



Driver & Vehicle
Licensing
Agency

Simpler | Better | Safer

2015-2016
DVLA as a sustainable business





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About this report

This sustainability report covers the 2015-2016 financial year.

It is intended to both supplement the DVLA Business Plan 2015-16 which sets out our plans and commitments for the year ahead, and support the 2014-15 annual report and accounts.

Previously DVLA has published Sustainable Development Action Plans (SDAPs), the last being in 2009-10.

2010 saw the abolition of the Sustainable Development Commission, and the obligation to produce SDAPs.

However we have continued to commit to sustainability in DVLA and report performance against the Greening Government Commitments, which covers aspects from energy to procurement.

This is not intended as a specific action plan, but an overview of where we are now, some of the activities we are engaging in over the next 12 months and how they will contribute to the sustainability of the agency.

Specific actions can be found in the agency's Business Plan.



Who we are

The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) is an Executive Agency of the Department for Transport (DfT) and part of the Motoring Services Group.

DVLA is responsible for maintaining over 45 million driver records and over 38 million vehicle records and collects over £6 billion a year in vehicle tax, limiting tax evasion to no more than 1% a year.

Our strategy is to get the right drivers and vehicles taxed and on the road, as simply, safely and efficiently for the public as possible.

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Sustainable



What is sustainability?

Sustainable development is not just about protecting the environment; there are three pillars:

- Social
- Economic
- Environmental.

In order to have a future where our quality of life is improving, the environment, economy and society all need to be looked after. Damage to one of these pillars can have a knock on effect on the future of the others.

The DVLA has a responsibility under the government's paper, 'Governing for the Future- The opportunities for main-streaming sustainable development' to ensure that it adopts a sustainable approach to its business.

We recognise the role we have to play in supporting all three pillars and do this in an open and transparent way.

HR and Estates Director Phil Bushby foreword

Sustainability in DVLA is all about efficiency:

Efficiency of our:

- business
- estate
- staff.

Similarly to last year, we will make leaps and bounds in terms of efficiency in our core business in 2015-16; projects are in the pipeline to bring further 21st century services for our customers and stakeholders in line with our commitments under the red tape challenge.

To manage our social and environmental footprint we are amongst other things developing a new travel plan to minimise

negative impacts our commuters have; our increasingly digital business is dramatically reducing the amount of paper we produce and receive, we are re-training our staff, developing new talent and seeking new business opportunities to maintain our huge presence as an employer in Swansea.



An introduction... Julia Ashford



Julia Ashford has been tasked with ensuring DVLA is a sustainable business since 2008.

The driver for producing this report was to draw out the sustainable thinking and action that is taking place across the agency.

This report is designed to demonstrate how acting economically, environmentally and socially responsible is integral to our business activities and plans for the future.

It sets out to capture the benefits the agency is bringing to society and the environment, as well as the well reported economic savings we are striving to make.

Whilst thinking sustainably is business as usual to many of our staff, its not always recognised as such and is often hidden behind terms such as efficiency, customer insight or staff engagement.

For this reason, we have spoken to some of the senior managers and asked them to explain in their own words what sustainable development means to them and how they are delivering their areas of the business.

Our sustainability objectives and targets

Our targets, which are set centrally by government, are the Greening Government Commitments (GGCs)

The GGCs were set as a means to achieve the government's vision; to have the greenest ever operations and procurement with greater transparency on performance.

The commitments aim to significantly reduce the government's negative impact on the environment through reducing emissions of greenhouse gases, reducing waste, reducing water consumption and making public procurement more sustainable.

The targets originally were for a 5 year period starting from 2009-10, however have been extended to cover 2015-16.

In 2015-16 we are committed to:

- reduce our greenhouse gas emissions from the whole estate and business related transport by 25% (against the baseline)
- maintain our reduction in waste generated at 47%
- maintain best practice levels of water consumed per person of <math><6\text{m}^3</math>
- embed government buying standards in procurement
- improve and publish supply chain impact.

The government's impact and ability to show leadership stretches beyond the key outcomes above. It has committed to be open, transparent and publish steps taken in the following areas:

Climate change adaptation, biodiversity and the natural environment, procurement of food and catering services, sustainable construction and people.

Our estate



In conversation... Cennydd Powell

Cennydd has recently joined the agency as Head of Estates Management Group

In your opinion what does sustainability in business mean?

