

COVENTRY VEHICLE REGISTRATION NUMBERS

The original vehicle licensing act was passed in 1903 and from January 1st, 1904, all motor vehicles in the UK had to be registered with the local council and carry a number plate at the front and rear. Councils were allocated a one or two letter code initially in the range A to Z then AA to FP. The code allocated to Coventry was DU and thus number plates began to be issued in the range DU 1 to DU 9999. As councils used up all numbers for their code, they were allocated a further free code. DU lasted for a surprising 15 years, then Coventry was assigned the code HP in 1919, then RW in 1924, WK in 1926, VC in 1929 and KV in 1931. Eventually when there were no more two letter codes left, a prefix letter was added to each code, eg. Coventry started at ADU 1 and numbers were then only used up to 999. This was followed by the AHP series and so on until AKV 999 then BDU 1 etc. The two letter codes however were still issued in the same non-alphabetical order as they were originally assigned. The prefix letters I, O, Q and Z were not used, so this system lasted until YKV 999 was issued in 1959. The whole series was then reversed, starting at 1 DU and so on. This however only lasted until 1963, the CWK series. At this point the familiar year suffix letter system was adopted nationally.

The Coventry History Centre (Local Studies at the Herbert) has a card index of cancelled Coventry registrations from 1921 to 1963. It records the vehicle details of the first post-1921 license along with the owner's name & address at the first and last taxation dates. The pre-1921 vehicle registration records for most councils, including Coventry, were destroyed long ago. Note that the date of the original registration was not copied from the old records. Cards continued to be kept, and updated, when vehicles were re-licensed by other local authorities. The index has an almost continuous series in the range DU 1 to 50 so it seems certain that cancelled numbers must have been re-issued at least once during the previous 16 years. Of the first 100 only numbers DU 1, 14, 18, 46, 49, 67, 68, 73, 75, 76, 80, 87 and 95 are missing as these were presumably never cancelled during the lifetime of the index. Of these, DU 1, 13, 14, 16 and 75 are still taxed according to the DVLA website as at 2013.

Only one number is noted as being a transfer from an earlier vehicle, DU 33 in 1934. However it is clear that many numbers were re-issued prior to 1921. The first number DU 1 is currently on a vintage Daimler owned by the Jaguar Heritage Trust but dates from 1911 so is surely not the first vehicle to carry this number. DU 13 is now carried by a 1900 MMC dogcart, yet the card index shows it was a Calcott coupe between 1921 and 1934. DU 13 is an Angus Sanderson, a manufacturer that did not begin production until 1919 so may well have been preceded by several vehicles to bear the same number. The Corporation bus DU 269, a 1914 Maudslay, was likely not the first to carry this number in the preceding ten years, yet by 1921 the number was carried by a Triumph motorcycle and sidecar. Quite why numbers were re-used is not clear, the HP number series had been allocated in 1919; perhaps the concept of cherished numbers is not a modern fad. I believe the transfer of cancelled numbers continued to be possible until 1963, after which it was only allowable to the 'original' vehicle.

There follows a list of the DU numbers up to 100. The Class column in this table indicates B for bike, C for cycle (probably both equivalent), G for Goods, H for Hackney, P for private car, S for cycle & sidecar and T for tricycle. The shortcomings of a manually maintained database of this size are apparent with DU 62, which for a short period was allocated to two different vehicles.

<i>Reg.no.</i>	<i>1st taxed</i>	<i>Class</i>	<i>Vehicle make/type</i>	<i>Colour</i>	<i>hp.</i>	<i>Chassis no.</i>	<i>1st Owner</i>	<i>Last owner</i>	<i>Last taxed</i>	<i>Council</i>	<i>Remarks</i>
DU 2	15 Jan 1921	P	Benz saloon	Brown	22.4	D13/48	Dr Herbert Thompson, Stourbridge	MacFarlane&Robinson Ltd, Wolverhampton	31 Dec 1926	Staffs	
DU 3	1 Jun 1928	P	Singer phaeton	Green	9.8	4239	Thomas Tetsill, Falkirk	same	31 Dec 1929	Stirling	1975 letter claims it was BSA motorcycle
DU 4	3 Mar 1922	P	Hillman 4 seat	Blue	10.4	99	William J Wormall, Eaton Rd	Mrs Bertha Bennett, Saltley	30 Sep 1934	Birmingham	changed to Lorry class G 20apr34; qv.DU 47
DU 5	12 Jan 1921	P	Calcott 2 seat with dickey	Grey	11.9	2019	Mr W W Spicer, Coombe Abbey	Reginald Malin, Crick	30 Sep 1931	Northants	Changed to Blue 29feb28
DU 6		P	Morris				W H Rowes, Plymouth				1945 note claims this was an Armstrong Siddeley car owned by J W Siddeley & later Dr Lodin?
