

# Correctly registering a **KIT CAR REBODY**

While some forms of kit car may avoid having to go through an IVA test, it's still important that the registration document accurately describes the new vehicle identity. Technical contributor James Horsely explains what's involved.

**H**aving completed my beach buggy build late last year, the next step was to ensure the vehicle was correctly registered with DVLA. I had chosen the long wheel base Apal shell as I knew this would avoid the need for expensive IVA testing, but still wanted to ensure the vehicle was correctly identified on the log book (V5).

The rise in popularity of kit cars which are panel kits using a single base vehicle is clear looking over recent issues of CKC. What's perhaps less well known is that all of these cases, even if the primary base vehicle remains mechanically unmodified, will need an updated V5.

With the increase in use of ANPR (automatic number plate recognition) VOSA, DVLA and the Police can check a vehicle's identity when on the road. If the vehicle does not match the description on the log book this is sure to raise questions, which are best answered by updating your log book, rather than at the roadside. Such updates may also assist with insurance for

your kit and also with future resale values.

With most local DVLA offices having closed in recent years I was not fortunate enough to be able to visit an office to discuss the process, so instead turned to the internet where a wealth of material exists (see Useful Contacts panel).

Many club forums also have valuable information on the process, and may offer guidance for your specific kit. If buying a new kit it is also worth discussing this aspect of the build with the manufacturer to understand if it has liaised with DVLA to make relevant changes to log books for its own demonstrators or other customers' cars.

Reviewing the guides on the gov.uk website I could see that my buggy build fell into any one of the following categories, depending on how the guidance was interpreted:

- Kit converted vehicle
- Radically altered vehicle
- Rebuilt vehicle

**Below:** James' Apal buggy in all its correctly registered glory!

In each case the instructions are the same – to complete form V627/1 'Built Up Vehicle Report', though the information given with regards to retaining your donor registration number does vary:

## KIT CONVERTED VEHICLE

According to the supplied definitions, a kit-converted vehicle has had:

- A kit of new parts added to an existing vehicle, or
- Old parts added to a new kit. The general appearance of the vehicle will change because of the kit.

I felt this best applied to my buggy conversion, though my bodyshell was purchased secondhand and is a 1970s kit no longer available. For many of the new kits on the market, such as Ferrari replicas and alike this seems to be the best match. The advice states you may keep a vehicle's original registration number if you can prove you've used two original unmodified major parts along with the original and unmodified...

- Chassis (car or light van)
- Monocoque bodyshell (car or light van)
- Frame (motorbike)

## RADICALLY ALTERED VEHICLE

Radically altered vehicles are described as vehicles that have been altered from their original specification, but aren't kit conversions. Given the age of the bodyshell I was using, and that all other parts were sourced by myself and not from a kit, I felt this category may be applied by DVLA. This would also apply to some of the unique one-off builds/modifications CKC has featured over the years.

DVLA uses a points system to decide what registration number to give a radically altered vehicle and the requirements are more involved than the Kit Converted category. To keep the



