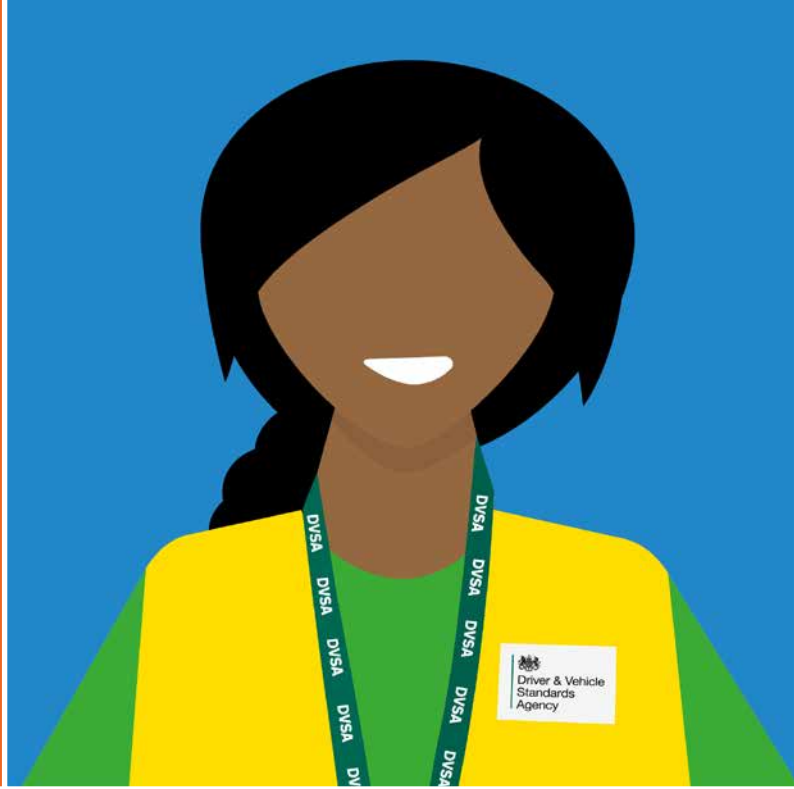


WE ARE
DVSA



Annual review

2019 to 2020

Helping you **stay safe** on **Britain's roads**

Welcome



Gareth Llewellyn
Chief Executive Officer



Shrin Honap
Non-Executive Chair

Welcome to DVSA's Annual Review of 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

We achieved all our Business Plan objectives this year. But, along with the rest of the world, we've been affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

This year we celebrate our achievements and the people who made them happen. But we also reflect on how colleagues responded to help slow the spread of the disease whilst maintaining essential services.

Many people have lost their lives or their loved ones to coronavirus and, to them, we extend our heartfelt sympathy. We also acknowledge the amazing work our key workers did during lockdown, to keep us as safe as possible.

Our NHS and care workers have been incredible – as have the police, armed forces, drivers, shop workers and everyone else who risked their safety for ours.

Our colleagues have also played their part during the pandemic, which you can read about in these pages.

This is a more muted than usual celebration of what DVSA has achieved. But we want to acknowledge our colleagues' great work in 2019, and after the pandemic hit in early 2020.

DVSA is a great place to work, and that strength means we can help the country get back on its feet in the months ahead.

We're proud

We asked some of our colleagues what their proudest moments have been during their time at DVSA.

“My team pulled together when there was an accident involving a rider in the test centre’s motorcycle manoeuvring area. They worked quickly and professionally to help and comfort the injured rider before the emergency services arrived. And they still made sure that every candidate got to take their driving test.”

Gareth Roberts
Local driving test manager, Newport (Gwent)

“We worked with authorised testing facilities (ATFs) to make sure our new app would work in a live environment – MOT testing lorries, buses and coaches. I’m proud of their great feedback about how we could do this while maintaining our business as usual testing service.”

Andy Thomas
Business Change Manager

“I’m proud of the work I’m involved in to help colleagues. I’m a core member of the Time2Care Staff Network Group, representing and supporting colleagues with caring responsibilities. I’m also a Wellbeing Champion and a Mental Health First Aider.”

Andrew Berrill
Driving examiner, Hinckley

“I was ecstatic to pass the Peer to Peer Motorcycle Mod 2 supervision course the Friday before lockdown. It’s an intense 3-week course. And, at the end, successful candidates are qualified to quality assure the standard of testing and riding skills of our motorcycle examiners.”

Mike Woolf
Driving and motorcycle examiner, Plymouth



I've helped build up DVSA's enforcement Twitter account. It showcases the work we do in keeping the roads safe, and we've built links with police and other enforcement agencies around the world. It's proving really popular with the drivers and operators we want to influence, and we now have over 10,200 followers!

Gareth Prismick
Vehicle examiner

"The Estates team completed significant refurbishment work in our Swansea and Leeds offices throughout 2019. It was challenging, but we finished the work to time and budget, with very little disruption to staff and customers. It's great to see the positive impact the work has had on our people and the business."

Graeme Campbell
Estates

"I joined the new driving examiner (DE) Forum, which we created to help DVSA understand DEs' need. There are 18 of us nationwide and we've met with senior managers to discuss improvements and solutions. Even during lockdown we've stayed in touch, and that's helped with our motivation and wellbeing."

Sharif Ahmed
Driving examiner, Wanstead

"It was a big achievement for me to design, create and launch communications to staff for our new internal social media channel, Yammer. Most colleagues have now joined and I'm proud to see how engaged everyone is."

