



May 2013 Headline News

Industry Communications Event – on 10 May 2013, DVLA held a communications event with representatives of the motor industry at the HMRC venue in Coventry. The event was generally well received and generated a number of questions from the industry which DVLA staff have been busy collating responses. An article summarising the outcomes of this event will be published as part of the next MNS News edition.

General Public Customer Insight Survey – Following on from the Commercial Customer Survey completed in March 2013, a survey aimed at the general public will be issued shortly. Similarly to the first survey, this exercise will allow DVLA to collate information regarding the current levels of awareness of the general public in relation to the impending closure of the local offices. This insight will represent an accurate picture of the views and opinions of the general public and aid in the development of robust communications activities regarding transition of services to alternative channels.

Half-day training sessions at local offices – Between May and October 2013, each local office will be closing for 3 half day training sessions. These sessions will allow staff to take part in important career transition training following the announcement that local offices will to close permanently to the public by the end of December. Closures will be scheduled to ensure as little disruption to customers as possible and information on each closure will be publicised within each office ahead of each closure date.



ARTICLE – Progress update on Digital Services

On the 10th May the Efficiency Programme held a stakeholder communications event at Sherbourne House, Coventry. The event was focussed on providing an update on current progress and communicating the change in delivery approach for some of the key initiatives including;

- Personalised Registration Online
- Change of Keeper Online
- Fleet Enhancements & V5 Suppression

The Programme is on track to deliver a large portion of the proposals discussed in the 'Transforming DVLA Services' consultation. The current deliver plan is outlined on Page 13 of this edition of MNS News.

Early proposals outlined the delivery of digital services associated with Personalised Registration Online, Change of Keeper Online and Fleet Enhancements & V5 Suppression from October 2013. There have been a number of changes across Government which inform our approach for implementing digital services. These changes will provide DVLA with a common approach for delivering better quality, more responsive digital services. This means the approach to delivering these services will be revised and as a result, they will not be available by October 2013.

The Agency is fully committed to delivering these services and providing workable solutions to support customer transition from Local Office services to alternative channels. The Department's Digital Strategy was published in December 2012 and has reiterated our commitment to deliver Change of Keeper and Personalised Registration Online solutions. In addition, delivery of the Fleets solutions has now been added to the Department's priorities.

Under the new approach, it is expected we will deliver working functionality to the Motor Industry much sooner than under our traditional delivery frameworks. This will allow for more flexibility, making it easier to manage changes and deliver fit for purpose solutions in the longer term. DVLA is piloting this approach and is already seeing benefits from the perspective of both the Agency and our stakeholders.

The new approach will begin with an initial 'discovery' phase which will consolidate our understanding of user's needs and the existing service landscape, providing a sense of the initial prototypes that will be explored. The Agency also recognises work which has already been undertaken in partnership with the Motor Industry and all reusable elements will be included in the process. The 'discovery' workshops are planned to begin in June this year and the outputs from this phase will be communicated as soon as they are available.



ARTICLE – Learning lessons

The challenge being faced by DVLA – closing and decommissioning 39 regional offices affecting over 1200 staff and countless customers – is one of the biggest changes to be delivered by the Agency in many years. One way that the project is ensuring it is ready for the challenge is to review and identify lessons learned from the work that has been done previously or is being done now by the project. We record and review our experiences as well as share them with the people who will be involved with future project activities. Below are a few examples of this from recent experiences on the project:

Closure of Area Enforcement Centres (AEC)

In March, DVLA closed 10 enforcement offices co-located within the local office network. This involved centralising processes to handle enforcement cases at DVLA Swansea and decommissioning the estate which was used to accommodate the AECs (though the local offices themselves remained open).

This was completed by business and project staff working in partnership on activities as wide-ranging as issuing communications, renegotiating lease arrangements and collecting assets such as PCs for reuse across the DVLA estate. When the work was completed, lessons learned workshops were held to identify what went well, what could have gone better and what should be done differently in the future. These lessons will prove particularly relevant ahead of the closure of the 39 local offices at the end of the year.