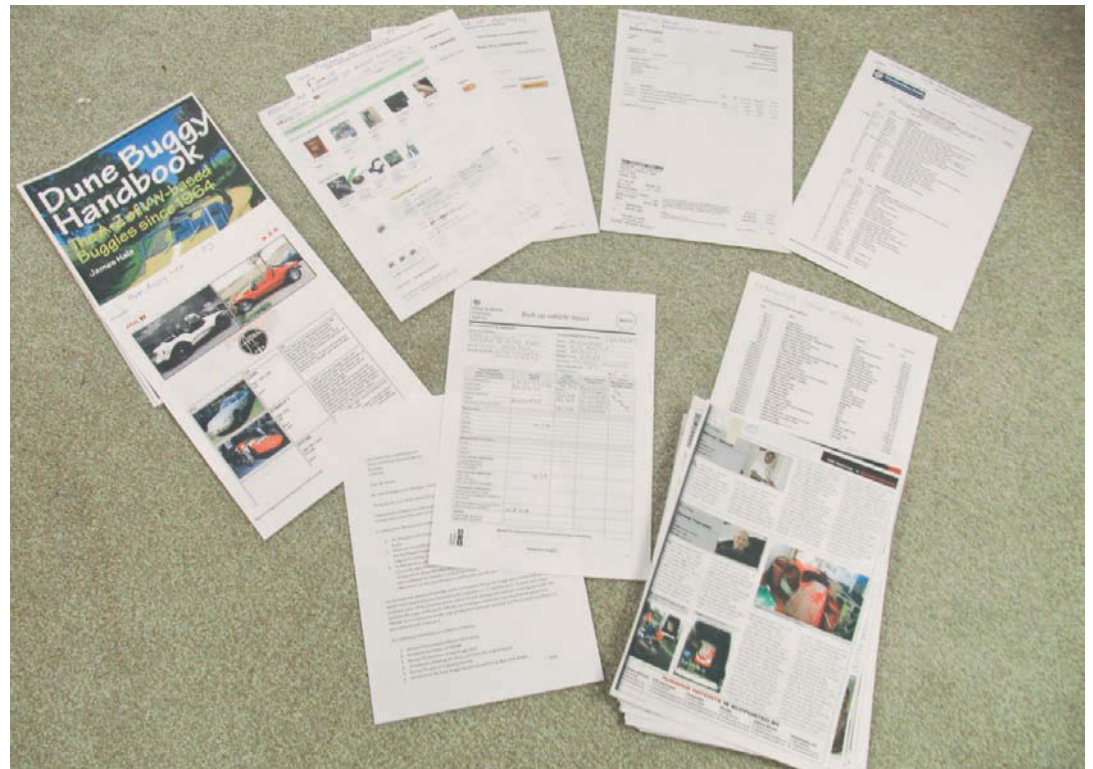
RADICALLY ALTERED VEHICLE	
PART	POINTS
Chassis, monocoque bodyshell (body and chassis as one unit) or frame, original or new and unmodified (direct from manufacturer).	5
Suspension (front and back) - original	2
Axles (both) - original	2
Transmission - original	2
Steering assembly - original	2
Engine - original	1

original registration number your vehicle must score eight or more points as summarised in the accompanying table. Five of these points must come from having the original or new and unmodified chassis, monocoque bodyshell or frame.

DVLA advises you won't be able to keep your vehicle's original registration number if one of the following applies:

- Your vehicle scores fewer than eight points
- It has a second-hand or altered chassis, monocoque bodyshell or frame
- There's evidence that two vehicles have been welded together to form one (ie 'cut and shut')

If the criteria are not met, a Q-plate is likely to be applied. Your vehicle must pass the relevant type approval test (IVA) to get



a Q-prefix registration number.

Considering my buggy build, if these criteria were applied I was able to score 13 to 14 points or 11 to 13 points depending on interpretation. My vehicle has a replacement front axle as the original was corroded. This was a bolt on replacement

**Above:** James supplied lots of supporting paperwork with his application. **Below:** The V627/1 form. Only the circled part on the first page needs any detail. More to do on the second page.

part, so not a structural alteration. Similarly the donor engine had been replaced, but again with a correct unit from another 1970s Beetle, and of the same size. These were points I wanted to ensure were conveyed when completing the form to avoid any misinterpretation of the changes.

### REBUILT VEHICLE

Less definition is given on the gov.uk website regarding what constitutes a rebuilt vehicle, but I felt this category could apply to a rescued kit that we all too often see appear on eBay. As my donor vehicle was bought in a stripped down state I felt it was important to also consider this category. A similar points system is applied for these, enabling you to keep a vehicle's original registration number if you can prove you've used:

- The original unmodified chassis or bodyshell (car or light van)
- A new chassis or monocoque bodyshell of the same specification as the original (car or light van)
- The original unmodified frame (motorbike)
- A new frame of the same specification as the original (motorbike)

You must also have two other major components from the original vehicle from the following lists.

- For cars or light vans:
- Suspension (front and back)
  - Steering assembly
  - Axles (both)
  - Transmission
  - Engine

# Project Bertini GT25

Like James' beach buggy, our Bertini GT25 still needed the BMW Z3 registration document updating to reflect the new exterior bodywork.

