

Medical matters

Many common medical conditions can affect your ability to drive and could put you and other road users at risk. Around 49 million people hold a GB driving licence with around 757,000 drivers telling us about their medical condition last year. But how do medical professionals know which conditions will affect our driving?

To help clinicians assess their patients' fitness to drive, we provide an ['Assessing fitness to drive: guide for medical professionals'](#) (AFTD) and update it every 6 months.

My role and AFTD

I joined DVLA in March 2015, bringing around 38 years' experience – first as a doctor, then a surgeon, and finally as an A&E consultant. This background has been essential in this job, reminding me that there's an individual behind each case.

I work with DVLA management colleagues as well as being the professional lead for DVLA doctors and act as the conduit between DVLA doctors and the General Medical Council (GMC).

Part of my role is to lead on updating AFTD.

AFTD helps clinicians decide if a patient's ability to drive might be impaired by a medical condition, treatment, or even certain medications. They use AFTD to advise their patients if they need to tell DVLA about their medical condition and if they can meet the medical standard to drive.

It also helps clinicians provide advice on driving while DVLA makes medical enquiries about the patient.



Dr Nick Jenkins, DVLA's Senior Doctor.

Medical panels

Twice a year, we host [Secretary of State medical panel meetings](#) about each type of condition that could affect driving and these panels corresponds with a chapter in AFTD .

The medical panel comprises of independent nationally and internationally renowned medical experts in each field: me as Senior Doctor (or my deputy), staff from our medical areas, and lay members who offer the perspective of those using our services. We talk about any changes in medicine related to the topic, any issues that have arisen in that field, and any complex medical cases.

Last year this worked slightly differently. When the coronavirus pandemic resulted in the first lockdown in 2020, we immediately turned our focus on contingency planning for the autumn round of panels and how we would host them through conferencing software.

The autumn panels played out seamlessly and we've had some great feedback from those involved. It's really given us opportunities to work smarter.

After the panel meetings

Once we've agreed what changes need to be made we make arrangements to update AFTD. Some updates are more complex than others, so [we work closely with the relevant medical charities](#) to make sure the changes cover everything needed.

The guidance is updated and published on GOV.UK. As soon as the guidance goes live, we tell DVLA colleagues, the GMC and our [email subscribers](#). We'll also have updated the corresponding medical pages within '[Check if a health condition affects your driving](#)' (an A-Z guide of medical conditions).

By law you must tell DVLA about a medical condition that affects your driving. The [A-Z guide](#) helps you meet your legal responsibility, as it tells you which conditions you need to tell us about (and the ones you do not).



What happens after you've told us about your medical condition

We may need to make further investigations, get reports from your consultant, or contact your doctor. This can sometimes take a bit of time, especially if doctors are busy, but while your application is with us you may still be able to drive under Section 88 of The Road Traffic Act. You should speak with your doctor about [the Section 88 criteria](#) and decide whether you should drive while you are waiting for a licence to be issued.

Most people who [report a medical condition](#), which can be done online, get to

keep their driving licence. We may issue a short-term licence (1 to 5 years) if you've got a medical condition considered to be progressive.

This is because we'll need to assess the ongoing stability of the condition or consider the risk of recurrence of an episode being below a certain threshold. Examples of this kind of condition are dementia, epilepsy, and diabetes.

If you're a driver and have had, or currently suffer from, a medical condition or disability that affects your driving, [you must tell DVLA](#).

If you're a medical professional you can keep up to date with any future changes to the guidance, including changes to medical standards, by [signing up for our email alert service](#). Simply go to the option named 'DVLA Stakeholders' and select 'Medical Professionals'.

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[Recognising our apprentices during National Apprenticeship Week 2021](#)

Last year we blogged about [why apprenticeships matter at DVLA](#) and the importance of supporting our apprentices with their personal development. As one of the largest employers in South Wales, with more than 6,000 people, apprentices can combine working with studying to gain skills in a specific role.



