



Department
for Transport

Flexible Bus Service data In BODS

Tim Rivett

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The Problem

- **BODS Fixed route & Fixed timetable**
- Increased use of not-fixed networks
- **Core network for transport authorities**
- Not currently in BODS
- **Using BODS data alone parts of country have no public transport**
- **Increasing areas covered by some form flexible service**
- Rural funds
- BSIP
- **Costly to operate – need greater visibility to make viable**



60%

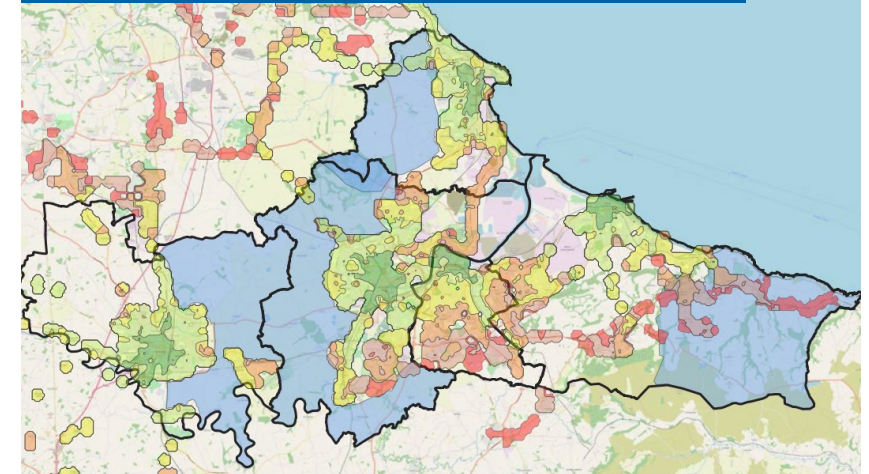
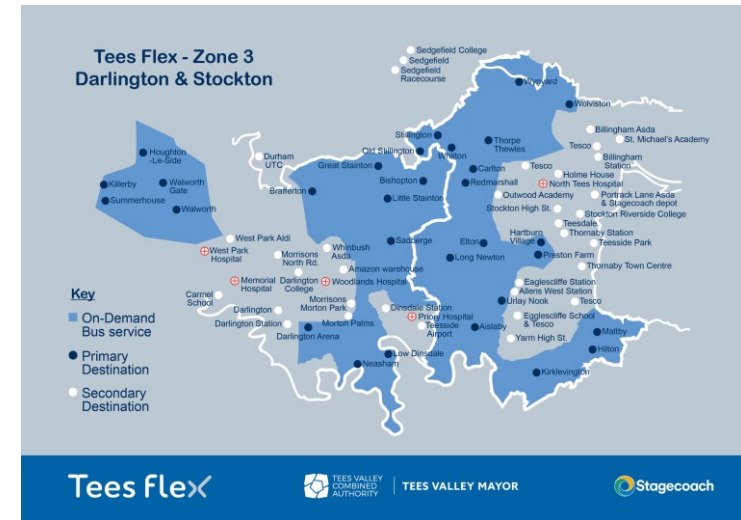
Consider flexible services as part of core public transport network

70%

Think flexible services should be in scope of BOD project

80%

Not currently providing flexible services data in BODS platform



Definition – Many Variants

- Flexible Service
- Demand responsive
- Dial a ride
- On Demand
- Flexibus
- Uber style

- Part fixed, part flexible
- Fixed route, run on demand
- Route and timetable flexible



BODS Problem

- **Lack of agreed approach**
- **Multiple approaches e.g**
- **Sample / notional timetable with notes**
 - `<NoteText>`Times are notional ***MUST BE BOOKED*** in advance. Phone XXX.`</NoteText>`
 - `<NoteText>`Most times are approximate.`</NoteText>`
 - `<NoteText>`Must pre-book in advance (XXXX)`</NoteText>`
- **Notes often not presented**
- **Journey planners use timetable as though it is fixed.**

Definition of Flexible Bus Service for BODS support

- **Registerable with Traffic Commissioner as a flexible service**
- **Most DRT or other service types will be supported**
 - Many variations so maybe some not supported.
 - Consultation may identify some unsupported that need including.
 - May be some types not possible to support.