Dealing with Personalised Registrations (PR)

As a result of the transition of PR transactions from the local office to the central operations at DVLA Swansea, a number of issues arose that resulted in a temporary backlog of applications. This occurred during the busy Easter period and some customers experienced delays in receiving their documentation.

The response to this problem involved the project issuing urgent communications to customers, the business taking corrective action to tackle the backlog and any customers chasing up their outstanding transactions being directed to Swansea so that the latest update on progress of their application could be provided. With the situation now under control again, the various parties involved have been sitting down to review what they have learned from this experience to avoid it happening again where possible.

Trade Licensing Services (TLS) Go-live

The first targeted service to be fully centralised was the process of applying for trade licences, which went live on 1 May. The process of migrating this service from the local offices to DVLA Swansea involved implementing technical changes, issuing targeted communications to existing customers and piloting the service using four local offices before the remainder were transitioned. Further IT changes are planned for later on this year and we will utilise the same resources for this, building on their experiences of the first delivery phase.



ARTICLE – The AFRL scheme

The Automatic First Registration and Licensing (AFRL) system is an electronic system which allows dealers to complete first registration and licensing of vehicles at their own premises without the need to visit the local Office for each registration. The system was introduced to enhance the accuracy, speed and efficiency of the first registration and licensing process for the benefit of the motor industry, the public and DVLA.

The AFRL System allows manufacturers to upload vehicle information on to the dealers system ready for the dealer to first register and licence the vehicle. Each dealer will have an electronic allocation of registration numbers. There are two types of AFRL system:



AFRL Web – AFRL Web is an Internet based system that is built and maintained by DVLA. Each user will have a unique ID and password and must log on via the dedicated website to gain access.

AFRL Co-op – AFRL Co-op is a system that is built and maintained by the manufacturer, and acts as an interface to the DVLA's system. The manufacturer will have developed the front end of the AFRL system for their dealerships. Access to the system is controlled via the manufacturer.

While approximately 96% of manufacturers are part of the AFRL scheme, the benefits of joining include:

- Improved customer service;
- Improved accuracy;
- Personalised registration assignments;
- Ease registration burden.

The AFRL service also has a dedicated helpdesk provided by DVLA Monday to Friday 8am – 5pm. The AFRL Helpdesk can be contacted by 0300 123 1345 or afrl@dvla.gsi.gov.uk

“System allows us to register/tax vehicles at our own convenience without having to travel to a DVLA Local Office enabling a much better service to our customers”

AFRL Satisfaction Survey 2010

“Straight forward and easy to use. Almost impossible to make a mistake!”

The MNS project will be introducing a number of changes to the AFRL service from July 2013:

- Reductions in the indemnities that dealers are required to lodge in order to stock tax discs – this should open up the electronic channel to smaller dealers who have found the indemnity prohibitive;
- Reduced administrative burden in terms of tax-disc management. No need for dealers to employ staff to travel to and from DVLA Local Offices, wait in queues etc;



- Changes in a number of areas to ease/make possible transition to the new arrangements:
 - Changed legislation to allow vehicles to be used for up to 14 days from date of first registration without displaying a tax disc;
 - Changed policy to allow vehicles to be registered in advance for up to 14 days any month of the year (as opposed to the current situation of 4 days for only 2 months of the year);
 - Accommodated multiple address change request, (AFRL users will be able to send discs to keeper, dealer or fleet operator address);
 - Reduced the definition of “bulk” transactions to 9 or more. These will be sent out by special delivery, meaning that discs should be received within 1-2 days (dependent on Royal Mail).



ARTICLE – Mythbusting

When introducing a change as complex and widely impacting as the closures of the DVLA local offices, communications is a critical part of the transition approach. Getting the right information out to customers and stakeholders is an activity the project is taking very seriously. The volume of communications will increase over the coming months as the closures get closer.

