

## News story: New DVLA campaign highlights consequences for drivers who evade vehicle tax



The message is clear to motorists – if you don't tax your vehicle on time, DVLA will take action: tax it or lose it.

The 11 areas of the UK have been targeted where vehicle tax evasion is highest (based on the number of enforcement actions that took place in 2018).

Area	Clamped	Fines or Penalties	Totals
London	27,605	94,550	122,155
Northern Ireland	5,516	67,944	73,460
Birmingham	5,076	50,045	55,121
Manchester	7,573	26,214	33,787
Glasgow	2,666	29,705	32,371
Sheffield	3,987	25,291	29,278
Cardiff	3,021	24,598	27,619
Nottingham	3,507	21,346	24,853
Bristol	3,496	20,412	23,908
Leicester	3,344	19,196	22,540
Coventry	1,257	18,193	19,450

The advertising campaign focuses on the consequences of not taxing your vehicle – from financial penalties to court action to clamping and finally the loss of a car.

A giant clamp at the centre of the campaign image reflects the fact that DVLA take enforcement action against untaxed vehicles on streets across the country and it will happen to you if you don't tax your vehicle on time.

DVLA Head of Enforcement Tim Burton said:

This campaign has a clear message for anyone who flouts the law in this way – tax it or lose it.

It's never been easier to tax your car, so there really is no excuse. We would rather not have to clamp or remove vehicles, but this campaign highlights the consequences of not taxing a vehicle. Having your vehicle clamped is expensive and inconvenient – and you could end up losing your car.

Motorists can go online, 24 hours a day, to [tax a vehicle](#) or [check whether their vehicle tax is up to date](#). You can even check by asking Amazon Alexa or Google Home – all you need is your vehicle registration.

Published 21 February 2019

Last updated 27 February 2019 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 27 February 2019 Added translation
2. 21 February 2019 First published.

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## [Press release: UK to invest up to £30m through partnership with African Union](#)

The UK is set to inject up to £30 million into prosperity and security projects across Africa as it steps up its investment in the continent, Minister of State for Africa Harriett Baldwin has announced today (Thursday 21 February).

The funding boost comes as Britain signs a new strategic partnership with the African Union, strengthening the engagement between the continent and the UK Government.

**Speaking ahead of the signing of the partnership at the African Union Commission Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, Mrs Baldwin said:**

From our support to observers ensuring free and fair elections in Nigeria and Senegal this weekend, to the crucial training our Armed Forces provides to security forces in Kenya, the UK's partnership with African countries continues to help empower and upskill people across the continent, and this funding will allow us to boost those efforts.

Our new partnership will also cement our relationship with the African Union, building on growing economic ties to forge new opportunities for young people and reinforce our close bonds.

The partnership will strengthen cooperation on security and prosperity, and

support a joined up approach to tackle climate change.

The funding, which forms part of the partnership agreement, and will be spread over three years, will be used to train peacekeepers in Kenya, assist free and fair elections, and support the next phase of negotiations for the African Continental Free Trade Area.

The signing of the strategic partnership also allows the UK to support African-led ambitions with British expertise, to create more opportunities and more jobs.

Mrs Baldwin's visit to Ethiopia comes after Prime Minister Theresa May visited Nigeria, Kenya and South Africa in August to set out her vision for the UK's future partnership with Africa and the UK's aim to be the largest G7 investor in Africa by 2022.

It also follows the rapid expansion of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's diplomatic network in the region, including plans to open new embassies in Djibouti, Chad, Niger, Eswatini and Lesotho, and recruit more diplomats with new skills-sets, including in trade and investment.

## **Further information**

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## **[News story: Dstl Seeks SMEs for Additional £40M Research and Partnership Opportunities](#)**

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the science and technology sectors could benefit from an additional £40 million to £45 million of external investment opportunities from the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl). The organisation is seeking supply chain partners for a series of research projects across the defence spectrum due to start this year.

Representatives from Dstl will be available to meet potential SME partners at Venturefest South at the Ageas Bowl on 29 March. Venturefest South brings together top talent from the region to demonstrate technologies and innovations, allow start-ups to pitch for investment, and match entrepreneurs with the right organisations to take their businesses to the next level.