Data Requirement

- Simple as possible
- Area covered (stops or zone)
- When it operates
- How to book



Welcome to Tees Flex!

Your all-new, on-demand bus service now available in Tees Valley.

Another day at the office? Heading into sixth form? A spot of retail therapy or enjoying a coffee with friends?

From 24 February 2020, Tees Flex services will operate from 7am to 8pm (Monday to Saturday).

Download the Tees Flex app and plan your first journey with us!

Brought to you by Stagecoach in partnership with the Tees Valley Mayor and Combined Authority.

Download the FREE Tees Flex App

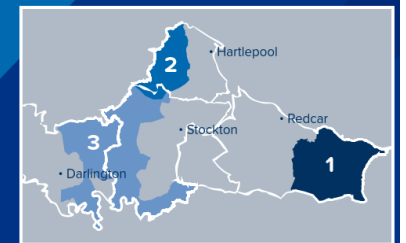


Powered by VIA VAN

Where can I travel with Tees Flex?

Tees Flex bus services are available in these three areas:

| | |
|--------|-----------------------|
| Zone 1 | Redcar & Cleveland |
| Zone 2 | Hartlepool |
| Zone 3 | Stockton & Darlington |



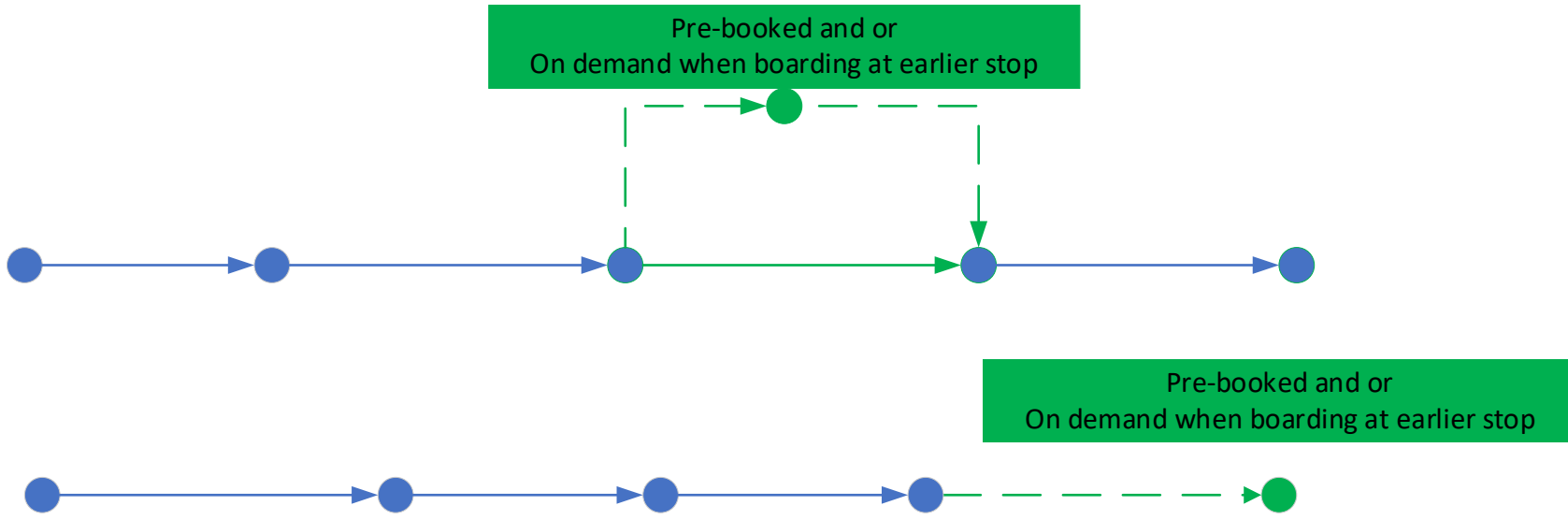
Please note: Customers can travel between two points within a single zone but not between zones. You're also able to travel to a range of predefined locations outside your local area, see stagecoachbus.com/teesflex for details.