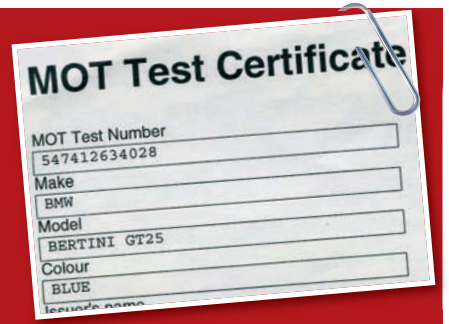
We began the process before the car was painted and, like James, we had an updated V5 document back within around two weeks.



We were very clear about what the conversion entails, provided an invoice for the kit from Bertini, pictures of the conversion process up at the Donington kit car show and a descriptive covering letter. We initially didn't think the V627/1 Built Up Vehicle Report was necessary, but the DVLA asked for it when we failed to enclose it in the initial package. In addition and presumably because the Z3 still had a valid MoT at the time, the DVLA wanted the original documentation for this too.

When the paperwork came back, we were delighted to see the car accurately described as a BMW Bertini GT25 and we initially thought the MoT certificate had simply been returned to us.

In reality, this was not the case, and closer inspection has shown that we now have a new MoT certificate with the updated description of the vehicle on it. Obviously, the expiry date has



remained the same, but an interesting feature of the process.

Having the V5 correct not only offers great peace of mind, but is also a requirement of the DVLA. Although it initially seems a bit nerve-wracking sending in the forms (in case they turn round and tell you the car needs a full IVA test or some other nasty surprise), we found the service to be quick and efficient.

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For motorbikes:

- Forks
- Wheels
- Engine
- Gearbox

With these different categories in mind I set to completing form V627/1.

Much of the first page of the form relates to motorcycles or trike

**Above:** CKC has been through exactly the same process with our Bertini GT25.

**Below:** Updated V5 now shows the buggy correctly described.

conversions, with only six rows of the table to complete for the following components if notifying of a car alteration:

- Chassis/Bodyshell
- Axles (both)
- Transmission
- Steering assembly
- Engine
- Suspension (front and back)

For each component you are required to supply a serial number/ID number if available (most likely to apply to any new parts), confirm origin (registration number of donor vehicle), the make of the component and verify if receipts are available. For a simple rebody conversion all rows would most likely confirm a single donor.

In my situation I had to advise of a replacement front axle and replacement engine. It is important to note I transplanted another period correct same capacity engine. As my vehicle was already registered as a historic vehicle (tax exempt) engine changes have less significance. If you are paying road tax on your vehicle a change in engine capacity may lead to the taxation class being revised. For the new parts fitted I also enclosed receipts.

On the rear of the form the following sections need completing:

**Original Parts not used – stating how they were disposed of** – I had kept a log of all parts bought and sold through my build, and had sold the majority of unwanted donor panels. I supplied a spreadsheet detailing this, as well as receipts for online sales through eBay etc. I advised that the corroded axle was disposed of at my local council recycling centre. If you are selling any parts of your

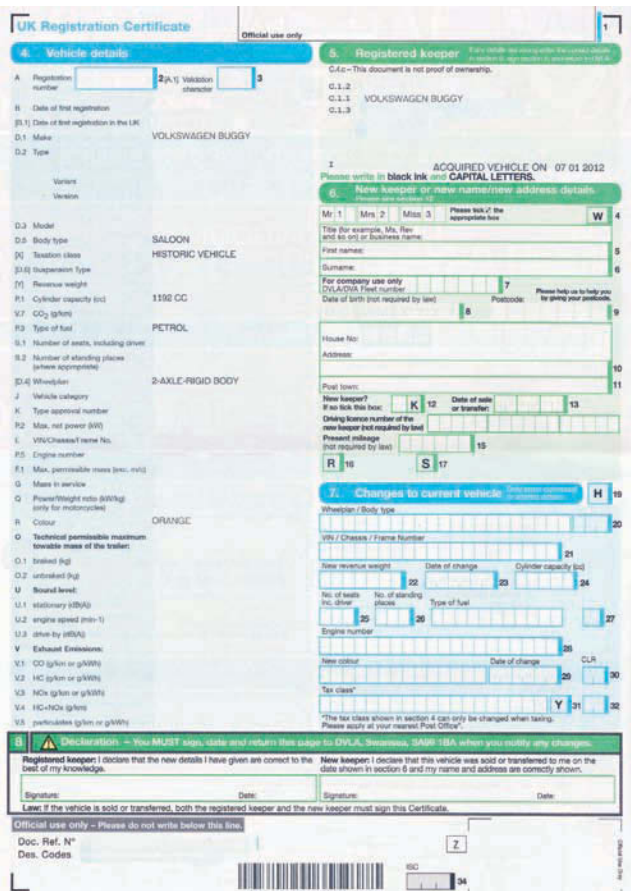
donor I would recommend a similar log and receipts. Also request receipts for any scrap metal sold as this is currently a particular area of focus.