An important aspect of communications is feedback and the MNS Project is busy coordinating feedback from various individuals and organisations. Sometimes we have to deal with queries and concerns based on misunderstandings or misinterpretation of information. The following is a sample of some of the myths we have had to address:

“Everything I used to do in the local offices is being moved to the DVLA headquarters in Swansea”

While the capability is being developed at DVLA Swansea to process the majority of the 78 services currently offered by local offices (many of which are already also available centrally), this is just the first step towards an organisation that is digital-by-default in line with recently published government policy and direction. Enhancements to intermediary channels are also being developed such as improvements to the Automated First Registration and Licensing (AFRL) scheme and extension to the range of licensing services available at the Post Office®. These two channel enhancements alone covers one third of the local office transactions which will be available via intermediaries ahead of the local office closures.

“The DVLA systems are already struggling to cope but it is only going to get worse”

In parallel to the closure of local offices, DVLA is embarking on a programme of technical changes that will enhance our supporting IT systems and interfaces. With over 44 million driver records and almost 37 million vehicle records to maintain, it is important that our systems are robust enough to support all our services. All technical changes being introduced by the MNS project are thoroughly tested to ensure a reliable service is offered to customers. The project has worked closely with motor industry stakeholders on developing solutions that are as simple and effective as possible, therefore ensuring our technical requirements have the minimum impact on current systems.

“Putting all this work in one place is going to mean considerable backlogs and delays”

An important aspect of the project is the development of the capacity and capability of our central operations at DVLA Swansea. The model office approach we have used is designed to minimise the impact on our customers (by ramping up the central operations in line with recruitment and training levels) whilst implementing changes to business processes to make the end-to-end service much more efficient and straightforward where possible. This allows us to test different approaches and solutions as well as using other means such as piloting new processes with industry volunteers. There may be some issues experienced as part of the transition process and we ask our customers to bear with us during this challenging period.



ARTICLE – Service centralisation

With just a few months of work remaining to centralise or migrate face-to-face services ahead of the local office closures, now is a good opportunity for an update on how these activities are progressing. The following table summarises where we are with the main areas of the local office closure activities:

Office Closures

Operation	Migration	Progress	Target	Status
Area Enforcement Centres (10)	Close centres	Complete	Mar-13	
Local Offices (39)	Close offices	On target	Dec-13	

Intermediary Services

Service	Transactions	Migration	Target	Status	Progress
AFRL	Disc Distribution (56,908)	Changes to current service	Jul-13		Testing & proving
Post Office	Renewal of vehicle tax	Extend current service	Jul-13		Testing & proving
	Change of tax class	Extend current service	Jul-13		Testing & proving
	Duplicate tax discs	Extend current service	Jul-13		Testing & proving

Centralised Services

Service	Transactions	Migration	Target	Status	Progress
Vehicle Registrations	First Registrations	Simplify and centralise	Aug-13		Piloting processes
Personalised Registrations (1,043,461)	Cherished Transfers	Simplify and centralise	Jul-13		Ramping up service
	Assignments	Simplify and centralise	Jul-13		Ramping up service
	Retentions	Simplify and centralise	Jul-13		Ramping up service
Licensing (1,344,181)	VED application	Simplify and centralise	Jul-13		Offer service until office closures
	HGV VED application	Simplify and centralise	Jul-13		Offer service until office closures
	SORN	Use existing channels	Live		In place
	License with a Tax Class Change	Simplify and centralise	Jul-13		Offer service until office closures
Vehicles Services (835,443)	Imports / Exports	Simplify and centralise	Jun-13		Piloting processes
	Dips & Cons	Simplify and centralise	Aug-13		Engaging with stakeholders
	Miscellaneous	Simplify and centralise	Jul-13		Piloting / implementing services
Inspections (18,322)	Inspections	Rationalise and outsource	Sep-13		Low level discussions with VOSA
Trade Licensing (82,143)	Trade Licensing	Simplify and centralise	May-13		In place
Enforcements (623,155)	Enforcements	Simplify and centralise	Mar-13		In place

Office Closures – With the Area Enforcement Centres (AEC) now closed and finalised dates for the final day of business in each local office now publicised, work on preparing for the office closures is underway. DVLA staff affected by the closures are being supported ahead of the transition period while customers are advised on alternative channels and impacts on current services. More communications on how the local office closures will take place is scheduled for the months ahead.