On demand stops

For passengers on
vehicle





Issue

- Data consumers don't honour "setDown"
- Notes not presented
- **GTFS cannot translate setDown in stop_times.txt as not sufficient data**
 - pickup_type=1
 - drop_off_type=3

| | | | |
|---------------|------|----------|---|
| pickup_type | Enum | Optional | Indicates pickup method. Valid options are: 0 or empty - Regularly scheduled pickup. 1 - No pickup available. 2 - Must phone agency to arrange pickup. 3 - Must coordinate with driver to arrange pickup. |
| drop_off_type | Enum | Optional | Indicates drop off method. Valid options are: 0 or empty - Regularly scheduled drop off. 1 - No drop off available. 2 - Must phone agency to arrange drop off. 3 - Must coordinate with driver to arrange drop off. |

Resolution

- Specify FlexibleJourneyPattern for section.
- Overkill for single stops
- Update TxC **schema** - TXC_journey_support.XSD to have additional activities

```
<xsd:simpleType name="VehicleAtStopActivityEnumeration">
  <xsd:annotation>
    <xsd:documentation>Activity undertaken by vehicle at a stop.</xsd:documentation>
  </xsd:annotation>
  <xsd:restriction base="xsd:NMTOKEN">
    <xsd:enumeration value="pickUp"/>
    <xsd:enumeration value="setDown"/>
    <xsd:enumeration value="pickUpAndSetDown"/>
    <xsd:enumeration value="pass"/>
    <!-- ===equivalent of GTFS pickup_type 3 ===== -->
    <xsd:enumeration value="pickUpDriverRequest"/>
    <!-- ===equivalent of GTFS drop_off_type 3 ===== -->
    <xsd:enumeration value="setDownDriverRequest"/>
  </xsd:restriction>
</xsd:simpleType>
```

- Plus education of data consumers to use “Activity”

Challenges



Risks

- **Consultation results in significant re-work**
- **Detail of format not well supported**
- Few systems currently can produce the flexible service outputs
- **Flexible zone stop type not frequently used**
- Lots of FLX stops will need to be created by authorities.
- Education of authorities.
- Working with NaPTAN team
- **Adoption by industry**
- Once published few data suppliers provide data
- Few data consumers can use the data

Next Steps



Technical Profile

- Adds to the BODS PTI-TXC Profile
- The content replaces Chapter 10 of the TXC-PTI profile document and will be included in v1.2 of the profile document.
- Standalone until v1.2 published
- Provides system suppliers with technical details of how data should be provided.

1 Flexible Bus Services

v0-1 28 April 2023
v0-2 17 May 2023, following BODS project team review
v0-3 23 May 2023, released for consultation.

The content in this document replaces Chapter 10 of the TXC-PTI profile document and will be included in v1.2 of the profile.

1.1 Background

There are a multitude of approaches to the specification and promotion of flexible bus services unlike fixed route and timetable services where there are fewer opportunities for divergence from a common approach.

This section sets out how the majority of flexible bus services registered as flexibly routed with the OTC can be specified within a BODS compliant manner, enabling data to be provided to BODS and for data consumers to present data in a manner that the operator would expect. The Services supported:

- Do not have a fixed timetable.
- Have a route which may be determined by the requests made by passengers.
- Include those where passengers may need to book in advance of using the service.
- Are open to anyone who lives in the area where the services operate.

A flexible bus service will use spatial zones or lists of fixed stops but do not have a fixed order of stops and or a timetable published in advance. This allows for flexible services to have combinations of

- area-to-fixed stop,
- area-to-area,
- fixed stop-to-fixed stop with no fixed timetable
- fixed stop-to-fixed stop with no pre-defined route.

Within a zone there does not have to be fixed or marked stop(s) and in these situations the service will call on demand at a location agreed during the booking process.