Suzanne Atkin
Internal communications



We responded quickly to the coronavirus pandemic



Beverly Stoner
Traffic examiner

“My colleagues and I met the challenges of working during the pandemic. And our hats go off to everyone on the frontline at this time.”

In the last weeks of DVSA’s year, the country went into lockdown because of coronavirus. We were all told to ‘stay at home’ to prevent the spread of the virus.

We had to act quickly to keep colleagues and customers safe, while making sure we met health and social care workers’ needs. These were some of our immediate actions.

On the frontline, we:

- suspended the driving test for most candidates
- prioritised special ambulance vehicle tests to support the NHS response
- conducted driving tests for NHS and care workers
- granted MOT extensions on all vehicles
- protected you from unsafe vehicles through our enforcement work, while maintaining social distancing

And, in the background, we:

- handled hundreds of coronavirus related comms pieces for colleagues and customers
- developed guidance for colleagues about home working and wellbeing
- gave colleagues the IT kit and mobile technology to work from home
- moved our customer contact centre to a home-based system

...and we supported the emergency services



Ian Gainford
Examiner

Suffolk Fire and Rescue Service said:

“We’re having real problems manning our appliances because we’ve deployed drivers to support the NHS. Thank you, DVSA, for conducting our tests.”

Early in lockdown we started to conduct driving tests for key workers. This was crucial in keeping the services running.

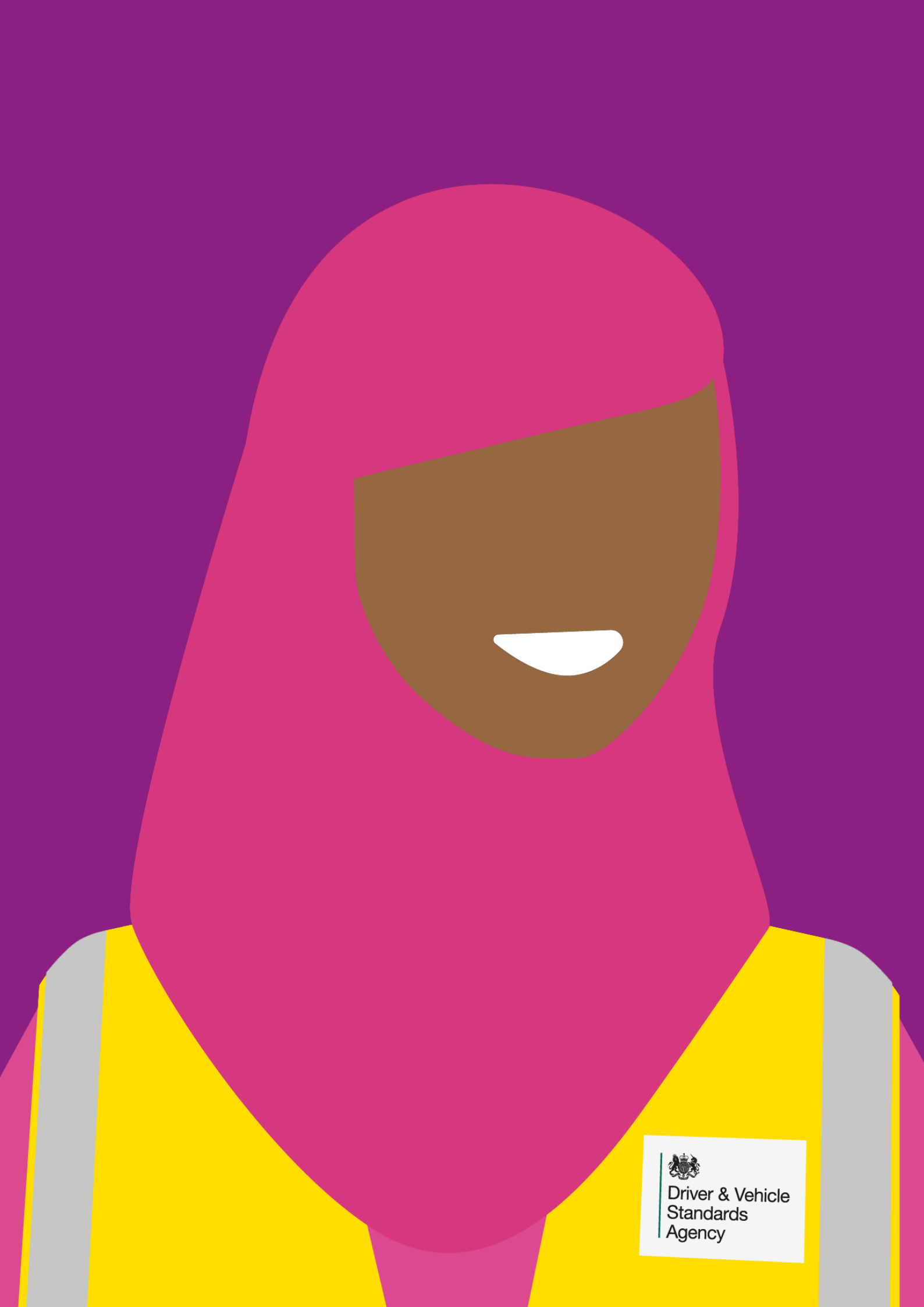
The fire authorities were supporting the NHS, which left them short of drivers as the pandemic reached its peak. So they needed new drivers to keep their own services running.

DVSA colleagues were nervous at first about conducting tests, because of the government’s strong ‘stay at home’ message. But, as one examiner, Ian Gainford, said:

“My first candidate was a nurse originally from Northern Italy, who worked in a COVID-19 hospital. That put my work into perspective. It was the least I could do.”