Having a long term strategy to manage and co-ordinate environmental, financial and social demands on the business. These cannot be looked at in isolation as they need to be flexible and dovetail with future growth. All 3 elements are interdependent as, for example an increase in energy efficiency leads to a reduction in energy costs whilst contributing towards our long term social responsibility through carbon reduction.

How does our estates, energy and travel strategies help ensure we are a sustainable business?

Looking forward, we need to reduce the impact of our resources across the estate. Initially we need to review the use of our existing buildings to ensure that we are utilising them to their maximum capacity and removing any surplus space from our daily operations. This in turn will minimise the running costs of the estate and also the carbon impact of our built environment. We need to review the way our buildings are run to ensure that they are operated in the most efficient manner, whilst ensuring that any plant and equipment due for replacement or upgrade are changed for more efficient systems.

We will also look at travel related issues both in respect of travelling to work and for business purposes to ensure that we are making the most efficient use of transport.

There may be a need for environmental promotions and staff training to ensure that all staff are aware of and compliant with efficient working practices whilst I intend to work with all areas of the business and our service partners to ensure that sustainable practices are embedded and embraced in all areas relating to the estate.

“Sustainability is looking at how we make best use of the resources we’ve got and what we need to run the business.”



“We have 14 properties covering 66,000 m² so a lot to cover and work with.”



Case study

Non territorial working (NTW) and how it's the most efficient use of our estate

NTW is a simple policy that helps increase the efficiency of the estate by utilising our space to gain maximum benefit and flexibility. Working non-territorially means you are able to work anywhere over the estate. An in-house database is used where local administrators can book areas up to 10 days in advance. Within those areas the seating will be allocated randomly unless there are overriding circumstances.

Application of the policy has required standardisation of our furniture and IT and operating in an open plan environment.

We have been applying this concept since 2005, during which time we have been able to reduce our estate by 5 buildings. NTW has over time become 'business as usual' in the agency, the policy is owned by our estates management group who are also responsible for maintaining the booking system.

Organising our estate using this model will be particularly challenging this year partly due to a major restructure of our IT directorate as we bring our IT services back in-house. However our aim is to maintain target performance of 0.83 workstations to 1 member of staff.

Utilising our space like this allows for flexibility as our business changes and enables us to make the most of our more efficient buildings, both in terms of cost and energy efficiency.

Travel

As an agency of the Department for Transport we are keenly focussed on reducing the impact of road vehicles and seek to find more environmentally acceptable alternatives to existing travel practices. In 2013 we achieved a platinum award for our travel planning which covered both business travel and commuting.

Business travel

Over the past few years we have reduced our environmental impact by encouraging a shift in travel management and behaviour.

We have reduced our tCO₂e from travel by approximately 70% since 2009/10 and reduced the number of domestic business flights we have made by 85%. These results have been achieved by:

- changing the culture around travelling on business, which has resulted in a significant reduction in miles
- hiring/procuring lower emission vehicles, most of our fleet is now hybrid or eco technology
- encouraging a modal shift from cars to rail.

The new target set by government for 2015-16 is to maintain current reduction levels, however we don't feel this is stretching enough for us in this area and have set ourselves a target to exceed the 2014-15 outturn.

One of the ways we will achieve this is to replace our older fleet. With the help from a grant from the Office of Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV), we will be replacing our vehicle business fleet with ultra low emission vehicles. This change will reduce the average grams of CO₂ per km of our fleet from 130 to 34.



Commuting

Our main site is based in a residential area and houses approximately 6,000 staff. It is poorly served by public transport and has just 2000 parking spaces.

To help alleviate the negative environmental impact and the impact on the local communities, we already have a number of initiatives running for staff. We have dedicated works buses running to and from the outreaching communities, a park and share/ride site, and a dedicated car sharing car park and databases. We have also linked up with local bus companies to offer discounts on public transport.

However we realise that there is more we need to do – one of our targets for this year is to increase the number of staff using the bus services from 200 to 1000.

In conversation... Rhian Thomas

Rhian has responsibility for Environmental and Energy Management in the agency.

How do we manage energy and our impact on the environment?

We apply an industry best practice management system (ISO 14001) to systematically manage the impact our business activities and estate have on the environment.

The system recognises that we need to pay the most attention to the outputs of our activities that have the most significant impact on the environment. This can be because they are covered by legislation or are high profile and we have government targets relating to them. Examples are:

- Our use of energy e.g. from our data centres and office space
- Production of hazardous waste e.g. obsolete batteries and lights
- Discharges to water courses e.g. from substances used in our printing facility
- Nuisance e.g. noise from our plant and commuting.