DU 7	4 Jan 1921	P	Standard 4 seat tourer	Dk blue	11.6	13861 SLO 59	George H Smart, St Patricks Rd	R F Marshall, Birmingham	31 Dec 1930	Birmingham	
DU 8	16 Jul 1921	P	BSA tourer	Grey	13.9	863	John Bennett, Wood Green	Walter H Tarbard, Beckenham	30 Jun 1929	Kent	1st taxed Mddx
DU 9	23 Apr 1921	P	Daimler laundaulette	Dk green	20.1	2E.20.9639	Leonard A Williams & Walter V Ward, London SE26	L A Williams, SE26	24 Mar 1927	London	
DU 10	31 Dec 1926	P	Daimler saloon	Green	34.9	26787	Charles K Welch, Warwick Rd	A Pargetter&Sons, Bishop St	31 Dec 1940	Coventry	1956 enquiry card from Walham Green police
DU 11	1 Jan 1921	P	Calcott saloon	Blue	13	1991.B	Calcott Bros Ltd, Gosford St	Frederick W Chaplin, Sheerness	30 Sep 1933	Kent	
DU 12	12 Sep 1921	P	Premier 2 seater	Grey	7.9	1508	Maurice F W Sampson, Quniton Rd	Leslie Russell, Holbrook Lane	30 Jun 1934	Coventry	
DU 13	3 Jan 1921	P	Calcott coupe	Blue	11.9	2020	William A Atkins, St Andrews Rd	Frederick A Kitley, Bristol	31 Dec 1934	Bristol	
DU 15	11 Jan 1921	P	Angus Sanderson 4 seat	Grey	14.3	A665	Percy V Vernon, Keresley Manor	William Mewis, Kenilworth	30 Jun 1928	Warwick	1st taxed Wawick

DU 16	5 Feb 1921	B	Triumph		2.2		Robert McAndrew, Sir Thomas Whites Rd	same	31 Dec 1921	Coventry	
DU 17	20 Jan 1921	P	Lanchester touring	Green	38.7		Rudge Whitworth	William Finan, Handsworth	31 Dec 1926	Birmingham	changed to class H Grey 6jan26
DU 19	31 Dec 1921	C	Humphries&Dawes OK Union solo		62		Winifred Deemin, Raleigh Rd	Charles Wale, Bedworth	30 Sep 1928	Warwick	
DU 20	20 Jan 1921	P	Singer phaeton	Grey	9.8	C4431	George H Baddeley, George Eliot Rd	H Norman Reynolds, Queen Victoria Rd	31 Dec 1927	Coventry	
DU 21	8 Jan 1921	B	Triumph		4	304480	Austin A M Garlick, St Annes Rd	Owen Woodward, Whitmore Park	30 Sep 1939	Coventry	Changed to class Sidecar 22jun32
DU 22	26 May 1923	S	Rover			48644	Edwin Jackson, Grays Lane	Ernest J Norton, Beech Tree Ave	30 Sep 1937	Coventry	
DU 23	1 Mar 1922	S	Triumph		4	319925	Alexander W Garlick, Bull Ring	Alfred G Clarke, Melbourne Rd	31 Dec 1932	Coventry	
DU 24	17 Mar 1921	P	Standard 2 seat	Green	9.5		William H White, Leamington	E H Bissell&Sons, Leamington	30 Sep 1925	Warwick	changed to Dk blue 3jul25
DU 25	31 Jan 1921	P	Calcott coupe	Grey	10.4		Thomas Patterson, Dewsbury	Concrete Supply Co, Doncaster	30 Sep 1927	Yorks W Riding	1st taxed Dewsbury, changed to Blue
DU 26	5 Mar 1921	S	P&M				Arthur W J Bales, Heacham	Harold Spencer, Kirton in Lindsey	24 Mar 1930	Lindsey	1st taxed Norfolk
DU 27	27 Jan 1921	P	Singer 2 seat	Grey green	9.8		Miss Phyliss Roberts, Coundon Lodge	Fredk G Malim, Willingdon College	30 Sep 1928	Berks	1953 enquiry card from Plymouth police
DU 28	15 Jan 1921	P	Hillman 2 seat coupe	Grey	10.4	P251	Charles Birch, Leek	Arthur W Bond, Brondesbury	30 Jun 1929	Mddx	1st taxed Staffs, changed to Blue 27mar24