Nicole Powell

If you've ever wondered about a career in DVLA, now is the time to consider an apprenticeship. It's a fantastic opportunity to gain more qualifications or get new skills whilst in employment.

Apprenticeships give you the opportunity to gain nationally recognised qualifications in occupational areas and can help you achieve the job or position you would like in the future.

We currently have 92 apprentices across the agency studying towards a range of qualifications from foundation apprenticeships (level 2), apprenticeships (level 3) and higher apprenticeships (level 4, 5 and 6) in a wide range of professions from finance to administration, IT to communication, to nurses and doctors. All contributing to the long-term future of the agency.

Learn what it's really like to become an apprentice at DVLA

Hear some first-hand accounts from some of our current apprentices within our Information Technology Services (ITS).

Hallie Rees, recently completed a [level 3 apprentice in IT, software, web and telecoms](#). She applied for an apprenticeship after hearing about the fantastic career opportunities in DVLA:

An apprenticeship is the perfect starting point for someone who, like me, is ready to take that next step and get a full-time job.

The part I have enjoyed most about the apprenticeship, within ITS, was that I was able to move around different areas of DVLA. This

allowed me to experience lots of different elements of the organisation to see what I'm good at and discover what I enjoy doing the most.

From my college work and the support from my colleagues and apprenticeship ambassadors, I have managed to secure a permanent full-time job in my current role as [an EUC engineer](#).

Without this apprenticeship, I wouldn't have known where to start. It's allowed me to develop the hands-on skills that are used in the business which has set me up for my future.

We're proud that our apprentices come from all walks of life and at different points in their career. The flexibility of apprenticeships means that it's never too late to change direction and pursue your dream career.

Cristian Vladut began his apprenticeship in L3 Diploma in ICT Professional Competence, after completing a master's degree in construction management.

I was looking for an opportunity to get hands-on experience solving problems involving computers, specifically in the software area. One might think it is unconventional to become an apprentice after finishing a master's degree. However, I put my trust in DVLA and Gower College Swansea and knew that I would be studying modules that would help me achieve my dream career – a software engineer.

The apprenticeship helped me to secure a permanent job, a safe environment and a place where I can grow and socialise with open minded people.

To find out more about apprenticeships visit: www.apprenticeships.gov.uk

Roles at DVLA

DVLA will support you in reaching your full potential, offering rewarding and challenging jobs, training plans and ongoing development opportunities.

If you're inspired by Hallie's experience, [we're recruiting for a Technical Infrastructure Engineer](#) to join our team. You'll be a key member of the team who has engineering skills and in-depth product knowledge. The closing date is Sunday 14 February.

If you fancy a career at DVLA make sure you keep an eye on [Civil Service Jobs](#).

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[Bats, bees and trees: DVLA's latest biodiversity action plan](#)

The recent publication of our fourth [Biodiversity Action Plan \(BAP\)](#) marks another milestone in our commitment towards a more sustainable future. Although it focuses on our specific aims for the next few years, together with our [new Sustainability Report](#), the BAP also ensures that decisions about the future of DVLA will include the development of biodiversity across our estate.

Whilst publishing the plan is not a legal requirement for the agency, it does help us stay compliant with legislation and government targets. Meeting targets is not the only reason for doing this though. We recognise that biodiversity is vitally important in fighting climate change, and in ensuring good health and well-being within our local community and further afield. The plan supports our commitment to ensure we address these related challenges of public health, climate change and biodiversity, both now and for future generations.



The DVLA estate includes three sites in the Swansea area which provide a variety of different habitats including urban and industrial. We're proud of the progress we have made in the development of biodiversity on our estate and over the next five years we will focus on three main areas we want to improve.

Our habitats

One of the main focuses is the habitats that we already have on the estate. On one grassland habitat surrounding a car park, we counted more than 16 species of plants and in a parkland area, we identified 25 species. We have many trees on the estate including Alder, whose catkins [provide an early source of pollen for bees](#).