Aspects can also be positive, e.g. the work we undertake to reuse materials or encourage biodiversity.

The system sets the basis for encouraging these aspects as well.

What are DVLA's priorities in this area?

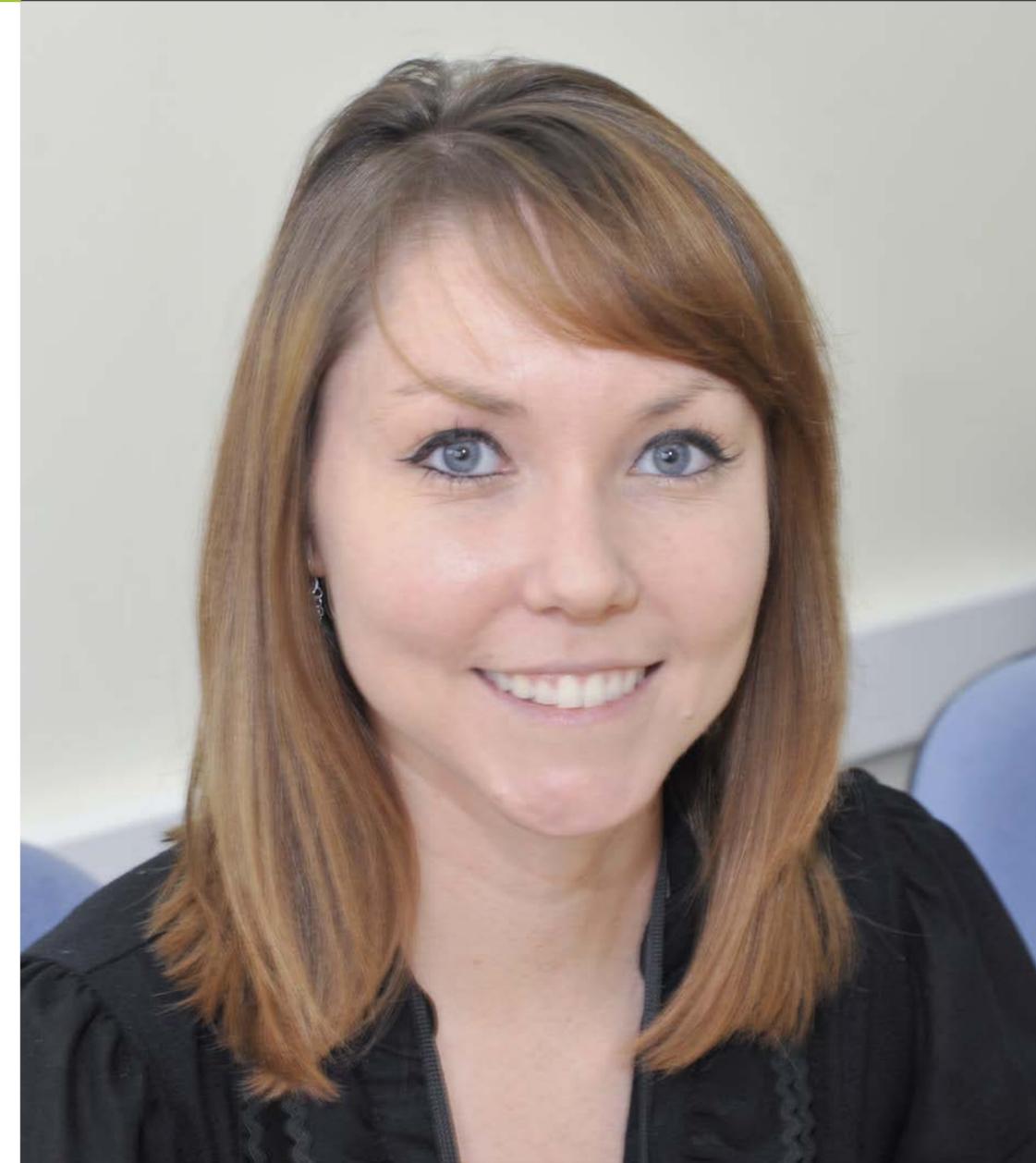
Energy management is a key focus for us, both as it feeds heavily into our carbon reduction target, but also as increasing efficiency will often lead to pure financial savings. This will be a key focus for us over the next 12 months; in terms of how our legacy 1960s estate can be maximised and how we can heat, cool and power our estate in the most efficient way.

