

Giving people information from our vehicle record



Getting information on your car from DVLA

After contacting the V8 Register for information about previous owners for his MGBGTV8, David Worthington made an application to DVLA under their V888 procedure. Here he describes how it works, what it costs and what information he received.

I made a request to the DVLA by completing their form and enclosing the £5 fee. I was delighted by their response – I received more than 30 A4 pages which set out a ‘**full keeper history details as requested according to our records**’. The pages I received are photocopies of the registration documents and any notifications of changes or registered keeper over the years. With that information it has enabled me to generate a complete history of the car with the dates of transfer of keepers. The DVLA is keen to stress that the registration document is not proof of ownership. I also have a couple of mileages recorded when the keeper changed. As you might expect, I have found it all very interesting. I was pleasantly surprised by their efficiency and the comprehensive nature of their reply. It also strikes me as good value for the fee of £5.

Getting information from DVLA on a vehicle

DVLA manages a vast amount of driver and vehicle data to help keep Britain’s motorists moving safely and legally. In addition to providing information to the police and local authorities, the properly controlled release of DVLA data to third parties offers a host of practical benefits for the public. DVLA’s vehicle register is maintained primarily to identify vehicles used on public roads, to assist law enforcement and the collection of taxes and to facilitate improved road safety. It holds information about each motor vehicle including the vehicle registration number, the vehicle identification number or VIN, make and model, emissions classification and the vehicle’s road tax status. It also includes the name and address of the registered keeper, dates of acquisition and disposal. While the law requires the DVLA to protect the privacy of individual motorists whose details they hold on both the driver and vehicle registers, there are a number of lawful circumstances in which data can be released from the registers

DVLA has two very thorough and useful documents setting out the information they can release from their vehicle records. First there is a 15 page guide to their release of information [INF266](#) which sets out their responsibilities and the public benefits of data release and second there is a 30 page [MIS546](#) with useful guidance on seeking vehicle data – for example if you are the current registered keeper and you need to know the history of your vehicle. Regulation 27 of the Road Vehicles (Registration and Licensing) Regulations 2002 provides for the release of information by the DVLA where a person shows reasonable cause to want it.

DVLA Form V888

This form has the title **Request by an individual for information about a vehicle**. As the DVLA holds personal data it has a duty under the Data Protection Act 1998 to protect that information. The DVLA therefore has to make careful checks before it will release information, so you will need to provide proof of your address with your application. If you do not provide a copy of one of the documents from the list set out on Form V888, DVLA will not be able to deal with your application and will return it to you. The documents DVLA requires to confirm your address are a gas, electricity, water or landline phone bill issued in the last three months, or a bank or building society statement issued in the last three months.

A necessary caution is set out on Form V888 that it is a criminal offence under Section 55 of the Data Protection Act 1998 to unlawfully procure or sell personal information. The maximum penalty is a £5,000 fine. DVLA adds they will carry out necessary checks on the information you provide.

Filling in Form V888

In filling in Form V888 you should choose either **option A or B** – you cannot choose both. But why are there two options? Well it depends on why you want the information which is part of the necessary and prudent checks DVLA has to make as a responsible personal data holder.

- Option A**
To obtain the name and address of the registered keeper of a vehicle at a specific date
 This option is used if the **vehicle was involved in an incident** where you need to trace the registered keeper of the vehicle if the incident involved damage and an insurance claim. You will need to provide details of any injury or damage, whether the police were informed and if so the incident number, the police officer and station together with details of any witness. Also details of your motor insurance cover have to be provided. Where your vehicle has been involved in an incident (Option A) you have to describe the situation that has led to you wanting the name and address of the registered keeper and how the vehicle was directly involved in the situation. The fee payable to DVLA with your V888 application is £2.50.
- Option B**
To obtain information about a vehicle that was previously registered, or is registered in your name
 This is the option if you are seeking information on previous registrations of a vehicle. The fee payable to DVLA with your V888 application is a modest £5.00.

In completing Form V888 there is a **serious and necessary declaration** as to how you will use the information you receive, that you are aware of the Data Protection Act requirements, that it is an offence to unlawfully procure or sell personal information and that you are aware of your legal obligations in handling information provided to you by the DVLA. So other sections on Form V888 require details from you of the vehicle you want information on, **what information you want and why** (section 4) and **how you are going to use the information** (section 5).