Conducting driving tests during this time was challenging. Examiners willed candidates to make the right decisions. But objectivity in the driving test is crucial for road safety and, thankfully, candidates were well prepared.

You can read more about how we’ve since responded to coronavirus on pages 48 and 49.



Driver & Vehicle
Standards
Agency

We finished rolling out our vehicle testing app



Danny Charles
Digital Service Manager

“The app has transformed the way frontline vehicle testing staff record test results. It’s given them the tools to do their jobs more easily.”

We developed the vehicle testing app to allow our vehicle standards assessors (VSAs) to record all bus, lorry and coach tests on their phones.

The app gives VSAs all the available information about a vehicle at the time of testing. It captures test results digitally and allows VSAs to print certificates.

Above all, the app makes our VSAs’ lives easier and helps keep operators’ vehicles safe to drive.

By March 2020 we’d rolled out the app to all authorised testing facilities and we’d used it for over 100,000 tests!

We dealt with tachograph fraud



Tracey Hall
Enforcement Delivery Manager

“Our priority is protecting everyone from unsafe drivers and vehicles. This sentence sends a message that we will prosecute other drivers who break the rules.”

One of our priorities is to protect everyone from unsafe drivers and vehicles. Tiredness can slow down a driver’s reaction time and reduce their attention to the road. So there are drivers’ hours rules in place for lorry drivers.

The rules set how many hours they may drive in a day and a week, to prevent them from getting tired at the wheel. And we investigate drivers who we suspect are breaking the rules.

Last summer a lorry driver, Neil Drury, received an 8-month suspended sentence and 200 hours of unpaid work for flouting the drivers’ hours rules. And for putting other road users’ lives at risk.

Our investigators found that Drury had used another driver’s tachograph card on 12 occasions to hide 28 drivers’ hours offences. And, on one occasion, he drove for 21 hours without breaks. The limit is 9 to 10 hours.

Drury was also ordered to pay DVSA £1,625 towards the costs of the prosecution in our investigations and bringing it to court.

We digitised the practical driving test



Sam Yardley
Driving examiner

“Getting feedback from the DEs who’d be using the app was so important. The app is for them and it’s made all our lives easier.”

We modernised the way driving examiners conduct and record a practical driving test, with the development of the Driving Examiner Service (DES) app.

Examiners used to follow a lengthy paper-based process, transferring information and recording faults by hand. But DES replaces that with a quicker and more accurate digital process on the examiner’s personal device.

We involved our driving examiners in the user research for DES. We visited test centres, held staff workshops and conference sessions, and created early adopter groups. Their feedback informed the app’s development.

Now examiners across all categories of vehicle use the app on iPads, reducing the time they spend on test admin. And they can manage their workloads more easily, using the app’s daily schedule function.

We were joint runners up for an award at DfT’s first Annual Project Delivery Profession Conference with DES. It’s early days, so we continue to gather feedback from examiners and refine the app.

Helping you through a
lifetime of safe driving

2.1 million

theory tests carried out

1.9 million

practical tests carried out

680,000

HGV tests carried out

593,000

tests on the digital app



Helping you **stay safe** on **Britain's roads**

We gave colleagues Windows 10 laptops



Rachael Smith
Senior Project Manager

“Windows 10 gives colleagues a customisable workspace. It promotes collaboration, supports diverse working styles and gives a consistent service across all our devices’.”

Many of our staff had been working on old Windows 7 desktops or laptops. We recognised that newer technology would enable our colleagues to do their jobs better. So, we gave everyone across the business a Windows 10 laptop to allow them to work remotely.

The team worked 14-hour days and through weekends, travelling across the UK, to complete the roll-out 2 weeks ahead of schedule. The extra push meant that everyone had the kit they needed to work from home by the time coronavirus hit.

The new devices have enabled everyone to work more flexibly, to suit their personal circumstances. And our staff now use Microsoft 365 features and functionality to provide excellent services for customers and colleagues.



Our learning materials reached a huge audience



Heather Price
Learning Materials Content Designer

“It’s fantastic that half a million people chose to download a DVSA app in 2019, and that so many people read our publications. Helping them on a lifetime of safe driving is essential. We’re proud to give drivers the content they need to develop their knowledge in a way that suits them.”

In partnership with The Stationery Office, we produce learning materials for drivers and riders at all stages of their learning. But our biggest audience is learner drivers working towards passing their theory and practical tests.

In 2019, we sold half a million of our apps to learners. And, since we launched our Theory Test and Highway Code apps, we’ve sold over 3 million. That makes DVSA’s learning materials some of the most successful in Britain.

Then, in the New Year, the BBC published the top 10 best-selling books of the last decade. We came in at number 7 with The Official Highway Code – just behind Jamie’s 30-minute meals!



Driver & Vehicle
Station

We're looking after our mental health



Claire Galbraith
HR expert

“The number of staff completing the survey has grown year on year. And our Wellbeing Champions’ work is a huge factor in the improvements we’re seeing.”

We aim to create a culture of prevention and support for mental health issues, and to reduce the stigma around this topic.

Nearly 500 line managers completed mental health awareness training this year. We introduced health and wellbeing webinars. And we’re improving the quality and frequency of wellbeing communications.

We ran our 3rd annual mental wellbeing survey to collect colleagues’ views about their mental health. The results allow us to measure the previous year’s successes. And they help us to focus on areas for improvement.

This year, 1,460 staff completed the survey. It showed that 72% believe DVSA values their mental health. And 76% think they have enough information about the subject – that’s 10% up on the previous year.