For example we are currently investigating the best way to revamp our district heating, cooling and water systems whilst maximising our two Combined Heat and Power (CHP) plants.

We also try to be as proactive as possible and work with areas across the business such as procurement and projects to ensure that any future activities are planned in a way as to minimise any negative environmental impacts.

Monitoring

To comply with our performance reporting requirements under the GGCs, we monitor all of our use of electricity, gas, oil, water, waste and paper. For energy and water we have access to real time monitoring software which is linked to dozens of main and sub-meters throughout the estate. This allows us to keep a close eye on trends and impacts of initiatives we implement.



Our footprint

Our estate occupies 14 properties over 3 areas in Swansea and consists of 2 state of the art print units, data centres, an award winning purpose fitted contact centre and 16,000 m² of office space housing 6,000 staff.

In 2014 - 15...

We travelled 719,367 road miles on business



That's equivalent to driving around the world 28 times

We used 50,972m³ of water



That's enough to fill over 20 Olympic sized swimming pools

We consumed 40,918 MWh of energy



That's around the same amount of energy produced by 13 wind turbines in one year

We produced 1199 tonnes of waste



That's as much as the weight of 218 elephants. We recycled 89.5% of this

We emitted 14,558 tonnes of CO₂



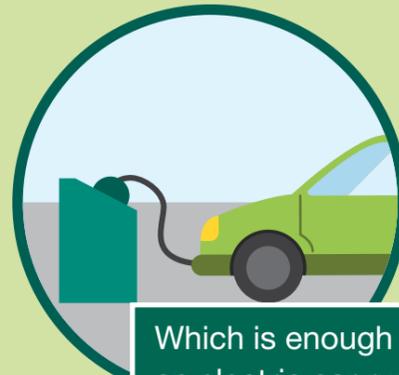
Enough to fill 14,500 hot air balloons

We purchased 19,967 MWh of electricity



Equivalent to the energy used by 4295 average homes in one year

We generated (on site) 4,195 MWh of electricity



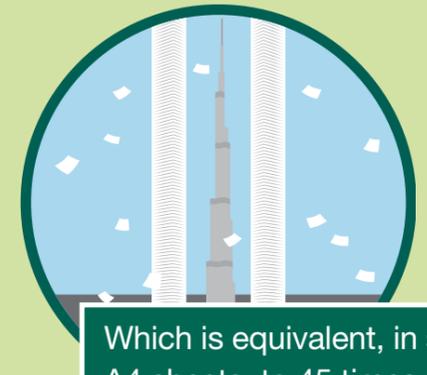
Which is enough to keep an electric car running continuously for 19 years

We imported 21,226 MWh of gas



Enough, in cubic metres, to fill our 16 floor tower block 15 times

We used 1930 tonnes of paper



Which is equivalent, in stacked A4 sheets, to 45 times the height of the Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest building

Biodiversity at DVLA

Two years ago we produced the agency's first Biodiversity Action Plan (BDAP).

It set out the framework for the protection, conservation and enhancement of our wildlife and committed to improving the biodiversity of our estate.

Since its inception we have made remarkable differences. We have adopted conservation management techniques, obtained valuable indicative data of the biodiversity present and produced a toolbox for guidance in choosing what plants to use and not use.

A new BDAP will be published alongside this report which has involved a review of the previous plan.

In the action plan we have considered the law and requirements regarding biodiversity set upon the agency, current and future threats to biodiversity on the DVLA's sites and amongst other things, investigated the agency's current biodiversity.

From this, objectives and actions have been formulated to ensure the agency's biodiversity is maintained and enhanced.



One new initiative we have started this year is the creation of a voluntary Biodiversity group for our staff. The group is a focal point for discussion of the topic as well as a chance for staff to play their part in conserving and enhancing the rich diversity of habitats and species we have on our different sites.



DVLA recognises the importance of a diverse ecosystem as well as the benefits that an improved knowledge and connectivity with the surrounding natural world can bring to staff.



Our operations



In conversation... Rohan Gye and Dudley Ashford speak about the digital transformation of driver and vehicle licensing services

Dudley and Rohan are our Drivers and Vehicles Service Managers. They have end-to-end responsibility for their service to ensure our customer needs are met.

Rohan Gye

'Each pillar of sustainability, social, environmental and economic drives benefits in the other two, its all interlinked.'

We're running a series of projects in the next year around the areas of vehicle management and personalised registrations.