DU 29	1 Mar 1922	P	Calcott 4 seat	Blue	11.9	3480	Mrs J Calcott, Kenilworth Rd	R E Barnett, Warwick Rd	30 Jun 1931	Warwick	changed to Blue&black 8mar31; enquiry card from Plymouth police 1953
DU 30	3 Feb 1921	P	Swift, touring	Grey	11.9	1302	Alfred Turner, High St	James A Spray, Leyton	24 Mar 1929	Essex	changed chassis10002 & engine 27jan22, changed to Blue 26aug25
DU 31	3 Jan 1921	S	Rover		5	48599	Wm A Atkins, St Andrews Rd	Douglas A Davis, Kilburn	24 Mar 1934	Mddx	
DU 32	20 Dec 1923	P	Cluley 2 seat	Brown	10.5	1348	L Soden, Queens Rd	Newell Orton, Warwick	31 Dec 1935	Warwick	
DU 33	26 Jul 1934		Standard saloon			220358 DL		Bertram C Powell, Droitwich	14 Oct 1960	Worcs	unlicensed 3yrs, reg transferred to new car 1934
DU 34	24 Jan 1921	P	Humber 2-3 seat	Mole	10.4	K.4002	Charles B Phillips, London W6	Wilfred Brandrick, West Bromwich	30 Sep 1930	W Brom	1st taxed LCC, changed to Buff 16jul29
DU 35	1 Mar 1922	P	Calcott 4 seat	Blue	11.9	3481	Mrs W H Calcott, Warwick Rd	Gordon V Dearn, Mitcham	30 Sep 1933	Surrey	Reg.no.duplicated, now Ixion motor cycle
DU 36	18 Jan 1924	P	Morris Cowley 4 seat	Grey	11.9	34055	James Wright, Holmsdale Rd	Charles G Hopkins, Redditch	30 Sep 1934	Worcs	
DU 37	6 Jan 1921	P	Singer phaeton	Lt grey	9.8	T488	Mrs Dora E Williams, Altrincham	Joseph Kaye, Stockport	30 Sep 1929	Stockport	1st taxed Cheshire
DU 38	3 Jan 1921	P	Riley open touring	Grey	10.4	106	Howard J White, Shaftsbury Rd	Percy G Forrvan, Wigston	30 Jun 1931	Leics	changed to class P&H 30dec30
DU 39	4 Feb 1921	P	Humber 2 seat	Grey	10.4	K3282	George Clifford, Croft Rd	A Birch, Wrexham	30 Sep 1929	Denbigh	changed to Blue 26jan22, Green 14oct27
DU 40	6 Jan 1921	P	Lea&Francis	Grey	13.9	7	Lea Francis Ltd, Lower Ford St	same	31 Dec 1935	Coventry	changed to Maroon 23aug23, class G, open lorry 7jul28, Grey 9jan30
DU 41	15 Jan 1921	P	Humber 2/3 seat	Blue	10.4	K3612	William N Barber, Kingsway	Alex Johnson, Holmsdale Rd	30 Jun 1931	Coventry	
DU 42	21 Jan 1921	P	Arrol Johnstone 4 seat	Green	15.9	3238	Edward T F Mason, St Georges Rd	C/A E Mason, Park Rd	31 Dec 1927	Coventry	
DU 43	12 Jan 1921	B	Triumph				Christopher Portman, Arthur St	C/A Caldecote Rd	30 Jun 1928	Coventry	
DU 44	10 Jan 1921	P	Humber open touring	Buff	10.4	K3231	Harry J Bell, Wellingborough	David W Bailey, Northampton	30 Sep 1935	Northants	1st taxed Northants
DU 45	3 Jan 1921	S	Triumph			154095	Coventry Corporation, Town Clerks office	Walter F Watts, Bedworth	31 Dec 1930	Warwicks	
DU 47	23 Mar 1923	P	Hillman 2seat&dickey	Blue	10.4	A9167	William J Wormell, Eaton Rd	Mrs Hilda Fletcher, Cuffley	30 Sep 1934	Herts	qv.DU 4
DU 48	17 Feb 1922	P	Wolseley 2 seat	Grey	10.4	38041	Robert C Bullock, Meriden St	Arthur T Batten, Sunbury	30 Jun 1935	Mddx	
DU 50	11 Feb 1921	S	Humber				Sydney G King, Brays Lane	Edward Read, Haslingden	24 Mar 1926	Haslingden	
DU 51	24 Jan 1921	P	Calcott 2 seat touring	Grey	11.8	2247	William Carter, Smethwick	Fanny Taylor, Balsall Heath	30 Sep 1928	Birmingham	1st taxed Smethwick; changed to Blue 24jul1928