Dstl works with a range of start-up and SMEs, providing funding and guidance to develop new and innovative ideas to help protect the UK's armed forces; helping companies grow and boosting the regional economy. Defence is a hugely important sector in the South East, employing more than 39,000 people, with a further 18,000 in aerospace and space.

By working with investors Dstl also helps companies to commercialise the impact and bring new technologies to market. Licensing agreements have been signed for 125 technologies across defence and security, biometrics, life sciences, and diagnostics which have created 580 jobs.

Gary Aitkenhead, Dstl Chief Executive said:

Venturefest is a terrific opportunity to meet potential suppliers and explore ways we can work together. We're especially interested in companies who have not traditionally worked in defence but have specialist expertise and fresh ideas. SMEs need rapid decisions and it can take as little as a week for a new supplier to be approved.

Venturefest South is a not for-profit initiative that has been created and developed by a group of partners within the regional innovation economy including: Carswell Gould, Solent LEP, Innovate UK, the Knowledge Transfer Network, University of Portsmouth, Southampton City Council, Solent University, The University of Southampton, Portsmouth City Council, and Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.

The fast-growing innovation network in the south is supported by a number of corporate sponsors including BDO, Natwest and Dstl. All the money raised from sponsorship and ticket sales will go towards creating opportunities for early-stage business start-ups to exhibit for free at the conference.

Venturefest South is part of the wider Venturefest network, which works nationally to draw local innovation eco-systems together through a number of local events around the country, working closely with the Knowledge Transfer Network, Innovate UK and other national partners.

[Find out more and to apply to take part in any of the pitching sessions, showcase an innovation in the exhibition or sponsor Venturefest South 2019](#)

A host of opportunities exist for SMEs to work across Dstl's portfolio over the next 12 months, and through the SME Searchlight programme there will be a series of events, workshops and consultations to develop a broader supplier ecosystem, particularly in the fields of radio frequency engineering, artificial intelligence, synthetic biology and wargaming. The team can be contacted by emailing [searchlight@dstl.gov.uk](mailto:searchlight@dstl.gov.uk)

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[\*\*Press release: Businesses urged to sign up for Latin America and\*\*](#)

# Caribbean Roadshow

UK businesses are being urged to register for the 2019 Latin America and Caribbean (LATAC) Roadshow organised by the Department for International Trade (DIT) to identify new export opportunities in the region.

The LATAC Roadshow will be held at various locations across the UK including Glasgow, London, Reading, Leeds and the East Midlands. Businesses can register [here](#) before 28 February 2019 to attend.

These events will provide businesses with insight into the latest exporting opportunities in vibrant markets such as Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru.

Joanna Crellin, HM Trade Commissioner for Latin America and the Caribbean, will lead the events alongside senior trade experts from DIT to give companies the latest advice and insights into new markets.

Businesses will also hear first-hand the experiences of companies which are already successfully exporting to LATAC, including JCB, Whittaker Engineering, Concept Smoke Screen and ABI electronics.

International Trade Secretary and President of the Board of Trade Dr Liam Fox MP said:

The Latin America and Caribbean region is home to more than 650 million people, where growing economies are demanding high-quality products and services. Companies that take advantage of this demand will flourish as the UK leaves the European Union and as the world looks to a time beyond Brexit.

Each year, my international economic department helps thousands of companies of every size to break into global markets. Engagement with business roadshows such as LATAC will help companies to make the most of these export opportunities and inspire the next generation of entrepreneurs.

Latin America and the Caribbean combined is equivalent to the world's third largest economy after China and the USA, offering vast potential for UK businesses across sectors such as food and drink, oil and gas, infrastructure and financial services.

HM Trade Commissioner for Latin America and the Caribbean, Joanna Crellin, said:

Latin America and the Caribbean have vibrant and dynamic economies, so the roadshow presents a valuable opportunity for UK businesses to develop stronger trade links outside Europe.