The traditional drive for the projects in my area has been to ease burden for the customer and to cut costs, however in reality we are just as much driven by the social and stakeholder side e.g. there are projects that we have identified that don't bring cost savings but will bring wider benefits to society. A recent demonstration of this is suppressing the V5 for fleet companies and allowing them to manage their vehicle data online.

Our vehicle services have historically been very paper based. As we move more and more of these online we are expecting to see a massive reduction in the paper we send and receive, which will only increase as the channel shift increases in years to come.

We're also trying to be very aware of how our changing business affects everyone in society by working with our stakeholders to understand the best way we can all work together to deliver change.

An example of this is engaging with the motor trade to transact on behalf of customers where they would find it difficult themselves.

As well as the benefits associated with the increase in online services we've also recently introduced changes to our business such as abolishing the tax disc which has removed the need to send over 45 million discs to customers and introduced a payment by direct debit for vehicle excise duty, which as well as opening up choice for the customer, has reduced the number of V11 reminders issued by a third.

By default if you're making things simpler you're changing processes, often removing paper which has a positive effect on the environment. It also helps in terms of the customer, as it makes the journey through transactions easier.



The simplification of our services is also wider than us: If we can stop the customer using fuel to drive to the post office or to post a piece of paper, it must be good.

The next stage will be the challenge of when we have all the planned services digitalised, how we increase take up through digital inclusion and assisted digital. We need to be aware that people will not always have the skills, language or equipment to transact digitally so we must make the alternative processes as simple as possible as well.

Dudley Ashford

'Sustainability for me is about flexibility.'

Initiatives we have and will launch this year such as abolition of the counterpart driving licence, view driving licence and share driving licence will dramatically reduce our production and handling of a finite resource, paper. This is a commitment we are delivering with the red tape challenge as the key motivation, however the resulting environmental benefits are significant in terms of energy consumed and paper used.

Another recent change which is increasing our sustainability is the way in which we deliver projects. We are now using agile methods which gives you the opportunity to regularly present the product that you are designing and building to the user community, enabling feedback to be obtained and enhancements made as you go along. This approach is proving to be far more economically responsible with civil service time and therefore taxpayers money.

Thanks also to a change in the commercial framework, delivering agilely and complying with the digital by default service standard, we can break down most of the elements in the build of a service into different facets. This allows us to procure each of those facets individually if we feel it's best, which can open up market competition to small to medium enterprises.



Customer insight and assisted digital

How we build our digital services to the customer's needs

Sustainability is more than just the environment, it's also about meeting the diverse needs of all people in existing and future communities, social cohesion and inclusion, and creating equal opportunity.

The DVLA is committed to ensuring that it delivers its services in a way that is inclusive to all parts of society and spends time working with its customers to understand what is right for them. We have a long legacy of effective customer insight, however with our recent rapid digital transformation it's now more important than ever.

We are committed to deliver on the actions set out in DVLA's Strategic Plan 2014-17 for making licensing simpler and providing excellent services.

Valuable insight is required by our strategy but is also an action under the Government Digital Strategy for any new or re-designed transactional services to meet the digital by default service standard. The standard is designed to ensure conformity to it will mean digital services are of a consistently high quality.

It includes mandatory requirements such as:

- putting appropriate assisted digital support in place that's aimed towards those who genuinely need it
- planning for ongoing user research and usability testing to continuously seek feedback from users
- understanding user needs. Research to develop a deep knowledge of who the service users are and what that means for digital and assisted digital service design.

We understand the need to focus on what is important to our customers, what they need in terms of services we offer, and the way in which those services are delivered.

Customer insight is a key part of achieving this goal and as an agency we are committed to continually improving the services for our customers whilst building our skills and equipping our people to provide an ever increasing level of customer understanding.

Activities for customer insight include surveys, focus groups, online panel, usability testing and customer journey mapping (CJM).



UX@DVLA

DVLA has recently launched a user experience testing lab on site. The state of the art facility allows us to better test our services with our customers, giving us detailed feedback to help us improve these services further.

The lab is split into two parts. Firstly there is an area where our customers can test and discuss our services. Fixed cameras, microphones and mouse and eye tracking software allow us to understand how users interact with the services.

In the second, user researchers, designers, developers and project teams are able to observe their services in use. The launch of this lab is an important step towards our goal of becoming a centre of excellence for Customer Insight and Research.