DU 52	1 Mar 1922	S	Triumph			319828	James T Moore, Priory Row	Harold T Moore, Oxford	31 Dec 1934	Oxford	
DU 53	24 Jan 1921	S	Triumph			1470 HS	Roland F Fenn, Ipswich	Joseph S Jacobs, Thetford	24 Mar 1932	Norfolk	1st taxed Ipswich
DU 54	16 Feb 1921	P	Hillman 2 seat touring	Grey	10.4	P282	Charles T Fisher, Weedon	P W Barker, Worcester	30 Sep 1930	Worcester	1st taxed Northants
DU 55	20 Jan 1921	B	Triumph		2.2	261293	William H Cramp, Spon End	Leonard L Aldrick, Burlington Rd	30 Sep 1934	Coventry	
DU 56	8 Jan 1921	C	Hobart			103131	Wm H Lees, Leamington	Harry Broughton, Chapel-Allerton	31 Dec 1929	Leeds	1st taxed Warwicks

DU 57	1 Jan 1921	S	Triumph			308409	John G Baxter, Humber Ave	Edward T Godfrey, Leamington	30 Jun 1934	Warwicks	
DU 58	27 Jun 1923	P	Armstrong Siddeley open touring	Purple	17.9	AS.6115	Archibald J Austin, Styvechale Ave	Andrew Hamilton, Stoneyburn	31 Dec 1932	W Lothian	changed to class H, Maroon 22aug1930
DU 59	4 Oct 1921	P	Lea-Francis 2 seat	Dk blue	11.9	8	E Turnall, King St	B Laird, Carlton Rd	31 Dec 1931	Coventry	
DU 60	8 Jan 1921	S	Hazlewood			1024	Charles H Pitts, Moreton-in-Marsh	Leslie J Poole, Brockworth	24 Mar 1928	Glos	1st taxed Glos
DU 61	1 Jan 1921	P	Calcott open 2 seat	Blue	13	1988	Calcott Bros Ltd, Gosford St	Walter G Bullock, Atherstone	31 Dec 1932	Leics	changed to limousine 26feb23, engine 15hp, Red 4jan24
DU 62	15 Mar 1922	P	Calcott coupe	Blue	11.9	3530	Thomas Carpenter, Queen Victoria Rd	E H Lawrence, Bedworth	31 Dec 1933	Warwick	
DU 62	20 Jan 1923	G	Ford van	Stone		990002	Fred Blow, Coalville	same	31 Dec 1924	Leics	1st taxed Leics; changed class to Goods&Hackney 11apr23
DU 63	5 Jan 1921	C	Coventry Eagle				Leslie H Veasey, Leicester	L K Veasey, Leicester	30 Sep 1928	Leics	1st taxed Leics
DU 64	10 Apr 1922	P	Bentley coupe	Brown	15.9	25	John G Grey, St Nicholas St	Jack Shrewsbury-Stevens, Itchenor	30 Jun 1938	W Sussex	changed to Black 30mar37
DU 65	14 Jan 1921	P	Morris Oxford 4 seat	Grey	11.9	5904	Lancelot W Pratt, Mile Lane	Randall&Whitfield, Gravesend	30 Jun 1929	Kent	changed to Blue 17jan1928
DU 66	28 May 1921	C	Triumph				Archibald F G Tucker, Kings Heath	H Steed, Beoley	31 Dec 1925	Worcs	1st taxed Birmingham
DU 69	30 Mar 1923	P	Armstrong Siddeley open touring	Grey	17.9	AS 5814	Oliver M Flinn, Rochester Rd	James R Holbrook, Balsall Common	31 Dec 1930	Warwicks	
DU 70	12 Jan 1921	S	Lea Francis			A1101	Joseph Kenny, Honiton	Edward C Dean, Sidmouth	30 Sep 1930	Devon	1st taxed Devon
DU 71	6 Jan 1921	P	Daimler open touring	Grey	30.1	TP.15896	Dan Stonehouse, Corbridge-on-Tyne	James Woodward, Esk Winning	24 Mar 1933	Durham	1st taxed Northumberland; changed to Blue, 2jul31, class H 3jul1931
DU 72	30 Sep 1921	P	Humber 2 seat	Mole	11.8	7430	Mrs Mabel C Harvey, Bournemouth	Francis T Assinder, Shirley	30 Sep 1936	Warwick	