“In the year to September 2018, £12.8 billion worth of UK goods and services were exported to LATAC – but there is potential for so much more, which is why DIT is dedicated to promoting UK trade and prosperity globally and improving market access for businesses. I look forward to attending the roadshow and meeting innovative British businesses ready to make their mark across the world.”

Home to over 650 million people, LATAC includes 48 countries and territories with a growing middle-class population, resulting in greater demand for high-quality products and services.

Scottish Secretary David Mundell said:

A number of Scottish companies are already working in and exporting to South America very successfully. I have visited South America in recent years to promote Scottish business interests and to help launch Innes and Gunn in the Paraguay market.

I know from speaking to businesses out there that Scotland’s skills, products and services are highly regarded, and I’ve seen first-hand the opportunities that exist. I’ve also witnessed the support on offer from DIT and our diplomatic networks.

So I would encourage businesses in Scotland to attend the LATAC Roadshow to identify new export opportunities and meet the demand for high-quality Scottish products and services worldwide.

Ian Harrison, Head of Exports for the Midlands at DIT, said:

There is an untapped demand across Latin America and the Caribbean for UK goods and services in these high value sectors, and our mission is to showcase the prospects in the region. I highly encourage businesses to sign up and take advantage of this opportunity.

Ben Raby, Head of South East, Department for International Trade, said:

The Latin America and Caribbean regions provide numerous trade opportunities for the UK, and there is no better time for UK businesses to explore these emerging markets.

I encourage businesses across the South East to attend the LATAC Roadshow and take advantage of the expert advice on offer and learn about the demand for high-quality British products and services in Latin America and the Caribbean.

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## [News story: David Mundell speech: 20 years of Scottish devolution](#)

In a keynote speech in Edinburgh today [21 January] the Scottish Secretary will mark twenty years of Scottish devolution

Two decades on from the establishment of the Scottish Parliament, Mr Mundell will reaffirm that Brexit will further strengthen the devolution settlement, with new powers being transferred directly to Holyrood. He will also note that work is progressing well in developing new ways of joint working between the UK and Scottish governments. In the speech, he will also reject 'power grab' accusations.

Mr Mundell will say:

### **Devolution is working well:**

I am a passionate supporter of devolution. I was proud to be elected as an MSP in that first intake in May 1999.

Two decades on, Holyrood has become one of the most powerful devolved parliaments in the world. Power and accountability are better balanced than ever before.

The vote in 1997 was re-affirmed by our decision in 2014 to remain part of the UK. And in the 2017 general election there was overwhelming support for devolutionist parties and support for a strong Scottish Parliament within the UK.

### **Reject 'power grab' accusations:**

It was claimed that the Sewel Convention was breached or, if it hadn't been breached, it was not fit for purpose and must be changed. In fact, the Sewel Convention remains an essential element in the devolution settlement.

To listen to the rhetoric coming from some of my political opponents, you could be forgiven for thinking that Holyrood is being stripped of a whole raft of powers it currently exercises. It is complete fantasy; an invented grievance. The reality is that more than 100 powers previously exercised in Brussels will transfer to Edinburgh on the day we leave the EU.

To characterise this process as a 'power grab' is nonsense.

“We should remain deeply suspicious when opponents of devolution try to present themselves as its champions and protectors.”

### **New ways of joint working with the Scottish Government:**

In the years ahead, our two governments – and the devolved administrations elsewhere in the UK – will need to work more closely than ever before.

Going forward, I want to see a Scotland’s two government’s working closely together for the benefit of people in Scotland.

Scotland would be ill-served if one government cannot add to the work that is being done by another. The time is right for this. Scots expect their two governments to work together and politicians on all sides accept the need to work together.

### **Brexit will strengthen devolution:**

I reject completely the argument put forward by opponents of devolution that it has been crushed by Brexit.

I do not believe Brexit will damage devolution. I want it to strengthen devolution, and I believe that can and will happen. Leaving the EU will bring new powers to Holyrood and new responsibilities to the Scottish Government.

Mr Mundell will be speaking this morning to an audience of businesses, academics and stakeholders at the Dovecot Studio in Edinburgh. The full speech will be available later today.