In conversation

Jonathan Humble talks about how we are using sustainability guiding principles in developing our business. Jonathan is head of Business Services.

What is the drive behind Business Development?

Business development was an output of an independent review of our organisation in 2013, and forms a key part of our 3 year strategic plan. It's main driver is to establish how can we best use our capability and our assets to generate income to help us with the challenge of reducing non-pay costs, thus making the most efficient use of government assets. Our core services include maintaining databases for licence holders; we have an outstanding world class print unit and card production capability, and we are also skilled at processing, casework, customer contact and enforcement.

My role is to identify spare capacity and if we are able use this to serve other government departments and the public sector. We are looking to introduce efficiencies across government by centralising functions and automating the back office processes e.g. exploiting our centralised mail facility in place of other departments local printing will produce cross government savings. We are thinking holistically about how we can save the public purse.

How does this help DVLA be socially and environmentally responsible?

By looking at how we can do things better for the wider government we are able to maintain and possibly increase

our staff numbers. This helps the local economy by retaining jobs in our region.

We have a huge impact on the community socially as we employ a wide range of people and business, either directly or through contracts, therefore I think it is important as part of government to be a force for good for our region.

There are also net environmental gains to be made across government, e.g. centralising print reduces a lot of waste, energy and paper.

Similarly as we move more of our services online, we want to help other government agencies make that transition. By offering out our capability to the local public sector we can help support those local services become more efficient and help sustain them for the local people.

We have a powerhouse of capability within the DVLA and its time we stood up and recognise that and help other areas of government.

Why do you consider this to be important?

We have one world, one planet, we all have challenges but we need to minimise our negative impacts where we can and be environmentally responsible. I think at DVLA we have a good balance of all three sustainability pillars.



In conversation

Paul Cattroll talks about how we look to procure in a sustainable manner. Paul is DVLA's Head of Procurement and sits within the Commercial Directorate



In your opinion, what does sustainability mean at DVLA?

From a broad DVLA perspective, it's how we operate as a business. From the perspective of procurement, it's the way in which we procure and build business cases.

How does the commercial directorate embed sustainability?

First of all, we try to drive habits away from predetermining what we want and to buy and to procure more sustainably e.g. considering initiative solutions, whole life costs, flexibility and end of life.

We help the business with these aspects by guiding them to ask the right questions when structuring their requirement.

We also engage with the agency's sustainability team which guides business areas through a sustainability risk assessment on all large procurement activities. This ensures social and environmental aspects have been considered. This step is embedded in the process by being a requirement for the tender documentation.

We have also done a lot of work and will continue to do so in educating the business on the importance of good contract management. We have run a series of contract owner forums with a view to establish a network and share best practice.

We also target specific roles in the contract hierarchy and provide training workshops e.g. We have recently run a series of contract owner training groups and have started a run of lead officer training groups.

Additionally we have a strategy for supporting SMEs, and are governed by the Public Services (Social Value) Act.

Whole life costs

Whole life costing is particularly important as being economically responsible to the taxpayer we have a target to reduce non-pay spend. This will be a continuing obligation so future proofing our spend is key.

Competence

We have our qualified procurement roles working through Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS) qualifications, around 70% have achieved the advanced diploma. Sustainability in supply chains is an area that is covered here.

Supply chain

We work to achieve a balance between risk, liability and resource when considering our supply chain. We're very good at managing our first tier, with help in a lot of cases from framework contracts managed by Crown Commercial Services.

Government Buying Standards

We make sure procurers in the agency make the most of guidance on procuring sustainably, e.g. we use or meet the Government Buying Standards where applicable for product specifications.

Review

We are keen to continue to improve on our sustainable procurement performance and have recently commissioned a full internal review of the sustainability of our procurement processes and we have become part of the newly established Department for Transport Sustainable Procurement group. These activities will help identify our good practices and areas for improvement.

Our people and community



In conversation... Louise White talks about how we are preparing our workforce for our increasingly digital organisation

Louise is the deputy HR Director.



Why is the HR function so important to maintaining a sustainable business?

The workforce is our focus. It's about making sure that people's working life is of a good quality. We set the agency's culture.

Tell us about the positive steps you're taking with staff to support them as our business develops...

In response to our rapidly changing business and services we provide our customers, HR have created an Agency Target Operating Model (ATOM) roadmap which we will really be driving forward in the next 12 months.

The model is a piece of work that looks at the design of our organisation to help our business areas to define where they need to be to achieve the vision of a flexible DVLA where our people do the best work they can: confidently delivering excellent services to citizens, government and business in a changing world.