People are more aware of our wellbeing resources and support. Over 80% now know about our Employee Assistance Program provider and Mental Health First Aiders. That’s up 34% since we ran the first survey!

We made it easy to replace your MOT certificate



Chris Price
Head of MOT Policy

“We knew there was demand from the public to replace MOT certificates, and there were many websites selling fakes. Our service meets user demand and has stamped out the fakes. Online certificates reduce fraud and improve the service.”

In 2018, over 636,000 people in Great Britain asked for a replacement MOT certificate. That’s about 2% of all MOT tests done each year.

Motorists told us that having to go to their MOT garage for a replacement was a pain. It was time-consuming and stressful – especially if they were selling the vehicle.

They asked us to make things easier. So, we developed the ‘Replace MOT certificate service’ as part of GOV.UK’s wider ‘MOT history service’. Like the rest of the service, ‘Replace’ works on mobiles, tablets and PCs. Now vehicle owners can use the service 24/7 to get a duplicate certificate – pass or fail. It allows them to view and save their certificate as a PDF and to print it themselves.

The service covers motorbikes, cars and passenger vehicles now. And we’re working on expanding it to include certificates for lorries, buses and trailers.

We made travelling to school safer



Della Reed
Enforcement Delivery Manager

“This was a well-planned and organised operation, which sends a clear message to illegal operators everywhere.”

When we suspected that there was a potential illegal operator carrying school children in his minibuses, we started digging.

We found that this operator was working under another person’s licence. So we used automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) and other intelligence to work out the best place to intercept his vehicles. This was at the 2 schools where they dropped and collected the children every day.

We moved in the morning, to allow parents time to plan their children’s return trip from school. And the police helped us in preventing the 6 minibus drivers involved from leaving.

We found all the buses to be unsafe, with some seats not even attached to the floor!

We impounded 6 minibuses – that’s 6 fewer unsafe vehicles on our roads putting school children at risk.

We continued to build respect



Delocia White
Senior Team Leader from the
Office of the Traffic Commissioner

“Through building respect, my team and I embed a culture where everyone is valued and welcomed.”

Each of our 4,700 staff have completed dignity at work training over the last few years. But we did not want to lose momentum in our building respect work. So we developed the ‘Confident Manager – Building Respect’ training course.

We gave our managers additional skills for dealing with discrimination, bullying and harassment. And they took the building respect message back to their teams, encouraging honest conversations about equality, diversity and inclusion. We also developed a new face to face learning package for colleagues to use in team meetings.

So far over 900 people have had a conversation on building respect. And we adapted the learning material so managers could deliver it virtually during lockdown.

We've been using immersive technology



Steve Kendall
Policy Manager for Specialist
Vehicle Tests

“This has kick-started DVSA’s use of immersive technology. My colleague put on the virtual reality headset and said: ‘Wow, now I get what you’re talking about!’”

Immersive technology means things like virtual reality, which creates a simulated world and ‘immerses’ the user. In training, it increases what the user remembers. It’s great for scenarios that would, in reality, involve high risk. And for allowing people to see hidden vehicle systems.

We explored using immersive technology for some of our vehicle examination training. We viewed the existing training opportunities and carried out user research with colleagues. This identified some of the potential problems, benefits, and costs of the technology.

We ran demonstrations to show how the technology could recreate vehicle components, in a training and assessment environment. And we captured users’ feedback.

Excitingly, we found the potential benefits of this technology includes:

- more effective training
- less disruption to our business
- accessible training that engages staff
- more consistent testing and inspection

And all this means safer vehicles on our roads.

Protecting you from unsafe drivers and vehicles

172,000

vehicle and driver checks

29,000

serious roadworthiness defects detected

10,000

ANPR cameras available to access

643

cases of identified fraud



Helping you **stay safe** on **Britain's roads**

We joined the National ANPR Service (NAS)



Matt Thompson
NAS Discovery Manager

“Joining NAS has been interesting and exciting. It’s put DVSA ahead of the game in tackling serious and serial non-compliant road users.”

Automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) uses cameras to capture and record the registration and image of a vehicle. Then we match that data to databases, giving our operators information about the vehicle.

DVSA had a small number of ANPR cameras. But in 2019 we began to look at the value of joining the National ANPR Service (NAS) with its 10,000 cameras.

We saw NAS bring real benefits to DVSA’s enforcement. The wider camera infrastructure gave us much more vehicle data, allowing us to tackle non-compliance more effectively. And, no matter how clever offenders try to be, they cannot get around a picture of the vehicle on the road with a time and date stamp.

We appeared in ‘Secrets of the Driving Test’



Aaron Green
Driving examiner and star of
‘Secrets of the Driving Test’

“This was a new and exciting opportunity. It’s been a confidence boost for me – I’ve realised I know my stuff, I’m knowledgeable about my role and I’m proud of what I do.”

After 2 years of preparation and an initial pilot, we worked with Curve Media to make ITV’s ‘Secrets of the Driving Test’.

The programme promised an insight into the driving test. It showed our driving examiners (DEs) on real driving tests and in the test centre, showcasing their professionalism in sometimes stressful and unusual situations. And it did a great job of showing our DEs as they are – fair, caring towards their candidates and often funny.

Narrated by Alan Carr, the tone of ‘Secrets’ was humorous, but we made sure that it struck a balance between entertainment and education. Along with the singing X Factor contestant, the nervous granny and the chatterbox teenager, ‘Secrets’ showed the public some of the amazing work we do. And it put some minds to rest about what to expect on the driving test.

