reduced again, to 40 offices. Since 2000, they have been referred to as local offices. In 2008, the Luton office was closed bringing the network down to 39.

Since the introduction of AFRL, the agency has continued to provide more services electronically, including the introduction in 2004 of Electronic Vehicle Licensing (EVL), and more still are in the pipeline.

After a review of local office functions in 2009, the network was developed to focus on providing an initial face-to-face contact for customers, with more of the associated processing work being centralised. Centralised Processing Units (CPUs) were established in Manchester, Swansea and Northampton to handle personalised registration transactions from across the network. A centralised operating model was also developed for the future management of enforcement casework.

Annex 2

Why are the local offices closing?

In December 2011, a consultation called 'Transforming DVLA Services' asked DVLA's customers and stakeholders how they felt DVLA should provide services in the future. The challenge was for DVLA to reduce its running costs and offer a better value service to reflect customers changing needs.

The consultation asked:

- for views about the proposed changes
- what customers needed to help them use different electronic (online) services
- how to encourage customers to use online services, and
- what the impacts would be.

The consultation ran between December 2011 and March 2012 and resulted in 1,000 written responses. The proposals focused on how closing the local offices and moving towards online services would affect DVLA, its customers and stakeholders. The detailed proposals covered:

- encouraging customers to use online channels
- moving some transactions from local offices DVLA Swansea, and
- moving other transactions to third party intermediaries.

A review of the consultation responses found some specific issues. It was clear from the responses that those asked were not sure about how the proposals would work. The changes suggested would reduce the workforce of DVLA by 813 posts in total and save around £25m every year. There was general support for the move towards online channels and with the right changes made to address the issues identified by the consultation customers and stakeholders could realise further benefits such as reduced travelling times.

In July 2012, the findings of the consultation was published. Full details of the findings, the impact assessments and detailed responses are available at

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/transforming-dvla-services