How will the ATOM model work?

The project is bringing representatives from across the business together to make sure we all work towards the same goal. Culture and ways of working are a big part of the model, our organisation design will see us working far more cross-organisationally, coming together in blended teams and making sure the environment is right for that to happen and ensuring people have the tools to work collaboratively .

How are we helping to develop our staff?

The biggest task we're going to have to do next year is around preparing our organisation in terms of skills and training because we know we're becoming increasingly digital.

The plan is very much about up-skilling, whether it be very specialist e.g. IT and programming staff, operational staff that will need to be able to use and support use of different systems, and all those in-between who just need to understand the digital world a little bit better.

We are also in the process of investigating and understanding the current skill sets and capability of our staff to draw upon this more efficiently.

How else does HR support it's staff?

We're really concentrating on equality and diversity this year particularly ethnicity and gender. We have recognised from the HR data that these are areas that we need to do better in.

Our goal is to be representative of our community. We will continue to strive towards this with work going on including going out to community groups and encouraging them to apply for schemes etc. We have had a marked increase in applications as a result of this and will now concentrate on the further stages of recruitment.



**happy
at work &
healthy
for life**

Case study

The health and wellbeing team raise awareness of good mental health

Development of the Changing Minds initiative was based on best practice advice from mental health charities and research/guidance from government and professional bodies.

Objectives:

- up-skill managers to deal with mental health issues in the workplace
- build mental resilience
- address stigma
- develop a working environment which is supportive and positive
- encourage openness about mental health conditions.

Activity focussed on raising awareness of mental health issues, highlighting sources of support and providing training and guidance to both managers and staff, specifically:

- A dedicated intranet site with information, advice and resources for both managers and staff.
- A 2 hour master-class for managers facilitated by a professional working in the field of mental health. The event gave information on understanding what mental health is, how to spot the signs when things go wrong and how to support staff. Feedback from more than 1200 managers who attended has been extremely positive.
- Recovery sessions - support for those with personal experience of a mental health issue.
- An e-learning package for all staff which more than 3500 staff completed.

A corporate challenge entitled 'Take 5' ran over five months at the start of 2013 - this introduced a programme of activity to help embed the learning from Changing Minds and build mental resilience.

The challenge was based on the findings of a national report, compiled by Foresight, the government think tank which identified five themes (connect; give; be active; take notice; keep learning) that, if built into our daily lives, will help us cope better with everyday difficulties. There was recognition that we needed to take a more proactive and preventative approach to support staff and extend this support beyond work-related stress, as absence was more often due to matters outside work. Although other changes in the business in 2012 need to be taken into account, absence days lost to mental health conditions reduced by 26% in 2012 in comparison with 2011.

Working within Human Resources, the agency's Health and Wellbeing (HWB) Team will be focusing on mental health issues this year as a direct result of investigation into absence rates.

In 2012 the team began a campaign entitled 'Changing Minds' with the aim of raising awareness of mental health in the agency.

With direct endorsement from the CEO, this year we have built on the previous success and have launched a second stage of the campaign with further live information sessions.

In conversation... Bethan Hall tells us about the importance of good staff engagement

Bethan works in internal communications and is responsible for staff engagement. She also co-ordinates the agency's approach to charitable giving and community work.



Why is good staff engagement important?

Employee engagement theory indicates that good workforce engagement brings benefits to a business including increased productivity, improved staff wellbeing and employee retention. We recognise that these are all connected and we need to be conscious of these connections if the agency is to be successful and a great place to work.

How does your work with the community and charities tie in with staff engagement?

Seeing your employer helping those less fortunate and encouraging its' staff to be active in their communities helps create a sense of pride in your workplace, which is an enabler of engagement.

How does DVLA work to engage it's staff?

Examples of ways we work to improve engagement are:

- We do our best to involve and include staff in decisions and changes that affect them – it's just good management practice. This is particularly important in periods where there are high levels of change.
- We have a brilliant communications team that works to provide interesting news and publications to staff which helps promote a good work life balance.
- We also have dedicated Communication and Engagement Managers for each area of the business who amongst other activities, regularly meet with the Senior Management team for awareness of and to provide staff insight on any proposed changes.
- We try to ensure there is a creative and innovative environment which staff will want to put ideas forward.

We recognise that staff on the ground often make the best contributors and try to use their extensive experience to feed into work where we can.