Intermediary Services – Manufacturers and dealers are busy updating their systems and processes for the impending Automated First Registration and Licensing (AFRL) service changes. DVLA and Post Office Ltd are working together on technical changes that will extend licensing services over the Post Office® counter (including HGV VED applications). Both of these enhancements to our current intermediary services will be live in the next few months and we are working closely with the motor industry to prepare for these big changes.

Centralised Services – Two of the highest profile services – V55 First Registrations and Personalised Registrations – are now being processed centrally at DVLA Swansea. We are in the process of ramping up the centralised service and simultaneously scaling down the service available in the local office. We have taken on board lessons learned early in this process to avoid any issues with migration of the remaining services. Some of the lower volume services such as trade licence applications have already been fully centralised.

Stakeholders will soon see an increase in communications around individual services being migrated – recent outputs include leaflets, posters and email messages – as the transformation of DVLA services picks up pace over the coming months.



Case Study

This section is where we will attempt to explain how some of the face-to-face services currently available to specific sectors of the motor industry will change as a result of the closure of the Local Office Network.

“I am an AFRL user (dealer) and I want to know what will happen after the closure of the local offices if I need to de-register a vehicle?”

Following the introduction of changes to the AFRL system, AFRL dealers will be able to notify de-registration via email or postal channels. For the postal channel, the date of de-registration will be classed as the Royal Mail postal date. At present, there are no plans to change the period from 7 working days in which to apply as we are hopeful the e-mail notification will ensure that there is sufficient time to notify DVLA and for de-registration to be completed. Information on how this process will work – including email and postal addresses – is due to be circulated to AFRL dealers over the coming weeks.

We welcome feedback from our customers around how the services currently provided at the Local Office will change as a result of the delivery of the project. Please email your questions to mns.project@dvla.gsi.gov.uk



Information Hub

The Information Hub is where we will share specific information about the changes that will be made to existing services and when you can expect to see these changes come into effect. You will also find this information available at your nearest Local Office.

Dealing with Personalised Registrations (PR) applications

- Please note [the local offices are] no longer able to respond to any queries about Personalised Registrations (PR) applications.
- The majority of PR applications – cherished transfers, retentions, etc – are no longer processed in [the local offices]. They are now being processed at DVLA Swansea ahead of the closure of all DVLA local offices by the end of 2013.
- Due to the new processes you may receive your new Registration Certificate (V5C) before your tax disc.
- Should you need to find out the progress of your application, please contact DVLA Swansea on 0300 790 6802 [please allow up to 10 working days for processing of your application].

Taxing your vehicle after the local office closes

- You can already tax vehicles either:
 - at a vehicle taxing Post Office® branch, or
 - online at www.gov.uk/taxdisc
- If you go to the Post Office® they 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, and
 - more than 50 applications within the week.
- From June 3 all local offices will be adopting the same service standards.
- To get details of your nearest vehicle taxing Post Office®, select 'car tax' on the branch finder service at the Post Office® website: www.postoffice.co.uk/branch-finder



WORKSTREAM UPDATE

Each edition will feature a progress update from specific workstreams within the project, to give you an idea of progress of specific activities that may affect customers.

AFRL Disc Distribution [Lead: Jason Oates]

The AFRL Disc Distribution (ADD) changes will come into effect on 21 July 2013. This means that tax discs will be issued centrally from Swansea for any vehicles registered via AFRL on and after this date. Dealers using the AFRL system will select a delivery address option to send the disc to the registered keeper, the dealer or the fleet operator address.

Legislation will be in place by 21 July which will allow vehicles to be driven/ridden on the road without displaying a tax discs for up to 14 days from the date of first registration. The advanced registration policy will change to allow vehicles to be registered in advance by up to 14 days during any month of the year.