We will target the areas we have identified as priority habitats in the BAP, meaning they are important for preserving biodiversity, such as hedgerows and ponds.

We plan to firstly maintain these habitats so that we do not lose any species and, where we can, look after these habitats in a way that improves their condition, making them better examples of these types of habitat. These management techniques include partially clearing vegetation from our pond and introducing tree and shrub planting in our woodland and parkland habitat. We will also time hedge cutting to avoid nesting season and allow leaves to gather below hedges to provide shelter for insects and hibernating hedgehogs.



Our species

Our second priority will be to ensure the species currently using our estate continue to be present in healthy numbers in years to come. We have focused on key species whose needs will not be met by the general habitat conservation plans.

We have two bee colonies at one of our sites. Bee populations are coming under pressure and numbers are decreasing rapidly, so we want to make sure

that our population remains healthy by renewing the bee hives we currently have on site and introducing new hives where appropriate.

We also have six species of bats recorded on site, all of which are all legally protected. We plan to encourage these bats to continue using our site by providing bat boxes and identifying trees and buildings where they can roost. We will also work to minimise the light spill from our external lighting, ensuring there are dark corridors connecting their roosting areas.



Common lizards were found on one of our sites and although lizards are not rare, they are coming under increasing stress from development, so it is good to see a medium size population here. We will maintain the site and provide winter shelters to ensure these species continue to be present in healthy numbers.

The site is home to lots of different wild flowers. These include wood vetch and betony, the presence of which suggest that at one time the landscape looked very different. Our plans include taking action to preserve the area and adding signage to ensure the plants are not stepped on or disturbed.

Our community

Our final priority is to engage with our staff and the local community. When we are able to, we will give local schools an opportunity to use our green spaces to encourage children to learn more about the natural environment and how important it is to protect this amazing resource. We will raise awareness of wildlife gardening with our staff and create a sign-posted trail to raise awareness of the biodiversity on site. We plan to include local schools in a biodiversity day and we are creating an official biodiversity steering group

to oversee the progress.



The sustainability team, with help from the official biodiversity steering group, will make sure these objectives are achieved. This group will be made up of staff from across DVLA including colleagues from Estates and the communications team who will help raise awareness with our staff and the wider community.

If you are interested in Biodiversity on the DVLA estate, you can find out more in [the Biodiversity Action Plan](#), and read more about our goals for a sustainable future in [the new Sustainability Report](#).

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[DVLA's bilingual online services: behind the scenes](#)

[English] – [[Cymraeg](#)]

If you've ever used DVLA's public online services, you may well have spotted that most of them are also available in Welsh or used them yourself if you speak the language. As today is Welsh language rights day ('Mae gen i hawl'), it's the ideal time to reveal more about how we developed our 2 newest bilingual online services.

[Welsh language rights day](#), which is promoted by the Welsh Language Commissioner, celebrates the Welsh language services provided by organisations and the rights people have to use them. We definitely had good reason to celebrate our bilingual online services recently, as our 2 latest ones – [change address on your vehicle log book \(V5C\)](#) and [get a duplicate log book \(V5C\)](#) – were the first ones we developed and launched in English and Welsh at the same time.

Here's how we did it

I've worked with the Welsh Language Policy (WLP) team regularly over the last few years as vehicle registration service designer on several big changes, and I'm fully aware of the Welsh Language Act 1993 requirements to provide translations of forms, letters and online services. My first step was to include these requirements from the very start for our vehicle change of address (or VCOA for short) and duplicate V5C services.

We shared the content and structure with WLP Manager Rhianedd Rhys and her team as soon as they were finalised. This meant she could get the translations over to us to integrate into the service as a finished product.

What really helped us achieve this was the great working partnership between my Service Design team, the business analysts for the project and WLP, which ensured we got everything done successfully and on time.



There were a couple of challenges...

