



Coach Chronicles

6th December 2024

The latest news, views, and announcements

Big Changes to Driver CPC

INSIDE THIS EDITION

—

Driver CPC Changes

—

Salisbury Coach Park

—

New Transport Minister

—

Smart Tacho Retrofitting

The Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) is undergoing significant changes aimed at improving flexibility and accessibility. From 3rd December 2024, drivers have two qualification options: International Driver CPC or the newly introduced National Driver CPC.

The International Driver CPC remains the same, requiring 35 hours of training every five years and will be necessary for those driving in both the UK and EU. For new drivers, passing the qualifying tests will automatically grant an International Driver CPC for the first five years.

But the National Driver CPC offers more amenable option for drivers operating exclusively in the UK. Modules can now be as short as three and a half hours, and split courses do not need to be completed on consecutive days, providing operational flexibility to businesses.

From 1st February 2025, drivers whose CPC expired within the last two years can take a new “return to driving” module and begin driving in the UK immediately. The remaining 28 hours must be completed within 12 months for both the National and International qualifications.



New driver cards will also reflect these changes. National CPC holders will now receive cards labelled “DOMESTIC UK USE ONLY.”

Following a consultation in 2023, these updates aim to streamline training, reduce costs, and offer greater flexibility without compromising safety. However, the penalties for driving without a valid CPC remain strict, with fines of up to £1,000.

Full details on the changes can be found [here](#).

Salisbury Coach Park Reopens

After Extensive Makeover

Salisbury Coach Park has reopened following a major transformation as part of the Environment Agency's River Park scheme. The refurbishment aims to enhance the experience for coach passengers visiting the city and improve the overall environment of the Central Car Park area.

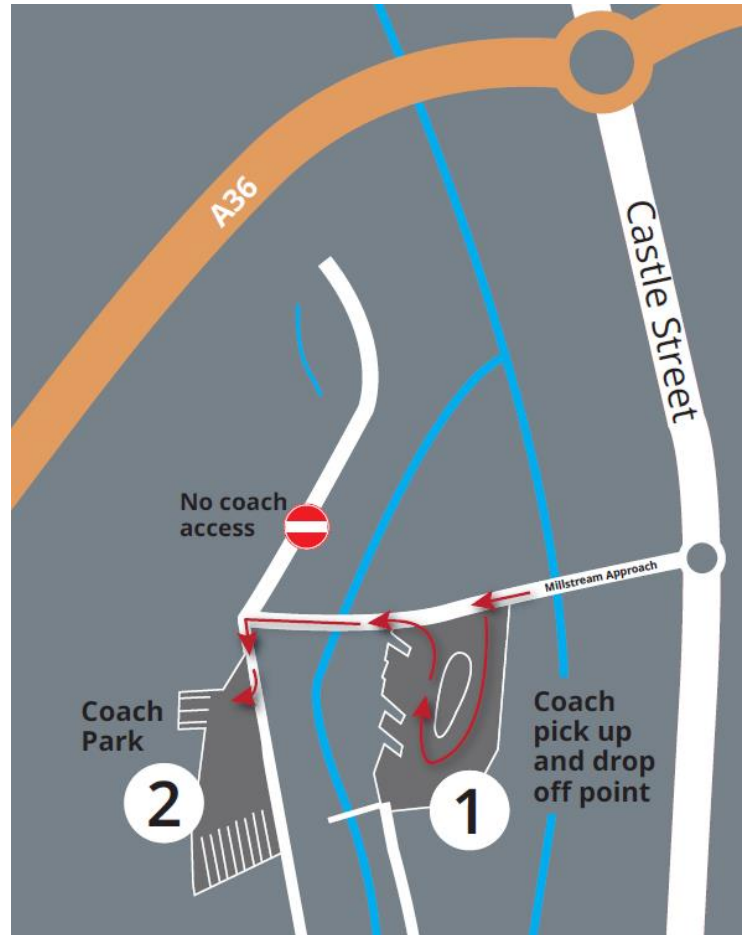
Located on Mill Stream Approach, the updated coach park now offers six designated spaces for drop-off and pick-up, alongside an additional ten spaces for coach layovers within the Central Car Park. These improvements aim to ensure a smoother and more welcoming arrival for visitors to Salisbury city centre.

The extensive makeover includes a range of enhancements:

- Improved drainage and lighting.
- Clear wayfinding to guide visitors through the area.
- Landscaping, featuring native trees and shrubs.
- A pocket park south of the Elai Restaurant.
- A welcome area near the new footbridge.

While the main facilities are ready for use, the Environment Agency will remain on-site to address final elements of the project and resolve any snagging issues. Additional seasonal works are planned for spring 2025 to complete the River Park scheme.

The reopening of Salisbury Coach Park marks a significant improvement for coach operators and their passengers, enhancing access to one of the UK's historic cities and supporting the continued growth of its tourism industry.



Dates for Your Diary



3rd December

National DCPC Introduced

31st December

Smart tachograph 2 retrofiting
for international journeys

21st January

Members Meeting

25th January

Annual Winter Ball
Royal Garden Hotel, London

1st February

'Return to Driving'
DCPC Module Launches

9th March

Members Dinner
Delta Hotel, Warwick

10th March

AGM & Conference
Volvo Group, Warwick

New Transport Minister Appointed

Following Louise Hague's recent departure as Secretary of State for Transport, Sir Keir Starmer has appointed Heidi Alexander as the new Transport Minister.



Heidi Alexander ©House of Commons/Laurie Noble

Ms Alexander has had a long career in politics, starting off as a councillor and then serving as the MP for Lewisham East, during which time she served as shadow health secretary under Jeremy Corbyn.

After leaving government in 2018, she worked as London mayor Sadiq Khan's deputy transport mayor and at this year's general election she was elected to represent Swindon South where she was offered a position as a minister in the justice department.

UKCOA is eager to work collaboratively with Ms. Alexander to ensure that the coach sector remains a cornerstone of the UK's transport network, and we anticipate to a productive partnership under her leadership.

Smart Tachograph Retrofitting

From 31st December, a 'full' smart tachograph 2 or 'transitional' smart tachograph 2 must be retrofitted into in-scope vehicles (10 or more seats) with an analogue or digital tachograph undertaking international journeys. If your vehicle is already fitted with a smart tachograph 1 then retrofitting needs to happen by 18th August 2025.

The new 'smart tacho' will still work with an old driver's smart card. However, if you want to take advantage of the latest features and technology on offer, then you'll need the latest digital tachograph driver smart card, and operators should also check that their analysis software is compatible.

Information stored by the 'smart tacho' now incorporates GNSS data (a newer version of GPS) which will include:

- Automated recording of the vehicle location
- Records the starting place of every daily working period
- Records every three hours of continuous driving time
- Records the end place of every daily working period

Additional improvements include updates to ferry mode and recording of new events and faults. The device can also be downloaded by enforcement officials wirelessly without having to stop the vehicle.

If the vehicle is operating only within the UK, then it can still use the original digital or analogue tachograph that has been fitted.

Our Industry Partners: **We Couldn't Do It Without You**

Platinum Partners



Gold Partner



Volvo Buses
UNITED KINGDOM & IRELAND