We've developed our apprenticeship programme



Chloe Finn and Lola
Customer service centre

“I’m delighted to receive the DVSA apprentice of the year award. I’ll use the skills and knowledge I’ve gained to improve my customer service skills and help me reach future goals.”

We now have over 140 apprentices in DVSA. They’re studying across many levels and in different areas of the business, including digital, data science, heavy vehicles, leadership and management and commercial.

All of our apprentices are completing a funded, nationally recognised qualification, with the support of a college assessor. Working with the apprentices and their line managers, we introduced new professional apprenticeship standards last year. They give our apprentices an even better opportunity to grow, learn and achieve their accreditation.

Our Head of Talent and Capability, Cara McMahon, says:

“We have exciting times ahead with apprenticeships as the market grows. Potentially even more people will be able to take up these great learning opportunities.”

This year we celebrated Chloe Finn, an administrative officer working in our Customer Service Centre based in Swansea. Chloe won DVSA’s Apprentice of the Year award and received a commendation award from the Department for Transport.



We developed video clips to keep motorcyclists safe



Daniel Fisher
Theory Test Product Specialist

Ria Brisland said:

“DVSA took me seriously and I’m proud to work with them on new ideas for how to keep everyone safe.”

Tragically in 2015 a young biker, Nick Brisland, died in a crash with a car. Then in 2018, Nick’s mum, Ria, contacted us to talk about how we could educate drivers about vulnerable road users like motorcyclists.

Together with Ria, we developed computer-generated video clips to teach drivers how to behave around motorcyclists. We’ve added them to our learning materials, which have been viewed by nearly 5 million people. We’ve also published one clip, called ‘What do you see?’ to YouTube, with nearly 29,000 views. And we’ve shared the clips through our social media channels.

Daniel Fisher, Theory Test Product Specialist, said:

“Motorcyclists make up approximately 1% of traffic, but they account for around 18% of deaths on the road. So our work with Ria is important. We want everyone to have a lifetime of safe driving, whatever their vehicle.”

We protected survivors of domestic violence



Grant Thunder
MOT Policy Manager

“We’d encourage any charity which sees an opportunity to improve our services to get in touch – just as Refuge did.”

After we added ‘garage location’ to the MOT history service, domestic violence charity, Refuge, contacted us. They were concerned that this information could tell an abuser where their victim had taken their vehicle for its last MOT. And, from that, they could potentially find out where they were now living. So we worked with Refuge to find a solution.

We took the service down and removed the MOT garage location from the MOT history service. We then reinstated it with an important change. If anyone wants this information, they must enter the latest 11-digit number from the vehicle’s logbook.

Ellie Butt, Senior Policy and Public Affairs Manager at Refuge, said:

“We’re delighted to have worked with DVSA in reducing the ways abusers can track down survivors. Refuge stops at nothing to keep survivors safe.”

We're writing more clearly



Bonny Chung
Clearly DVSA supporter

“Words are a powerful tool and play a massive role in communication be it written or spoken. That’s why I’m proud to be a Clearly DVSA supporter, where I can champion better writing and help to develop it across government.”

Recognising that government writing can be confusing and inaccessible, we launched our version of the Plain English campaign – Clearly DVSA. Its aim is to make everyone’s writing clear, useful and trusted.

We researched colleagues’ and customers’ needs. Then, using the evidence, we developed tools to help everyone improve their writing. And, to bring about behaviour change, we used the EAST framework making our campaign Easy, Attractive, Social and Timely.

We wrote guidance, a training course and news items about Clearly DVSA. We developed a network of supporters to help their colleagues locally. And we rewarded good writing with an award. We also started a Yammer group and blog.

So far, we’ve trained 250 colleagues and 19 Clearly DVSA supporters. And we’ve rewarded 50 people for their good writing. Our next step is to help other government organisations to develop their own version of ‘Clearly’.

Helping you keep your
vehicle safe to drive

39.1 million

MOT certificates issued

3 million

users of MOT services

108,000

vehicles tested on digital app

76,000

licenced vehicle operators



Helping you **stay safe** on **Britain's roads**

We improved guidance for MOT testers



John Ploughman
Head of Content Design

“Over 90% of the users we asked to test the new guidance agreed that it’s clear and useful. They also said they’d recommend it to other people in the MOT industry. Everyone agreed that it has a clear and logical structure, making it easier to keep vehicles safe to drive.”

One of our priorities is to help everyone keep their vehicle safe to drive. An important part of this is making sure MOT testers can carry out tests to the highest possible standard. And to do that, they need clear guidance about managing MOT centres effectively.

We recognised that the existing guidance on GOV.UK could be better. It was split across 3 web pages, so it was difficult to find. It was also long, making it easy to miss important information.

So, we scrapped the old guidance and started again. We’ve rewritten it to our Clearly DVSA standards, making it useful and easy to understand. It’s shorter, as we’ve focused on what MOT managers really need to know. And we’ve published it as a single guide so people can find what they need.

We moved up the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index



Trina Swan
Pride staff network group member

“In the 3 years we’ve submitted to the WEI we’ve risen from near the bottom to the middle. It’s a fantastic achievement!”

Stonewall campaigns for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans + (LGBT+) people’s rights and culture. They also support organisations in making their workplace inclusive and welcoming to LGBT+ employees. They measure employers’ effectiveness in the Workplace Equality Index (WEI).

DVSA rose 96 places in the WEI during the last 12 months! We’re now at number 273, out of over 500 companies taking part.

