

Be a 'Road Safety Hero' by making sure your eyesight is fit for driving

This week is [Road Safety Week](#). At DVLA, we take road safety very seriously – one of the ways we do this is by ensuring drivers meet the vision standards required by law to drive. This involves [assessing drivers with visual disorders](#) and encouraging all road users to regularly check their own eyesight.

As the dark winter months draw near, it's important to be aware that fewer daylight hours and poor weather can lead to reduced visibility when driving. Therefore, meeting the minimum eyesight standard for driving is essential for being safe on the road.



Be a 'Road Safety Hero' this winter

This year's Road Safety Week theme is '[Road Safety Hero](#)' and it's important to remember that everybody can be one this winter, including you.

Seasonal changes such as heavy rain, hail, sleet and snow, along with darker days, can all impact your vision when driving. Adverse weather is a challenge for all drivers, especially if you already have an eyesight condition.

Fog, ice on the windshield, and even glare from low sun can make driving more hazardous during the winter months. If you're planning a journey this winter, whatever the distance or time of day, then be a '[Road Safety Hero](#)' by being aware of the hazards before setting out.

Is your eyesight fit for driving?

No matter the weather or time of year, your eyesight must be fit for driving at all times. And remember – seasonal changes and poor weather aren't the only things that can affect your vision.

Eyesight can naturally worsen over time, so make sure you have regular eye tests, at least every 2 years, or more often if your optician advises this. If you're concerned about your vision, don't wait for your next eye appointment – book a test with your optician as soon as you can. If you don't meet the minimum eyesight standard, you must stop driving and [tell DVLA](#).

If you need to wear glasses or contact lenses for driving, make sure you wear them every time you drive to stay safe and reduce the risk of accident, injury or damage to others on the road. In good daylight, drivers must be able to read, with glasses or contact lenses if needed, a car number plate made after 1 September 2001 from 20 metres.

Take the 20-metre number plate test

But how far away is 20 metres? You won't have a measuring stick in the car with you! 20 metres is around the length of 5 parked cars, or the length of 2 double decker buses.



A survey by DVLA found that [less than 50% of motorists are aware that they must read a number plate from 20 metres](#). That's why we've launched a campaign to raise awareness of the 20-metre eyesight test. The number plate test is a simple and effective way to check if your eyesight meets the required standard for driving. Anyone can do the test at any time.

Visit [our page on driving eyesight rules](#) for more information, and [check if you need to tell DVLA about your eyesight problem](#). Our driving eyesight rules are also [available in Welsh on GOV.UK](#).

You can also visit [Brake's Road Safety Week campaign](#) to find out how you can take action and become a 'Road Safety Hero' this winter.

[Adblock test \(Why?\)](#)

[Railway restored: regular trains to run on Dartmoor Line for first time in 50 years](#)

- first passenger train on the first Restoring Your Railway reopening will run on 17 November 2021, ahead of public services resuming on 20 November
- restored in just 9 months, and delivered £10 million under budget, transforming a mothballed former freight railway to regular services
- reopening is the first of the government's Restoring Your Railway schemes to return to service, fulfilling a manifesto commitment

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps will today (17 November 2021) dispatch the first passenger train to run on the Dartmoor Line for over 50 years, as the line once again becomes part of the UK rail network for passengers.

This has been made possible thanks to over £40 million of government investment through the Restoring your Railway programme.

The line links Okehampton to Exeter and will officially reopen to the public for regular year-round, all-week passenger services on 20 November.

The first train runs this Wednesday, travelling from Okehampton, and will carry local schoolchildren, campaigners, railway staff and supporters who all helped make the project happen.

The Department for Transport (DfT), [Network Rail](#) and [Great Western Railway \(GWR\)](#) have worked together to reopen this line ahead of time and under budget. Benefitting from the application of [Rail Project SPEED](#) approaches, the Dartmoor Line has been transformed from a mothballed former freight railway with occasional summer Sunday services to a full 7 days a week passenger operation in a mere 9 months since confirmation of funding, coming in more than £10 million under budget.

A service will run every 2 hours, with plans to expand to an hourly service in 2022. This will benefit students heading to colleges in Exeter as well as tourists travelling towards Dartmoor, easing congestion on local roads and helping boost local economies.