Our biggest challenge was around time really and making sure what we sent to be translated was the final wording. Welsh translations tend to be longer than the English equivalent so we did face some issues about length of fields and space on screens to accommodate the additional space needed for the translations, which can be tricky at times. Nothing we couldn't get sorted together though.

We learned handy lessons too

We certainly learned from VCOA, as we started working on the get a duplicate V5C service within a week of VCOA going live. We structured the project planning more, so when we finalised the screens we passed them for translation more regularly. There were a few last-minute changes because of insight but that is to be expected. It is [agile](#) after all.

Bilingual bonus for users

The signs so far from users are really encouraging. Take-up of the 2 new Welsh services is already on a par with our long-established services like [tax your vehicle online](#) and [driver licensing online](#), which have been around for many years.

And finally...

I'm not a Welsh speaker but was proud to deliver these services in Welsh. It would never occur to me that to do so would ever be an optional extra, so I see it as standard. I would like to recognise the patience, support and delivery of Rhianedd and her team, as we would not have done it on time without them.

I'm absolutely delighted that the Welsh services went live at the same time as the English services," adds Rhianedd. "These end-to-end Welsh language journeys are great news for us and our customers who wish to transact with us in Welsh, and build on the Welsh services we already provide. Thanks to everyone who made this happen!

"Our [Welsh language scheme](#) sets out our commitments to the Welsh language, as agreed with the Welsh Language Commissioner. We have a responsibility to show that we're treating the Welsh and English languages equally. We're very proud that usage of our current Welsh online services has increased year on year, so it was extremely important that these 2 services were launched at the same time as the English ones to make sure our Welsh-speaking customers can use their language of choice.

Da iawn bawb (well done everyone)!

All of our Welsh online services are listed on GOV.UK's [Welsh online services page](#), and you can find them under 'Trwyddedau gyrru' and 'Rhifau cofrestru cerbyd, treth cerbyd a phrofion MOT'.

[[English](#)] – [Cymraeg]

Os ydych chi erioed wedi defnyddio gwasanaethau ar-lein cyhoeddus, mae'n bosibl eich bod wedi gweld bod y rhan fwyaf ohonynt hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg

neu efallai eich bod wedi eu defnyddio nhw os ydych yn siaradwr Cymraeg. Gan fod heddiw yn ddiwrnod 'Mae gen i hawl', hwn yw'r amser perffaith i ddatgelu mwy ynghylch sut wnaethom ddatblygu ein 2 wasanaeth ar-lein dwyieithog fwyaf newydd.

Mae diwrnod '[Mae gen i hawl](#)' sy'n cael ei hyrwyddo gan Gomisiynydd y Gymraeg, yn dathlu'r gwasanaethau Cymraeg sy'n cael eu darparu gan sefydliadau a'r hawliau sydd gan bobl i'w defnyddio nhw. Yn bendant roedd gennym reswm da i ddathlu ein gwasanaethau ar-lein dwyieithog yn ddiweddar, wrth i'n 2 wasanaeth newydd – [newid cyfeiriad ar eich llyfr log cerbyd \(V5CW\)](#) a [chael llyfr log dyblyg \(V5CW\)](#) – fod y rhai cyntaf i ni eu datblygu a'u lansio yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg ar yr un pryd.

Dyma sut aethom ati

Rwyf wedi gweithio gyda thîm Polisi'r Iaith Gymraeg yn rheolaidd dros y blynyddoedd diwethaf fel dylunydd gwasanaeth cofrestru cerbydau ar nifer o newidiadau mawr, ac rwyf yn llwyr ymwybodol o ofynion Deddf yr Iaith Gymraeg 1993 i ddarparu ffurflenni, llythyron a gwasanaethau Cymraeg. Fy ngham cyntaf oedd cynnwys y gofynion hyn o'r dechrau gyntaf ar gyfer ein gwasanaethau – newid cyfeiriad cerbyd (VCOA yn fyr) a V5CW dyblyg.

