



PTIC 26 September 2024

Video: <https://youtu.be/9nUalvoabrY>

Video timings for the start of each agenda item are provided below.

Actions in red text

Opportunities to engage/test/feedback in green text

Contents

PTIC 26 September 2024.....	1
1. Introduction.....	2
1.1. Apologies	2
2. Notes of last meeting 7 March 2024.....	2
3. Bus Open Data Digital Service (4:30 - 28:00).....	3
Procurement	3
4. NaPTAN (28:00 - 1:10:20).....	5
5. Traveline Update (1:10:20 - 1:14:25).....	10
6. Christmas Data (1:14:25 - 1:19:38).....	11
7. Accessible Information Regulations (1:19:38 - 1:24:11)	12
8. Content Management to Display Interface (RTIG T047) (1:24:11 - 1:25:48)	12
9. EU Standards Development (1:25:48 - 1:27:14)	13
10. Bus Centre of Excellence (BCoE) (1:27:14 - 1:35:25)	13
11. Issue Log (1:35:25 - 1:36:15)	14
12. Next Meeting	14



1. Introduction

Attendees:

- Ian Barratt, Lancashire Council
- David Batchelor, Ticketer
- Mike Baxter, Leicester City Council
- Tim Berkeley, Kodergarten
- Amy Brown, Traveline
- Nic Cary, DEFT153
- Mark Gallagher, Basemap
- Dr. J Harrison, Service Owner NaPTAN, DfT
- Teresa Jolley, DEFT153
- Ben Moulton, Vix
- Ben Murray, KPMG
- Mike Nolan, Traveline
- Triumph Okojie, DfT
- Tim Rivett, RTIG
- Peter Stoner, Ito world
- Ian Walker, Systra (PT insight)
- Rob West, Elydium
- Claire Williams, Kodergarten
- Tricia Wright, Nottinghamshire CC

1.1. Apologies

- Keith Sabin, Staffordshire Council
- Dan Saunders, Basemap
- Nick Truscott, Cornwall Council

2. Notes of last meeting 7 March 2024

Actions:

- BODS coverage - addressed with data catalogue in BODS now
- Christmas and Bank Holiday data discussion - had call, movement slow
- NaPTAN - offer of access to APIs and testing
- John Carr plans - yet to arrange a session around journey planning /quality but Transport Focus are interested in this, following on their work with Traveline a year or so ago.



3. Bus Open Data Digital Service (4:30 - 28:00)

Update from Triumph

Lots happened since March, and lots of ambition.

Procurement

The commercial contracts that underpin BODS and ABODS are coming to a close, so it is time to re-procure openly. Goal is to get supplier to support DfT in next phase of BODS.

In March - ran an RFI through different frameworks, including open framework and Contracts Finder. Gauging interest in market, maturity of supplier capabilities and interest to deliver on the ambitions we have.

Pleasantly surprised by amount of responses. 29 in total, and all were invited to a supplier day in May, held in Birmingham.

We outlined our medium and long-term vision for the programme, and the things we would like to achieve in next phase. It was also an opportunity for DfT to take questions, and help us understand more about suppliers and the market generally.

Issued PQQ in June: 23 responses, which we evaluated and have an idea as to suppliers we'd like to take forward to next phase.

Process has been hampered by a few things, including new procurement regulations coming into force in September, and new government and new signoffs needed from Cabinet Office and DfT. We're in the process of getting everything in order, before we go out with ITT asap.

New supplier will need 3 month parallel running to get up to speed.

Programme commitment:

- increase data quality
- reduce system latency
- ensure ease of access to historic data
- improve support given to users across the different services
- improve user experience - make it as seamless as possible
- Passenger at forefront of our thinking. Planning journeys, and provide real time service updates, particularly given the current focus on Passenger RT provision
- quality reporting and analysts to industry and stakeholders (ABODS / other)

To achieve this, we thought necessary to show more ambition in terms of opening up the service or aspects of it, and architecture.



Baseline architecture shared earlier this year, and have made progress since then.

Priorities are data quality and central AVL, and these are still proprietary systems, not open (at odds with government Open by Default approach).