The project is currently working with AFRL web users carrying out User Acceptance testing. AFRL Co-Op users will start testing with DVLA on 17 June. To date, testing is progressing well with only minimal defects being identified. There is some really useful feedback being provided by AFRL users and the project would encourage this to continue for the duration of the test phase.

We've seen a steady decline in the number of AFRL-related questions coming via the project email address which, hopefully, signifies an improved understanding of the system and business changes required ahead of July.

We will be issuing a number of documents to the motor industry by the end of May to provide further information on these changes, including an updated Dealer Procedure Guide and Frequently Asked Questions along with process maps which will explain how the key elements of the new process will work.

Workstream Objectives

Project Management Office (PMO) - To support successful management and control of the project in line with best practice project management standards and procedures.

AFRL Disc Distribution (ADD) - To enable tax discs printing in Swansea resulting in there being no requirement for dealers to hold discs on their premises

Extended Licensing Services at Post Office (ELSPO) - To extend the scope of vehicle licensing services offered at Post Office branches.

Trade Licensing Services (TLS) - To change the current paper trade licensing process so all applications are processed at DVLA Swansea.

LSN Centralisation - To deliver centralised services for all transactions currently offered within the Local Office Network and will not be offered via the Post Office.

ED Centralisation - To centralise enforcement 'back office' activities, i.e. penalty payment collection, preparation of court case papers and resolution of disputed cases.

Decommissioning - To facilitate all necessary decommissioning and Local Office closure activities.



Questions & Answers

Each month the project will provide answers to questions raised by our customers and stakeholders

Q1: “Tax your vehicle when you don’t have the Reminder, Registration Certificate or New Keeper Supplement” – does this mean we can tax a car on a V62 (Application for a vehicle registration certificate) at the Post office?

A1: If you do not have any of the required documentation when relicensing your vehicle, you will be able to tax using a V62 providing keeper details on the V62 match those already recorded on DVLA records. Further information regarding the V62 form is available online at www.gov.uk/vehicle-registration-certificate-v5c-log-book

Q2: How and where will I be able to register imports from Japan and motability vehicles?

A2: You will need to send the relevant documentation via the post to **DVLA Swansea SA99 1BE**.

Q3: As a dealer, will I have to make my customers aware of what these changes to the AFRL system means for them?