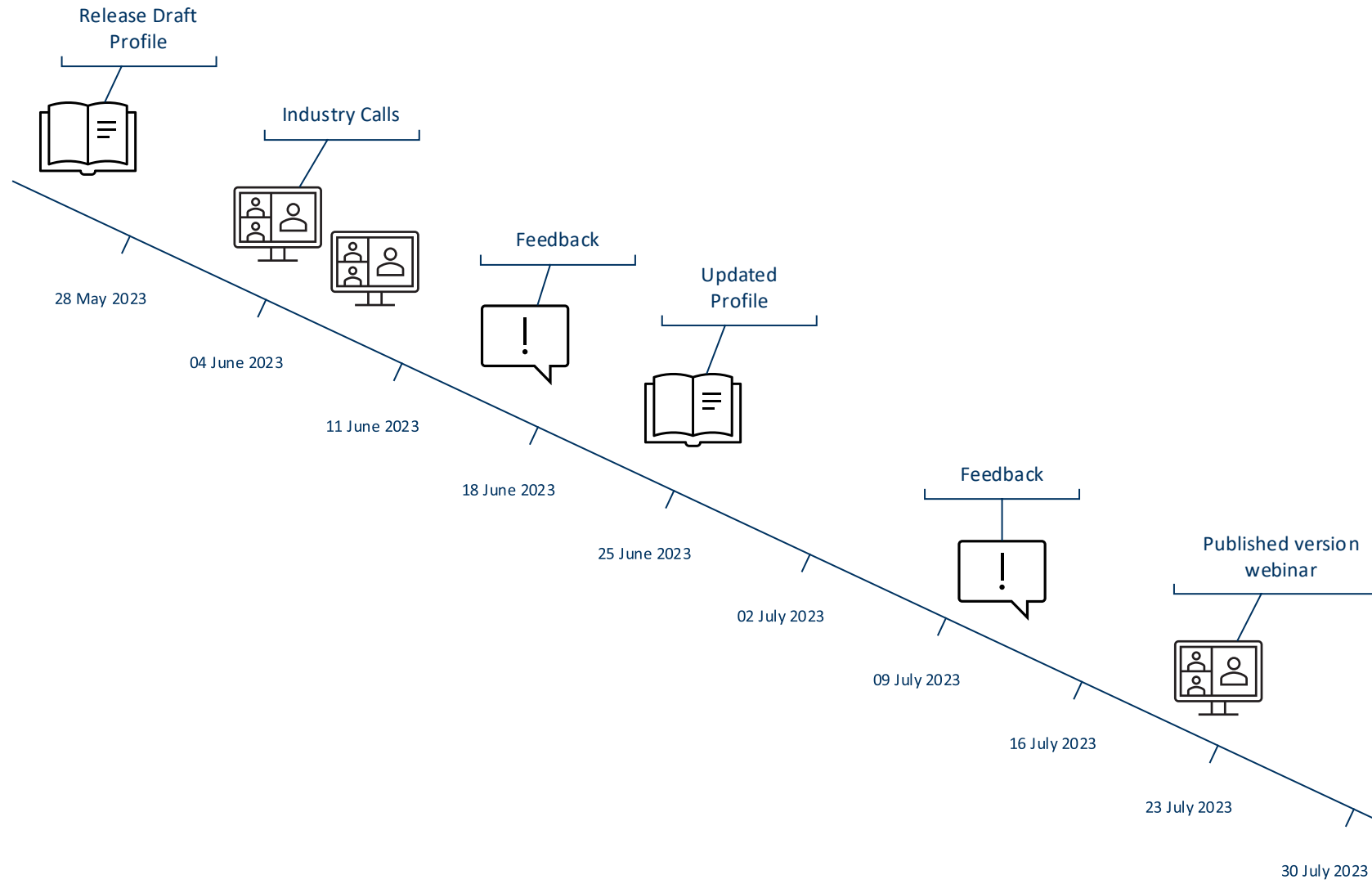
Both zones and fixed stop points use the requisite NaPTAN stop types which need to be defined in NaPTAN in advance of submission to BODS.

1.2 Declaring a flexible service

A FlexibleService is constructed, at a high level, in essentially the same way as a StandardService, and forms part of the Service, generally replacing the StandardService. It is possible for a single service to contain both StandardService and FlexibleService components.

TXC-PTI Profile Flexible Bus Services 0-3 - released draft

Timeline



Documentation

- https://www.pti.org.uk/flexible_bus_services_BODS



Consultation responses to: txcpti@timrivett.co.uk

Tim Rivett
tim@timrivett.co.uk
07479 950850