DU 74	18 Jan 1921	S	Lea&Francis			A1060	Alexander Tomlinson, Purley	Arthur Lee, Nottingham	30 Sep 1928	Nottingham	1st taxed Surrey, changed to class C 3aug28
DU 77	28 Jan 1921	S	Triumph			3021	Walter Holvey, Twiston	Hedley F Tinnams, Westbury	31 Dec 1928	Wilts	1st taxed Bath, changed to class C 8oct27
DU 78	11 Feb 1921	S	Triumph			252966	Harold F Hackett, Avondale Rd	James H Hawthorne, London Rd	30 Sep 1926	Coventry	
DU 79	1 Apr 1922	S	Rover			832673	Sidney James, Clarendon St	C D Goodall, Wainbody Ave	31 Dec 1929	Coventry	
DU 81	27 Jan 1921	S	Levis				Howard Newey, Hampton-in-Arden	same	31 Dec 1924	Warwick	1st taxed Warwick
DU 82	19 Jan 1921	P	Standard coupe	Buff	9.5	TSL S 63	Walter Weelock, Birmingham	J W Wareingo, Aston	30 Jun 1931	Birmingham	1st taxed Birmingham
DU 83	5 Jan 1921	T	Morgan			521	Charles E Hulse, St Nicholas St	Albert W G Paice, Foleshill Rd	30 Jun 1934	Coventry	1971 letter claims DU 83 was Rolls Royce coupe
DU 84	29 Jan 1921	B	Triumph			2.2 261284	George W Worsey, Aston	H Hancock, Churchill Ave	30 Sep 1932	Coventry	
DU 85	13 Apr 1922	B	Sparkbrook			2.8 2108	John Cave, Beaconsfield Rd	George B Hobday, West St	31 Dec 1931	Coventry	
DU 86	12 Jan 1921	P	Calcott touring	Lt blue	10.4		Walter Edwards, Norwich	Verena B E Potts, Lowestoft	30 Sep 1928	E Suffolk	1st taxed Norfolk
DU 88	12 Jan 1921	S	Triumph			310359	R E Price, Abbey Cottages, Binley	John Harrison, Wyken Grange	30 Sep 1927	Warwick	1st taxed Warwick
DU 89	2 Feb 1931	B	Triumph			261320	Beatrice King, Broadgate	C Jackson, Vincent St	31 Dec 1930	Coventry	
DU 90	27 Jan 1921	P	Rover 2 seat tourer	Buff	8.9	SE 8	Messrs Rover Co, Meteor Works	A Twigg, Kenilworth Rd	24 Jul 1928	Coventry	
DU 91	31 Mar 1922	S	Rover			48387	Edwin Jackson, Brays Lane	William S Butler, Plymouth	31 Dec 1933	Plymouth	
DU 92	8 Jan 1921	P	Humber open tourer	Chocolate	15.9	M4430	William R Purdy, Oak Lodge, Stoke Park	Ernest Gethin, Dunchurch	31 Dec 1931	Warwick	changed to Van class G Blue 12jul29
DU 93	26 Jan 1921	P	Standard open 4 seat	Brown	11.4	SX68.308X	Major T M Rogers, Kenilworth	George Dimmock & Son, Harrogate	30 Sep 1929	Yorks W Riding	1st taxed Warwick; changed to Grey 17apr26
DU 94	24 Jan 1921	P	Humber 4 seat tourer	Stone	11.9	K.1401	Samuel H Shakespeare, Yardley	William Pilsbury, Small Heath	30 Sep 1929	Birmingham	1st taxed Birmingham
DU 96	18 Jan 1921	G	Ford van	Blue			Arthur J Warden, Corley	C W Trythall, Allesley	30 Jun 1931	Coventry	
DU 97	8 Jan 1921	P	Hillman open tourer	Blue	10.5	PT.146,1104	William S Heatley, St Pauls Rd	Mrs Violet Atkin, Ransom Rd	30 Jun 1931	Coventry	
DU 98	22 Jan 1921	S	Douglas B20			9475	Samuel Taylor, Belvedere Rd	H Satchwell, Holland Rd	30 Sep 1930	Coventry	
DU 99	22 Jan 1921	S	Triumph			307802	Thomas Swain, Dover St	Herbert V Elcott, Allesley Old Rd	31 Dec 1922	Coventry	
DU 100	28 Jan 1921	S	Premier			3.5	Reginald T Weston, Claments St	T Simmons, Hewitt Ave	31 Dec 1927	Coventry	