Much of this improvement was down to work on our policies. We changed the wording of existing policies to be fully inclusive of LGBT+ colleagues. And we introduced a new gender, intersex and trans policy.

We also promoted DVSA at LGBT+ events – the most exciting and high-profile being Manchester Pride 2019.

Our supportive policies and activities are making a difference. But we’re working with Stonewall to help us understand how we can be even better. By promoting diversity and inclusion, DVSA aspires to become truly representative of the public we serve.




Driver & Vehicle
Standards
Agency

We produced a daily walkaround check video



Thomas Williams
Publishing Content Designer

“It’s essential that DVSA provides easy-to-understand information. The video meets this aim and I’m proud to be part of the team that developed it”.

Daily walkaround checks are vital for road safety. By doing them, drivers of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) can be sure they’re safe to drive.

Before they start their journey, drivers must check things like mirrors, brakes, steering, load security, lights and indicators, and vehicle height.

Feedback from the industry told us it would be easier for drivers to understand all the checks if we could explain them more visually. So we produced a new video to go along with the updated guidance on HGV daily walkaround checks.

We know that long videos do not hold people’s attention and the message is often lost. It was a challenge to fit all the checks into a useful and engaging video, but we managed to condense everything into 3 minutes.

The video is now part of a package of information to help drivers and operators understand what they need to check. It’s received over 46,000 views on YouTube, making thousands of vehicles safer on our roads.

We won an International Road Safety Award



Jody Whitfield
Policy Specialist

One trainer from the trial said:

“It was like the Ridefree learners were already car drivers, with better knowledge of the rules of the road.”

Ridefree is the award-winning enhanced compulsory basic training course (CBT) for completely new learner riders. We supported Highways England in its development.

Evidence about young riders shows that learning about riding skills and behaviour before getting on a bike helps reduce their risks. From that came Ridefree. It’s an eLearning course that helps new road users understand riding skills and focuses on how their behaviour can affect crash risk.

Policy Specialist, Jody Whitfield, said:

“We trialled Ridefree with real trainers and learners, who gave us fantastic feedback. Trainers told us that new riders who’d done the training had better road sense.”

In December 2019 Ridefree won a Prince Michael International Road Safety Award, which recognised that it can make a real difference to new riders.

And now, thanks to our publishing partners, The Stationery Office (TSO), we’re ready to launch Ridefree. All motorcycle training schools will have free access to this content.



We recruited through 'Operation DeLorean'



Anne McKenzie
HR business partner

“Working in an Agile environment was an amazing experience. It was very energising and fulfilling! It focused the team and we learnt a lot.”

We piloted some new ideas to recruit for hard-to-fill vacancies. HR worked with the business areas to develop a more Agile recruitment plan – Operation DeLorean.

Agile usually describes software development, where the focus is on performance and outcome, rather than processes. Applying that to recruitment, we came up with the imaginative and flexible ideas for Operation DeLorean.

Communications developed a targeted social media campaign. We hosted a digital careers evening in Nottingham and attended careers fairs at Nottingham College and University. The Digital team also designed careers booklets for the roles, showcasing our work and selling DVSA as a “great place to work”.

And we used video to accompany the campaigns, alongside blogs from our own people to personalise the campaign.

Through Operation DeLorean we attracted high quality candidates. And we managed to recruit them into DVSA much more quickly than usual.

A great place to work

4,700

members of staff

500

mental health awareness trainees

144

people across DVSA doing an apprenticeship

250

trained in Clearly DVSA



Helping you **stay safe** on **Britain's roads**

We prepared to leave the EU



Kevin Jury
Vehicle Enforcement Manager

“Preparing Ashford for Brexit was a collaboration across DVSA. Now we can remove more dangerous vehicles from the road network, to keep Britain’s roads safe.”

We worked at and near ports to prepare them for the increase in traffic after Brexit. For example, we improved facilities in Plymouth, Boughton and Ashford.

The largest piece of work we did to prepare for Brexit was at the Ashford enforcement site in Kent, where we built a new inspection building. This means we can target more international vehicles and identify defects that we otherwise would not have found.

We also remodelled the office at Ashford to give colleagues a flexible workspace. All this has made shift changes and handovers easier.

As well as the estates work, we also built new digital services. These allow the International Road Haulage Permit Office to support UK hauliers who transport goods to the EU and beyond.

We met almost 100% of our HGV testing commitments



Clare Williams
Network Business Manager

“We provide a world class testing service for heavy vehicles. We have the right people to do the job, and our apprenticeship scheme is training the next generation of testers.”

There are nearly 1 million heavy goods vehicles (HGV) operating in Great Britain. Our team of 500 vehicle standards assessors (VSAs) is responsible for carrying out their annual test (MOT).

Most tests are carried out at privately owned authorised testing facilities (ATFs). The ATFs’ job is to book vehicles in for test. Our job is to conduct them to the highest possible standard.

In 2017 we were letting ATFs and operators down by failing to turn up to some of the appointments they’d booked. We needed to improve.

So, we invested in more staff, including apprentices, and we improved the planning and scheduling systems. That meant we were putting the right people in the right place, at the right time. And we set ourselves the ambitious target of meeting 98% of our testing commitments.

It’s been a challenge, but up until coronavirus hit in March, we exceeded our targets and were attending 99.9% of our testing commitments.

We supported counter terrorism



Dave Wood and Ziggi
Policy Enforcement Manager

Terry Egan, Head of Road Transport Security at DfT, said:

“DVSA is critical in providing security guidance to help operators and drivers understand the vehicle as a weapon threat and promote good security.”