Rhannom y cynnwys a'r strwythur gyda Rheolwr Polisi'r Gymraeg Rhianedd Rhys a'i thîm mor gynted â'u bod wedi'u gorffen. Roedd hyn yn golygu y gallai anfon y cyfieithiadau draw atom fel y gallwn eu hintegreiddio i'r gwasanaeth fel cynnyrch a oedd wedi'u cwblhau.

Yr hyn a oedd wedi ein helpu i gyflawni hyn oedd y bartneriaeth gweithio da rhwng y tîm Dylunio Gwasanaeth, y dadansoddwyr busnes am y prosiect a thîm Polisi'r Gymraeg, a wnaeth sicrhau ein bod wedi gallu gwneud popeth yn llwyddiannus ac ar amser.



Roedd ychydig o heriau...

Ein her fwyaf oedd yn ymwneud ag amser yn bennaf a sicrhau bod y gwaith

roeddwn yn anfon i'w cyfieithu oedd y cynnwys terfynol. Mae cyfieithiadau Cymraeg yn dueddol o fod yn hirach na'r cynnwys Saesneg felly wnaethom wynebu rhai problemau gyda hyd y meysydd a'r lle ar y sgrin i gynnwys y lle ychwanegol oedd eu hangen am y cyfieithiadau, a allai fod yn ddyrys ar adegau. Serch hynny, nid oedd dim byd nad oeddwn yn gallu eu datrys gyda'n gilydd.

Dysgom gwersi hwylus hefyd

Roeddwn yn bendant wedi dysgu o VCOA, wrth i ni ddechrau gweithio ar y gwasanaethau cael V5CW dyblyg o fewn wythnos i VCOA fynd yn fyw. Roeddwn wedi strwythuro cynllunio'r prosiect yn fwy, felly wrth i ni orffen y sgriniau roeddwn yn eu hanfon i gael eu cyfieithu'n fwy rheolaidd. Roedd ychydig o newidiadau munud diwethaf yn dilyn mewnwelediad ond mae hynny i'w disgwyl. Dyna beth yw gweithio'n [ystwyth](#) wedi'r cwbl.

Bonws dwyieithog am ddefnyddwyr

Mae'r arwyddion hyd yma wrth ddefnyddwyr yn galonogol iawn. Mae'r nifer sydd wedi defnyddio'r 2 wasanaeth Cymraeg newydd yn barod yn hafal gyda'n gwasanaethau sydd wedi'u sefydlu ers tro fel [trethu eich cerbyd ar-lein](#) a [thrwyddedu gyrwyr ar-lein](#), sydd wedi bod mewn bodolaeth ers nifer o flynyddoedd.

Ac yn olaf...

Nid wyf yn siaradwr Cymraeg (diolch i Rhianedd am gyfieithu'r flog hwn i mi), ond roeddwn yn falch iawn i greu'r gwasanaethau yma'n Gymraeg. Ni fyddai fyth yn croesi fy meddwl ei fod yn ychwanegiad opsiynol, felly rwyf yn ei weld fel cam safonol. Hoffwn gydnabod amynedd, cefnogaeth a gwaith Rhianedd a'i thîm, oherwydd ni fyddwn wedi gallu eu cyflwyno ar amser hebddynt.

Rwy'n hynod falch fod y gwasanaethau Cymraeg wedi mynd yn fyw ar yr un adeg â'r gwasanaethau Saesneg," ychwanegodd Rhianedd. "Mae'r teithiau hyn sy'n gwbl Gymraeg o'r dechrau i'r diwedd yn newyddion arbennig i ni a'n cwsmeriaid sy'n dymuno trafod gyda ni yn Gymraeg ac yn adeiladu ar y gwasanaethau Cymraeg rydym eisoes yn eu darparu. Diolch i bawb a wnaeth i hyn ddigwydd!