Since 1997, the line has only been open on some Sundays in summer after

regular services were withdrawn in 1972.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Improving transport links is essential to levelling up and spreading opportunity across the country, which is why we are driving forward our pledge to reverse the Beeching cuts in Devon today.

As we reopen the Dartmoor Line, we are rightly reconnecting communities, giving passengers the chance to choose rail over the road and travel from Exeter to Okehampton on greener, cleaner modes of transport.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

By restoring the Dartmoor Line, we are undoing 50 years of damage, reconnecting a community and creating new opportunities for jobs, tourism, education and recreation.

We have made it our mission to reverse cuts made in the Beeching era of the 1960s. The passion, nostalgia and enthusiasm for that ambition is clear right across the country.

People love their railways and rightly miss them when they're gone. Today – ahead of time and under budget – we've made a decisive step in fixing that, cutting the ribbon on a line and making a real difference to people's lives.

The [Restoring Your Railway Fund](#) was launched in January 2020 to reinstate axed local services and restore closed stations, many of which were cut following Dr Beeching's report on 'The Reshaping of British Railways' in 1963.

The fund is focused on delivering schemes that can level up the country, reconnect cut-off communities, improve access to jobs, homes and education and boost opportunity across the country.

DfT and its partners have accelerated the reopening of the railway, delivering passenger services in only 9 months from the original funding being approved to entry into service and saving money at the same time. As the government continues its overhaul of the railways following the [Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail](#), more lines and stations will be reopened.

To make the restoration possible, Network Rail's team of engineers worked tirelessly to deliver a huge programme of work to physically reopen the line in just 9 months, including laying 11 miles of new track and installing 24,000 concrete sleepers and 29,000 tonnes of ballast in a record-breaking 20-day period.

Repairs have also been made to 21 structures along the route including 4 bridges. Other infrastructure work has included level crossing improvements and the installation of railway communications equipment. Vegetation clearance, earth and drainage works and fencing have also been completed and further infrastructure work will continue to take place to increase the line speed to enable an hourly service in 2022.

Michelle Handforth, Network Rail's Wales & Western regional managing director, said:

Today marks a significant milestone for the railway and the local community and I am delighted to have been able to welcome the Secretary of State to Okehampton to mark this special occasion.

I am so proud of our engineers whose hard work and dedication has resulted in this line reopening ahead of schedule and today enable the Secretary of State, campaigners and supporters of the Dartmoor Line to enjoy a first passenger journey.

I would like to thank the local community, our partners and everyone who has supported us in reopening this railway line and I am excited to think that this Saturday, regular passenger services will resume for the first time in nearly 50 years.

GWR identified suitable rolling stock and developed a robust timetable with franchise funding ahead of funding being agreed for the infrastructure elements of the project. The project has also hugely benefitted from strong local support spearheaded by [Devon County Council](#), without which it would have taken far longer to reach the point where regular year-round services can be restored after almost 50 years.

GWR, [Dartline Coaches](#) and Devon County Council have also made sure that local transport is all coordinated, ensuring easy bus and train connections to the rest of Britain are easily accessible from the Dartmoor Line.

More work will be carried out over the winter including on the station buildings to enable the restoration of the cafe and other facilities.

Mark Hopwood, GWR Managing Director, said:

This has been a key aspiration for the community and the rail industry for some time and today is a significant day for everyone who has been involved. I am delighted to have been able to invite the Secretary of State and leading community campaigners to enjoy a first passenger journey on this restored line.

The support and advocacy of the local campaigners over the years has helped deliver a fantastic new service for customers, which we hope will grow from strength to strength.

Civil news: speeding up the appeals process for applications

News story

Reminder prompts now being sent to request supporting evidence for application appeals is submitted within 7 days.



We are now sending out alerts to providers using the application appeal process to ask them to send us supporting evidence within 7 days.

Why is this happening?

We appreciate it is not always possible to upload the required documents in one go.

So, we think it will be helpful to send you reminders about the need for this evidence. This will help speed up the appeals process when challenging funding refusals. It will also prevent appeals being considered without the right evidence.

Of course, there will be times when supporting evidence is not required. But there are times when the appeal cannot be processed if all the supporting evidence has not been submitted.

Ideally, we would like supporting evidence to be sent within 7 days. The submission window is a maximum of 14 days.

How will the reminders work?

1. When further evidence is required, we will request it via the Client and Cost Management System (CCMS). This will enable the provider to respond to the notification and submit the evidence.