In many cases where a classic car owner is making a V888 application to learn more of the history of their car, the statements that might be suitable in sections 4 and 5 could be:

Section 4:

“Information including how many owners my car has had and the locations in which it has been based and any mileages on transfer of the vehicle.”

To cover the undertaking required in the declaration

(particularly with regard to the sale of data) it might be wise to include in section 5 a statement that it is the intention that the **history obtained should stay with the car** and in due course be **passed on to future owners**. There should be no objection to that since a future owner would be equally entitled to obtain the DVLA information themselves.

Section 5:

“To trace the full history of my vehicle for my own personal interest, including how many owners it has had and the locations in which it has been based. It is my intention that the history obtained should stay with the car and in due course be passed on to future owners, for their own interest.”

When the time comes to sell the car, a documented history file will be of considerable interest to any prospective purchaser of the vehicle, but it should be borne in mind that personal data is concerned here. The suggested wording for section 5 of the form indicating **an intention that information obtained under the form V888 procedure should remain with the vehicle and be passed on to future owners**, should avoid any suggestion that such data is being illegally sold when the car is disposed of.

The completed form with the appropriate fee is then mailed to Vehicle Record Enquiries, DVLA, Swansea SA99 1AJ. You can download a copy of [Form V888](#) via the [GOV.UK](#) website.

important. However I was pleased to know more of the history of my car.

What information did I receive from DVLA?

The thirty A4 pages I received from the DVLA were nearly all photocopies of the front pages of the original **Vehicle Registration Document** or the pages used for the **Notification of Changes**. These contained the names and addresses of the previous keepers and the dates of changes of details. All signatures had been erased.

The oldest document was the **Application for a Licence for a New Motor Vehicle and Declaration for Registration** giving details of the original dealer and also the ‘selling’ dealer. This explained a mystery to me of why the **British Motor Industry Heritage Trust – Certified Copy of a Factory Record** I had obtained gave the destination dealer when my V8 was despatched from the MG plant as Wadham-Stringer in Southampton but the vehicle registration number was issued in Worcestershire. The address of the selling dealer was in Stourbridge!

I knew that I was the 14th keeper of the car and I had details of the previous three keepers but the DVLA information enabled me to compile a complete history of all previous keepers. It gave details of how long they had kept the car and in a couple of recent transfers, the ‘present mileage’ had also been filled in. Two of the keepers had been garages and this explained why there was a mystery garage sticker on the rear screen. It was not the selling dealer but keeper number seven.

One page was a summary of the last 5 keepers giving their date of acquisition; date of disposal and name and address. This looked to be a computer generated list, maybe from a database when the DVLA records were computerised.

This is a very helpful service from the DVLA and has answered many questions that would have been very difficult to work out by other routes. It was performed speedily by DVLA and in my opinion represents very good value for money.



Release of information from DVLA's registers

INF266 - [link](#)

4 What information do you want and why?
(see note B over the page)

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

5 How are you going to use the information?
(see note B over the page)

Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Interest in V888 data for future owners of your car

While anything about the history of the vehicle you are buying is interesting, I am not sure that a list of previous owners adds much reassurance about its maintenance. A history file with a well-documented trail of regular servicing and replacement parts invoices, even possibly a maintenance log, would be seen as more

Request by an individual for information about a vehicle
Form V888

1 What are you asking for?
Please read the notes over the page before you fill in this form.
For more information go to www.gov.uk/request-information-from-dvla

2 Your details
Name: _____
Address: _____
Postcode: _____
Phone number (if you have one): _____

3 Details of the vehicle you want information about
Vehicle registration number: _____
Make and model: _____
Colour: _____

4 What information do you want and why?
See note B over the page.

5 How are you going to use the information?
See note B over the page.

6 Declaration
I declare that the information (see note A) is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. I am not providing this information for any other purpose than that stated in section 1. I will accept that my name and address may be used for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998.

7 Further information
You can find further details and the latest guidance about requesting information from our registers on our website www.gov.uk/request-information-from-dvla
For more about DVLA, our order services or www.gov.uk/askaboutdvla

8 Paying a licence?
The date is to begin registration. Do not tick this if you have not yet paid your licence fee.
www.gov.uk/dvla

Form V888 - [link](#)