We worked with the transport industry on understanding the potential of a vehicle as a weapon for terrorists, and reducing the threat. This supported the Government’s wider counter terrorism initiative.

Working with the Department for Transport (DfT), Traffic Commissioners and the industry, we introduced new security requirements for bus, lorry and coach operators.

Earned Recognition operators who meet DVSA standards are less likely to have their vehicles stopped for inspection. Now they must have robust security systems in place to keep their Earned Recognition accreditation.

DfT published new ‘Countering vehicles as a weapon’ guidance for drivers and operators to GOV.UK. We included the guidance in the ‘new operator seminar’, which all new operators must attend. There’s also now a security assessment in the Vehicle Examiner operator visit report.

Dave Wood said:

“We’re planning more training to help colleagues better understand the terrorist threat.”

We've got the Power BI



Jamie Williamson
Head of MI & Data Science

“We put information in colleagues’ hands, as and when they need it. It allows us to make better business decisions, for our customers and for road safety.”

We use management information (MI) to help us understand how we’re performing, and to plan and improve our services. But too much information can make it difficult to identify the important bits and spot trends.

So we moved our MI to the Power BI platform. Users can now visualise data through graphs and charts, which they can filter to show only the information they need. And they can access it 24/7 through their personal device.

Colleagues are using Power BI to find out things like the demand and waiting times for a test centre on a given day. Or they can create a report showing trends in the types of defects and offences we’ve detected on vehicles.

There are currently over 300 different reports and the take-up has been amazing. Over 2,300 colleagues are using Power BI to manage performance, make business decisions and report to senior managers, our customers and DfT.



We created accessible theory test video clips



Ava Martin
Theory Test Content Manager

“The new clips will make the test more accessible to all candidates, not just those with special educational needs.”

For years, we’ve used written case studies as part of the car theory test. But research shows that videos and pictures can help candidates who find reading blocks of text challenging.

As driving is a visual activity, we wanted to make the test more relevant. So we decided to create video clips, using the same technology we use for our hazard perception clips.

We tried the clips out in focus groups with special educational needs experts. Then we did more research using learner drivers. We involved candidates with special educational needs and those from the deaf community.

We asked candidates to compare the video clips to the existing case studies. They said the video clips and their accompanying questions were much easier to understand.

We restarted theory testing on 4 July, after its suspension because of coronavirus. And we’ll introduce the new, accessible clips to the test very soon.

We updated and adapted our staff induction



Beverley Scott
Learning and Development
Solutions Lead

“We’ve had great feedback. People are grateful for their welcome and the understanding induction gives them. They feel ready to start their career with DVSA.”

Our induction programme welcomes new colleagues and helps them to understand our business and our culture.

We’ve updated the programme to help us recruit quality candidates. And giving our staff a solid induction to the business leads to even higher service standards and customer satisfaction levels. It also means improved staff satisfaction and increases staff retention rates, reducing DVSA’s recruitment costs.

Since launching the programme in October, coronavirus has had a major impact on our recruitment processes. But, since lockdown, we’ve overcome this challenge by using technology to develop an innovative virtual corporate welcome. We invite new colleagues to take part in an interactive session, where they can meet other colleagues virtually and learn more about DVSA.

We won a court case around illegal vehicle parts



Emma-Jane Morris
MSU Senior Investigator

“Through our investigations we hope to achieve a swift improvement in compliance in the parts industry”

Our Market Surveillance Unit (MSU) checks that vehicles and parts available in the UK meet safety and environmental standards. We also investigate and take appropriate action when they do not meet these standards.

The MSU investigated the complex and unprecedented case of European Exhaust and Catalyst Ltd. They were a company producing diesel particulate filters that did not meet the right emission standards.

The hearing judge commented that this was the first prosecution of its kind in the UK. The landmark case resulted in criminal convictions for the company and a £3,000 fine. They also had to pay costs of £10,460.

The case had a huge impact on the industry, influencing the behaviour of suppliers and manufacturers. They now know there will be consequences – financial and reputational – if their products do not meet the required standard.

We have diverse mental health first aiders



Alex Morris-Roberts
Driving examiner

“I became an MHFA to raise awareness of mental health, especially in men. It’s important to talk to someone if you’re not OK.”

We recruited 28 more mental health first aiders (MHFA), bringing the total to 63. The new MHFAs did a 2-day training course, learning the skills to help colleagues with mental health issues, or those who need emotional support.

But growing the network was not just about numbers. We also wanted to increase the diversity of the network. Our MHFAs are now in all areas of the business, at all grades and in each of our frontline roles – like driving examiner and vehicle standards assessor. They reflect our workforce and have improved the support available for under-represented groups.

Now we have MHFAs in all our staff network groups, who understand the specific problems members may face. They are:

- embRACE for BAME colleagues
- Enabled for disabled colleagues
- Pride for LGBT+ colleagues
- Women’s Integrated Network
- Time2Care – for colleagues who are carers

Coronavirus update

The Annual Review usually celebrates our achievements from the previous year – that is, from 1 April until 31 March. But things are different in 2020

On 18 March, following government advice, we suspended our services. And we explored the ways we could manage our business during lockdown, while safely supporting critical workers.