2. If the necessary evidence has not been submitted after 7 days, we will send a reminder via CCMS.
3. If, after another 7 days, the required evidence has still not been submitted we will withdraw the appeal and notify the provider via CCMS.

Further information

[Training and support website](#) – for ‘legal aid review’ course

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Senior British official Matthew Rycroft visits Pakistan

Press release

The most senior official in the UK Home Office, Permanent Secretary Matthew Rycroft is visiting Pakistan on a two-day visit to affirm Pak-UK ties.



Permanent Secretary Matthew Rycroft visited Bahria University in Islamabad on Wednesday to speak to students about UK’s revised new immigration system which will provide an opportunity for Pakistani students to enter into skilled roles in the UK job market.

UK and Pakistan have a long and shared history that is bolstered by the 1.6 million Pakistani diaspora in the UK that is at the heart of the relationship between the two countries. It is these people to people ties that makes Pakistan a particularly important partner for the UK Home Office.

“These ties are reliant on an effective and well-functioning migration

relationship and the UK is committed to strengthening our visa routes and facilitating those wishing to travel between the two countries,” said Matthew Rycroft, adding that the Home Office is delivering an immigration system that offers clear opportunities to the brightest and best from Pakistan to come to the UK to study, work and live.

During his visit, he talked about the UK Home Office’s new immigration system that will level the global playing field to those wishing to come to the UK. Pakistani students will benefit from new graduate routes, providing an excellent opportunity for Pakistani students to enter into skilled roles in the UK job market.

The Permanent Secretary took part in a range of engagements and meetings at the Ministry of Interior and associated agencies to discuss challenges affecting operational cooperation and identify areas of mutual interest to expand collaboration. Highlighting the ground-breaking collaboration between Metropolitan Police and Pakistani authorities last year, which resulted in getting justice for the murder of Dr Imran Farooq, Matthew Rycroft set out his desire to work much closer with the Government of Pakistan to tackle shared threats and bring criminals to justice.

On recent developments in Afghanistan. Rycroft discussed a host of security issues including narcotics smuggling, human trafficking and illicit finance. This is the second visit of a senior British representative to Pakistan in the last three months. Former Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab visited Islamabad early September and met with senior Pakistani leaders including Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi.

Notes to editors:

1. Applications for study visas have been increasing year on year. In the year ending June 2021, UKVI granted over 53,000 visas to Pakistani nationals. These included 9,700 student visas, representing a 78% increase, and 4,600 working visas. This increase is even more impressive considering the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.
2. Visa granting rates are also steadily increasing. At the end of June 2021, the UK granted 93% of work visas and 91% of student visas to Pakistani nationals. This represents a 6% increase in applications granted in the financial year ending June 2019.
3. Applications for student visas have increased 68% than the year ending June 2019. This represents a clear example of how the points-based system can benefit Pakistani nationals.
4. Pakistan was taken off UK’s red-list last month while NADRA vaccination certificates are also now recognised for UK approved vaccines, which from November 22 will include Sinovac, Sinopharm and Covaxin vaccines.

Ends

For updates on the British High Commission, please follow our social media channels:

Twitter: @UKinPakistan @CTurnerFCDO @MatthewRycroft1

Facebook: facebook.com/bhcpakistan

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/world/pakistan>

Contact: British High Commission, Islamabad; tel. 0300 500 5306

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[MOX fuel transport arrives safely in Japan](#)



Pacific Egret

Pacific Heron and Pacific Egret arrived safely in Japan this morning (17 November 2021) and delivered their cargo of 16 MOX fuel assemblies.

The vessels departed from Europe on 8 September 2021 carrying the fuel assemblies which were manufactured in France.

PNTL, which is operated by Nuclear Transport Solutions (NTS), has been transporting nuclear materials between Europe and Japan for more than 45 years and has a flawless nuclear safety and security record.

Our purpose-built vessels are state-of-the-art and are manned by some of the

most experienced nuclear mariners in the world.

This voyage demonstrates again the ability of PNTL and NTS to transport nuclear cargos safely and securely around the world.

Seth Kybird, CEO of NTS, said:

We're delighted to have successfully completed another shipment of Mox fuel to Japan.

It's another demonstration of NTS and PNTL's extensive and proven expertise in nuclear material transportation.

I would like to thank our PNTL crew members, transport partners and customers for their hard work and co-operation in making this shipment such a success.

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