**Any other information/Additional documents produced** – Here I summarised the build, highlighting the kit shell used was a long wheelbase body, and simply a rebody removing the original bodyshell. I stressed here that the core mechanical components remain as per a standard VW Beetle and reconfirmed all of the original parts retained. This section also asks you to verify the year/s of the build and who completed the build. If you have outsourced to a professional builder, receipts will be required.

**Additional notes or comments** – This section is provided for any other background information that is relevant. I used this to explain the origins of the replacement parts, stressing they were like-for-like OEM style replacements. I also referred to my build diary which formed the CKC Running Reports. As I didn't have a manufacturer's receipt for my bodyshell I confirmed the age and name of the buggy shell.

For a simple rebody, this form accompanied with relevant receipts, should be more than sufficient to convey all required information. In my case I chose to send a covering letter with the form which summarised the additional information provided. In my case I provided the following:

1. Running Reports articles from *Complete Kit Car* (18 in total). This was useful to show in picture form that the base chassis was not altered
2. Receipt for purchase of donor Beetle
3. Receipt for purchase of Apal buggy shell



### 3. Special notes (these notes cannot be removed)

1. REBUILT - ASSEMBLED FROM PARTS SOME OR ALL OF WHICH WERE NOT NEW.

4. Spreadsheet detailing the items sold from the original Beetle
5. Receipt for sale of original bodyshell
6. Extract from the *Dune Buggy Handbook* confirming Apal shell details (used as no manufacturer information available for kit – if fitting a new kit supplier specifications/instructions would suffice)
7. Article from Belgium Apal website confirming Apal shell details (used as no manufacturer information available for kit – if fitting a new kit supplier specifications/instructions would suffice)
9. Receipt for replacement Beetle front axle (original version corroded)
10. Summary of engine codes for VW Beetles to validate previous replacement engine code

I then sent off this information and waited for news from DVLA. It is important to note that correspondence of this type should be sent to K&R (Kit and

Rebuilds), DVLA, SA99 1ZZ

In my case, after a fortnight I received a new log book back with my vehicle details updated. This included a statement on the front page, Section 3 stating 'Rebuilt – assembled from parts some of which or all were not new'. This is a permanent note on the log book which cannot be removed, and rightly informs future purchasers of the car's origins.

The vehicle make (previously Volkswagen Beetle) was also changed to read 'Volkswagen Buggy'. I was not required to present the vehicle for inspection, though the DVLA do advise that changes to any of the following may warrant an inspection:

- Wheel plan
- Body type (DVLA give a body type description based on the vehicle's external appearance)
- Vehicle identification number (VIN)
- Chassis number
- Frame number for motorbikes

**Above:** Special notes section will inform any future owner of the car's origins.

Whilst I didn't receive any written feedback on the information provided, my opinion is that by providing as much information as possible relevant to your build, you will increase your chances of a routine V5 update and avoid the need for formal inspection. That said I have spoken to other long wheelbase buggy builders who have presented their buggy for a brief inspection following submission of V627/1 resulting in the issuing of a revised V5.

I hope this guide is useful to anyone contemplating a similar style build, and reassures that these changes can be made painlessly if organised with your build diary. **CKC**

## Useful Contacts

### Basic V5 change guidelines:

<http://tinyurl.com/15tesnu>

### Vehicle registration guidelines:

<http://tinyurl.com/kk3kwym>

### Download V627/1 form:

<http://tinyurl.com/psxfpn4>

### Send correspondence to:

K & R (kit and Rebuilds), DVLA, SA99 1ZZ

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