Here are just a few of our achievements since March:

- Colleagues who do not work on the frontline moved successfully to home working. This was only possible because of the early roll out of Windows 10 devices to colleagues (see page 13).
- We quickly created a virtual customer contact centre. We launched a new ‘softphone’ system that reroutes calls to the contact centres to colleagues working at home, via their laptops. This was important as we’ve dealt with huge volumes of calls and emails from customers during this uncertain time.
- Our systems and information have been vulnerable during the crisis, with people working from thousands of locations. So we protected colleagues from cyber-criminals by sharing training material and guidance.
- We managed the suspension of theory and practical driving tests for all categories. As the lockdown has extended over the months, we’ve kept in regular contact with affected candidates, explaining what to expect (as far as we could tell them).
- We worked with national stakeholder groups on how to safely restart our services. Together, we gathered customer feedback which has helped us to plan and develop our policies.
- We developed our policies and procedures to enable enforcement colleagues to work safely throughout the pandemic. They continued to carry out roadside checks, protecting us from unsafe drivers and vehicles.

- We've conducted driving tests for critical workers, including those in the emergency services (see page 7). To make this possible we quickly developed, in-house, a brand-new digital booking service. We've conducted over 5,900 driving tests for critical workers.
- We allowed 7.5 million motorists a 6-month exemption from renewing their MOT. And we quickly put the IT in place to automate these exemptions. We also simplified government guidance for those MOT testers who continued to work, allowing them to test safely.

“As a nurse, I was very happy to be able to take my test, which had been cancelled due to the pandemic. I appreciate the work that’s gone into making that happen.” NHS nurse

- Our vehicle standards assessors worked to new Standard Operating Procedures during lockdown. Activity was limited compared to usual, but we still tested over 1,200 vehicles at authorised testing facilities.
- We supported the nation’s coronavirus response by lending our enforcement vehicles to the British Army for mobile testing. Within 3 days of the request from the Ministry of Defence, we’d stripped out and prepared our vehicles and delivered them to the testing site.
- We’ve handled unprecedented volumes of ministerial correspondence and coordinated with other departments and Number 10 Downing Street.

Since lockdown restrictions began to ease, we’ve worked with DfT, Public Health England, the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales and others on restarting our services.

We’re not completely clear of coronavirus yet, so there are still restrictions. But we’re looking forward to safely reintroducing our services from July.

What's next?

The future is less certain than it has been in previous years. The short and long-term effects of coronavirus are still not clear. But our immediate priority will be to continue the work on restarting our services safely, in line with Government guidelines.

This pandemic has taught us that we cope well with change. We responded swiftly and flexibly to the crisis. And the different ways of working we've developed give us a great opportunity to realise potential and make our services even better.

We'll use these exceptional experiences to inform how we complete work that was already underway. For example, our frontline service transformation and the future of the theory test.

We'll learn from the impact the pandemic has had, and will continue to have, on society. And we'll use this to review our 5-year strategy.

This may mean we'll change the focus on some of the commitments in our strategy. For example, how we contribute towards air quality and how we work with Government on strategies for the future of mobility.

One thing we can be sure of is that our plans will help UK citizens and businesses along the road to recovery.

DVSA will continue to keep you **safe** on **Britain's roads**.



We're listening

We're continuing to perform well against our customer service targets.

Last year, we:



answered **798,124** calls – **76%** within 30 seconds



replied to **129,997** emails within 5 days



replied to **79%** of social media questions within an hour

We also processed **113,412** applications for technical tests – **98.39%** within service level.

In March, we saw a huge increase in people contacting us by social media and email because of coronavirus. Our team handled over **40,000** additional emails.

In November, we achieved Customer Contact Association accreditation Version 7.

The customer service excellence assessors commented that our centre continues to make good progress. They recognised that we have an in-depth understanding of our customers and that our customer satisfaction levels are high.



We're still beating our targets for answering correspondence.

Last year, our team dealt with:



98.1% of **6,659** letters and emails within 10 working days



99.5% of **376** Freedom of Information requests in 20 working days



646 data protection and subject access requests

We've improved the way we handle complaints.

Since January 2020:

- we reduced the number of complaint escalation levels from 3 to 2 stages
- the Public Liaison Team now answers complaints, while other pieces of correspondence are answered by other business areas
- we have aligned our complaints processes to other Government departments
- we've improved our responses to customers in consultation with Independent Complaints Assessors (ICA)

Vasim Choudhary,
Public Liaison Manager, said:

“We've reviewed our complaints process. Evidence from workshops, questionnaires, interviews and surveys shows the changes will make a real difference to our customers and colleagues.”

Our people

We have around 4,700 members of staff. Most of them work in frontline roles like driver and vehicle testing and enforcement.

Between April 2019 and March 2020, we recruited **412** new members of staff.

Everyone at DVSA, whether they're out on the road or based in one of our offices, works hard to keep you **safe** on **Britain's roads**.



Our income

In the financial year 2019 to 2020, our income was slightly above plan.

This was mainly because of a higher demand for theory tests and driver professional competency training. We also received additional one-off grant funding (to support increased employer pension contributions).

These increases were almost entirely offset by the effects of coronavirus. Our income decreased when we suspended the majority of our testing activities on 21 March 2020.

We lost **£11.6m** in income and spent an extra **£1.0m** in the financial year 2019 to 2020 as a result of these test suspensions.

We had a target to save **£1.0m** and we actually saved **£1.5m**. That means we've saved **£52.2m** in 5 years.

Income: **£388.2 million**

- driver services **£204.9m**
- vehicle services **£101.6m**
- MOT services **£63.8m**
- licensing services **£13.1m**
- other services **£4.8m**

Costs: **£388.6 million**

- Staff costs **£187.0m**
- other operating costs **£160.3m**
- asset-related costs **£26.3m**
- net finance costs **£6.6m**
- dividend payable to DfT **£8.4m**

www.gov.uk/dvsa

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