"Mae ein [Cynllun Iaith Gymraeg](#) a gytunwyd gyda Chomisiynydd y Gymraeg yn dangos ein hymrwymiad i'r iaith Gymraeg. Mae gennym gyfrifoldeb i ddangos ein bod yn trin y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg yn gyfartal. Rydym yn falch iawn bod ein gwasanaethau Cymraeg presennol wedi gweld cynnydd blwyddyn ar ôl blwyddyn yn y nifer sy'n eu defnyddio felly roedd yn bwysig iawn sicrhau bod y 2 wasanaeth newydd hyn yn cael eu lansio ar yr un pryd â'r gwasanaethau Saesneg. Mae hyn yn sicrhau bod ein cwsmeriaid Cymraeg eu hiaith yn gallu defnyddio'r iaith o'u dewis nhw wrth drafod gyda ni.

Da iawn bawb!

Mae ein holl wasanaethau ar-lein Cymraeg wedi'u rhestri ar [dudalen gwasanaethau ar-lein Cymraeg](#) GOV.UK, a gallwch ddod o hyd iddynt o dan 'Trwyddedau gyrru' a Rhifau cofrestru cerbyd, treth cerbyd a phrofion MOT'.

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[Business Analysis Programme at DVLA – twelve months on](#)

It's been just over a year since our students started the programme and, despite the disruption of the pandemic, our Business Analysis (BA) development team have done an amazing job. They've successfully reached the midway point of their two-year programme, and are progressing steadily towards achieving the [BCS International Diploma in Business Analysis](#).

Working from home

The entire BA team was ready for the new environment and transitioned seamlessly to working from home. Digital tools have allowed everyone to stay connected, with the experienced members of the team doing a fantastic job of mentoring and coaching our new Business Analysts (BAs). The BAs have continued to learn, explore and develop while making the most of technology and developing an inclusive community that promotes sharing ideas, learning and keeping in touch.



Opportunities and experience

A primary ingredient in our development programme are real-world experiences that allow students to practice and experiment with new tools and techniques. Our new analysts have wasted no time in becoming fully active members of the team. They can be found supporting BAs on key business initiatives, running workshops, process mapping, and working with engineering squads. They have also started to take the lead on small projects.

James Gray, BA student, had this to say about the programme,

I have just completed an assignment working on the apply for a duplicate log book (V5C) service. It was amazing to be part of a delivery team delivering at pace in an agile environment. The collaboration between business representatives and the engineering squad made them a pleasure to work with. For me personally, it was rewarding to work on the end-to-end delivery, being involved from the start and refining requirements to help deliver the service into production using agile methods.

The students' enthusiasm for assignments is a positive challenge to the team supporting the programme, making sure opportunities are tailored to individual learning experiences, and providing insight into different aspects of daily BA life.

Courses and exams

The development programme has a set learning path in line with the diploma, where courses and exams were delivered in a classroom environment. Since the pandemic, all courses have been completed digitally using video conferencing tools, with online monitoring of exams becoming a new experience for most. The BAs embraced the new approach and worked through some initial bumps to successfully pass the exams and achieve their certifications.

Learning to code

Earlier this year, our new BAs were introduced to code through face to face classroom training at DVLA, self-led tutorials, a mini-project and some excellent support from our own Centre of Digital Excellence (CoDE) MSc students. They learned HTML, CSS, and Javascript and developed a web application which contributes towards a learning objective for their development portfolio. This provided them with a full end-to-end example of taking an idea into production. While many found the task challenging, the feedback was positive. And it provided the students with an appreciation of the role of engineers and the important relationship of BAs in daily interactions with delivery teams.



What next?

Over the coming weeks, the students will complete module 3 of the development programme which finishes with an end-of-module assessment and submission of their development portfolio before kicking off module 4. They will continue to study for their BCS diploma, and the BA team are proactively looking for new experiences to supplement the learning journey.

We are now sharing knowledge with other organisations and government departments who have expressed an interest in the programme who have shared their interest in the programme.

If you have an interest in becoming a Business Analyst at DVLA, keep an eye on the [Civil Service Jobs](#) website where all our opportunities will be advertised.

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