- We also encourage managers to value their staff and recognise their contributions.

How do we measure engagement?

We measure staff engagement by holding the annual Civil Service People Survey (CSPS), and for more continuous measurement we hold quarterly pulse surveys and focus groups. Our engagement index has increased in the last survey on a number of levels. Our goal is to continue to use good engagement practices and reinforce their importance in order to make DVLA a great place to work.

What challenges do you face in your role?

Engagement is often invisible, one of the biggest challenges has been to encourage managers who are very busy and target driven to see the benefits of investing time around good employee engagement. It requires a change in culture; engagement is not something pink and fluffy, is not even a nice to have, it's a must have if we are going to continually improve our business. We are in a period of high change in the business, which is a difficult and challenging time especially for our operational staff. We are doing our best to keep staff connected by applying good engagement practices to support staff as much as we can.

What's next for your team?

We've been recognised for our approach and have welcomed in external bodies such as NHS, Swansea City Council and the Valuation Office Agency to learn from our activities.

Sustainability for me, in essence, is responsible business practice. It's the way in which we support the community we serve, both on the environmental side of things and the community activities we participate in.

We also ensure our engagement is aligned with the McCloud Report which explains that strategic narrative, employee voice, engaged management and organisation integrity are enablers for engagement to success.

We have come far but still have a lot to do. High levels of engagement and rapid change rarely come hand in hand but we will continue to apply our practices and focus on supporting our staff.

Charitable giving

How the agency supports charitable organisations both locally and nationally.



The DVLA has a long history of supporting charities both in a corporate capacity and ad hoc fundraising by staff.

Our charitable giving approach has developed over the last 12 months to include corporately supporting local charities. This helps increase staff awareness about organisations that are out there and helps support those that are less fortunate than us.

In 2014, we moved to vote in a 'charity of choice' which we ask staff to nominate. Agency fundraising efforts are in aid of the organisation for a 12 month period. At the end of 2014, staff voted LATCH to be our charity of choice for 2015.

LATCH is a Welsh children's cancer charity who supports the children and their families who are being treated by the Oncology Unit at the Children's Hospital of Wales.



Last year we supported WAA and raised over £21k with which they were able to purchase scanning equipment. This incredible achievement demonstrated to staff that they were able to contribute something tangible to that organisation.



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Following on from last year, events and fundraising activities will include wear your hat to work day, Summer fete and a similar event in the Autumn.

In addition fundraising is taking place at a local level in many of our areas ranging from marathon running to craft events.

We also have long standing corporate charities which we support i.e. RNLI and Poppy Appeal, for which we do a considerable amount of fundraising.

In accordance with the waste hierarchy under the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 we explore all options for re-use of surplus equipment etc before recycling and disposal. This includes offering items to local schools, charities and community groups where we cannot utilise them within the agency.

DVLA IT developing the digital economy and IT skills across South Wales.

Last year we launched DVLA@techhub.

The tech hub in Swansea is a place where start up business, innovators and technology entrepreneurs can be a member of and/or occupy space.

Our involvement in the hub is a new and exciting opportunity for DVLA to work together with local businesses, suppliers, customers and universities, in the design and development of digital services. This is a completely new way for a government agency to harness the skills and knowledge in the local tech community, to assist in the provision of excellent digital services.

We have become part of a network that will work together in a unique environment to benefit in terms of sharing resource, knowledge, experience and workspace. We are proud to work toward fostering a culture of mutual learning in the development of excellent digital services, applications and technologies.

As well as upskilling our own staff, this venture allows us to offer placements and projects to undergraduates.



Recently the agency's software development community have made an ongoing commitment to local primary schools and the community. During afternoon clubs they will be helping teach children how to code and learn how to program. The program is led by Code Club, a nationwide network of volunteer-led after school coding clubs for children aged 9 to 11. The schools we are working with are all eager to get involved and associate themselves with both Code Club and DVLA. This year we plan to be involved in more programmes with local schools including enterprise days and work experience.

We have the skill sets that can be used to support the teaching profession to help develop the children and students in our community. This year we will be working with Swansea University to offer six 1-year sandwich course placements for Computer Science students within our Information Technology Directorate.

This initiative will help students at the university gain relevant industry and employment experience.

In addition to numerous individuals throughout the business who are developing their skills through study at various institutions ranging from diplomas to masters degrees, this year we're also working with the university to offer 20 further education programmes in computer science for DVLA staff.

Contact us

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