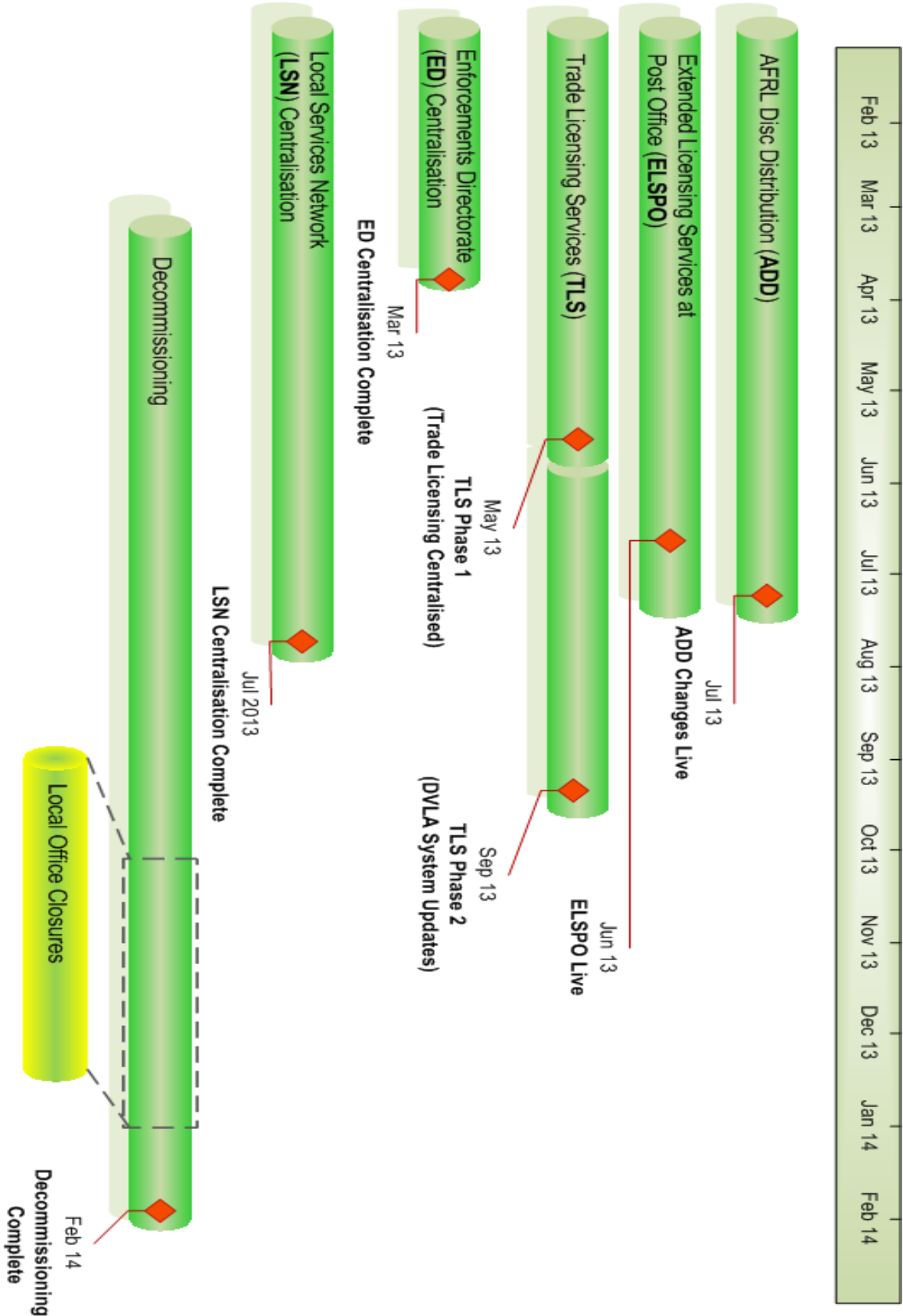
A3: Following the introduction of these changes, AFRL dealers will need to ensure their customers understand that their tax disc will be issued via the post from DVLA Swansea and that they can drive the vehicle up to 14 days without displaying a tax disc. DVLA will be issuing an information leaflet for all manufacturers to disseminate to their dealers; dealers can give this information to their customers where there is no tax disc with the vehicle to be driven away.

Q4: If I can not get a Cherished Transfer from the local offices, how do I apply now?

A4: You will need to send the relevant documentation via the post to **DVLA Swansea SA99 1DP**.

Q5: If DVLA is sending out the tax discs, what am I (an AFRL dealer) supposed to do with any remaining stock of tax discs?

A5: There will be a communication issued shortly by DVLA to advise AFRL dealers that appointments will have to be made in August for the return of unused/spoilt tax discs, stamps and pens.





FURTHER INFORMATION & CONTACT DETAILS

DVLA welcomes feedback from our customers and stakeholders and the project would particularly like your views on this newsletter. Please let us know what you think and feel free to share with us ideas for future articles or questions you want answered.

- Email the project directly at mns.project@dvla.gsi.gov.uk
- AFRL manufacturers can direct questions relating to the AFRL Disc Distribution (ADD) initiative directly to AFRLdiscdistribution@dvla.gsi.gov.uk
- New information will be published through www.gov.uk/browse/driving over the coming months (we will keep you informed on this progress).
- For further information about the Transforming DVLA Services Public Consultation conducted last year (including some background context around the reasons for the decision to close the Local Offices), click [here](#).
- Follow DVLA on our official Twitter account: [@dvlagovuk](https://twitter.com/dvlagovuk)