

Looking to the future – DVLA's strategic and business plans



We've just published our [3-year strategic plan](#) and this year's [business plan](#), so it's a good time to take stock of what we've done – and what's to come.

Through everything we've achieved and the significant changes in the past year, our goal remains the same. We want to get the right drivers and vehicles taxed and on the road, as simply, safely and efficiently as possible. We are continuously improving our services, getting more services online and making them even easier for our customers to use.

Looking ahead, we're well on track with our preparations for the [new vehicle tax rate changes](#) coming in on 1 April for newly registered vehicles. We've been working really closely with the motor industry on this, as well as designing a [new online system](#) for motor manufacturers and dealers to use when they first register a vehicle.

Also on the horizon are more tech successes. We're rebuilding the [tachograph](#) and tachonet services onto an open system landscape, with the aim of getting a new tacho web service live in 2018-19. We're working on expanding the types of penalty payments that can be paid online around the same time too.

We're also using our digital expertise to help other government departments. [Office for Low Emission Vehicles \(OLEV\)](#) has chosen DVLA to develop a single web portal to support 3 grant schemes to encourage take-up of ultra low emission vehicles (ULEV). These include the Plug-in Car Grant Scheme and a new Workplace Charge Scheme.

Finally – picking up on the customer service theme – we're also looking to maintain the [Customer Service Excellence standard](#) and [Customer Contact Association Global standard 6](#) which, once again, we've retained this year. This is something we're very proud of, and we're aiming for reaccreditation

for the coming year.

All of this means that I continue to feel really positive about where we're heading – lots to do for sure, but also plenty to look forward to.

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News story: Crime news: updates to Crown Court fee guidance

We're making updates to Crown Court fee guidance which include:

1. Change to claiming process so new advocates in retrial cases can submit payment claims directly to the Legal Aid Agency.
2. New content to reflect costs judge decision in R v Gravette (2016). When the trial concludes, if the judge allows a QC for the hearing for mitigation of sentence, a fixed fee will be payable.
3. Clarification of funding for post-conviction Proceeds of Crime work can be found in a new 'Appendix R' in the guidance.
4. Introduction of 20p bicycle mileage rate where mileage is payable.
5. Pages of Prosecution Evidence (PPE) guidance updated to reflect that where there is a first stage streamlined forensic report this will now be treated as PPE.
6. Clarification that the whole of the LAA Report from the Digital Case System must be provided when the advocate is using it in a claim as evidence of PPE.
7. Ground Rules Hearings will be used as an admissibility of evidence fixed fee to reflect R v Gravette (2016).

Further information

[Crown Court fee guidance](#) – to download updated 'Crown Court fee guidance' document

Press release: 'Left Behind Britian': narrowing the social mobility divide

Education Secretary Justine Greening will today (Thursday 30 March) open a major conference in Westminster aimed at improving social mobility and building a shared agenda for action.

The 'Left Behind Britain' conference, which is hosted by the Social Mobility Commission and University of Bath, brings together 200 political leaders, policy makers, academics, charities, think tanks, civil servants and business leaders to increase understanding, share knowledge and explore new solutions to one of the greatest challenges facing our country today.

The Social Mobility Commission's recent ['State of the Nation' report](#) to Parliament found that there is a new geography of disadvantage in Britain today which goes beyond a crude north-south divide.

It found that low levels of social mobility are not just impeding the poorest in society, but are holding back whole tranches of middle, as well as low-income families, the so-called 'treadmill families', who are running harder and harder but standing still.

From the early years through to education and the labour market, the 1-day conference examines the causes and consequences of declining social mobility in many parts of Britain today.

It will focus on the growing geographical divide which has seen many parts of Britain 'left behind' in terms of social mobility. 65 parts of Britain are identified by the Social Mobility Commission as being social mobility cold spots – those with the poorest education and employment prospects.

Drawing on lessons for research and policy from international evidence, the conference will also look at how government, councils, employers, universities, colleges, schools and communities can work together with one core purpose: a more level playing field of opportunity in Britain. It will assess the influence that policy has had on social mobility trends and consider how policy makers might now respond to declining mobility.

Speaking ahead of the event, the Rt Hon Alan Milburn, chair of the Social Mobility Commission, said:

Social mobility is arguably the most important and challenging issue facing British society today. How to make our country one where aspiration and ability, not background or birth, determine where people get to in their lives.

Tinkering with change will not turn it around. A new and far bigger national effort will be needed if progress is to be made on reducing poverty and improving mobility. That will mean long-term and fundamental reforms to our country's education system and local economies and in the labour and housing markets.

Today's conference is aimed at developing a shared agenda for social progress to create a more level playing field of opportunity. One that can unite educators and employers – indeed the whole nation – to action.

Professor Paul Gregg of the University of Bath, Department of Social and

Policy Sciences added:

For children educated in the 1980s, Britain had an unenviable record of being a society where a person's origin determined their destiny. Being among the least socially mobile countries in Europe and performing less well than it has had in previous generations, this has made social mobility a key issue for social policy in the UK.

The policy challenge now is how all actors in society – from government to schools to employers – can best contribute to turning this around for the current generation of school aged children.

1) The Social Mobility Commission is an advisory, non-departmental public body established under the Life Chances Act 2010 as modified by the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016. It has a duty to assess progress in improving social mobility in the United Kingdom and to promote social mobility in England. It currently consists of four commissioners and is supported by a small secretariat.

2) The commission board currently comprises:

- Alan Milburn (chair)
- Baroness Gillian Shephard (deputy chair)
- Paul Gregg, Professor of Economic and Social Policy, University of Bath
- David Johnston, Chief Executive of the Social Mobility Foundation

3) The functions of the commission include:

- Monitoring progress on improving social mobility
- Providing published advice to ministers on matters relating to social mobility
- Undertaking social mobility advocacy

For further information

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[Sharon Hodgson responds to proposed sugar limits published by Public](#)

Health England

Sharon Hodgson MP, Labour's Shadow Health Minister, responding

to proposed sugar limits published by Public Health England, said:

"Labour supports action to tackle sugar consumption and with the refresh of the Five Year Forward View published this week there is a chance to set a really radical approach to obesity and children's health. It should be a matter of shame that obesity affects so many children in the UK and that the circumstances of where you grow up can have such a long term effect on your health outcomes.

"There is clear clinical and public support for measures like sugar taxes which promote healthier living and can keep people fit and well for the years to come.

"Theresa May watered down the Government's childhood obesity strategy but should be much bolder in supporting radical public health measures. Too often the Prime Minister seems happy to settle for second best for the nation's wellbeing when she ought to position Britain at the front of the global drive for better public health."

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