At the beginning of 2024, we started developing alternative solutions to extricate ourselves from the technical / commercial inoptimalities.

Since last PTIC meeting (March 2024), we have developed:

- **a data quality service** that helps with measuring and pinpointing, and helping users improve quality of data being published (using DfT-owned, open-source, open-code transparent design)
- **a new integrated / centralised AVL service** which centralises all the AVL feeds and makes it available for consumption (using DfT-owned, open-source, open-code transparent design)
- **a data warehouse** to replace that which the incumbent supplier created. Need to make it open, and enable access to historic data, which up and until now, wasn't possible
- **Devolved registrations data portal** - a new portal to harmonise and standardise bus registration data. Helps in validating data quality and completeness on BODS, and also with BSOG claims appraisal etc. Requires a bit of fine tuning improvement and we're continuing to work with local authorities on developing this.
- **Coach data** - this is now available through BODS, and there is a renewed contract with the incumbent supplier to allow a greater transition process.
- **a timetable visualiser** - a human-readable format to enable inspection of the data for accuracy
- **Fares validator** - accessibility improvements to align with standards
- Work on line-level analysis and accommodating Scottish bank holidays.

Upcoming features:

- **Processing times for timetable and fares data.** Some issues with some publishers - not as seamless for them as they would like. So we are improving the process to help them
- **File level processing** - zip files will be restructured to present successful data immediately to consumers whilst failed data reported on as normal
- **improvements to Devolved Registrations data portal** - around accuracy and completeness.
- **Disruptions:** Also done some work on disruptions and integrations with StreetManager data to make the publication for Local Authorities a more seamless process, and aid in completeness and accuracy of disruptions using the tool. Also working with other local authorities to increase use of the disruptions tool
- **Cancellations:** Done some work on expanding the SIRI-SX standard so we can deal with cancellations as a consequence of disruptions. Discussions with stakeholders around



cancellations data aggregation, and making this available on BODS - improving RT data offering for those who can make use of it.

Q+A and Discussion

Tim: from re-procurement perspective - handover periods - when?

Triumph: asap. Few hoops to jump through from assurance perspective. But ambition is for 3-month period to enable proper handover.

Nic: data quality a vast topic. Where is your focus within data quality?

Triumph: several concerns:

- Completeness- making sure we are getting as much of data that should be on BODS as much as we can
- Timeliness - that it is reflective of the service at this point in time
- Accuracy - making sure the data on BODS is accurate, considering ambitions around next phase of BODS

Nic: Open Source - great but doesn't come without risk. Risk is that you swap proprietary for a few people who understand the code really well. GDS are experts in how to mitigate that risk. Hope you are plugged into that risk management process, if you end up with data source development who no-one else can understand apart from those who built it.

Triumph: take this on board. Doing all we can to mitigate against that. Various ways. Also element of building different capability. Code base and architecture diagrams given to new suppliers to help them ask questions before they even bid. And in handover - knowledge transfer during this process.

Mike Baxter: re-procurement - end of contract for KPMG?

Triumph: yep, assuming KPMG were unsuccessful in the rebid, then yes, new supplier on board.

Mike: when does it run out, currently?

Triumph: March 2025.

4. NaPTAN (28:00 - 1:10:20)

Update from Dr J.

Link to NaPTAN Mural, where you'll find lots of details shared below:

<https://app.mural.co/t/digitalservice3659/m/digitalservice3659/1727355090203/9f330e058a019a6d08f975913e8b9f2b9eae004?sender=u719acef472ba7c4d42f34745>



Housekeeping

- You Tube channel with all public meetings.
 - Sign up on Eventbrite to get early access to all meetings.
 - Monthly newsletter for what we are doing, which includes updates of any outages.

Monthly meeting topics:

- September: Common name
- October: Stop Status
- November: rail replacement buses
- No December public meeting
- January 2025: update on accessibility

If you have things you'd like us to focus on in monthly meetings, then put some stickies on the Mural.

NaPTAN performance metrics available on the Mural:

- 100% uptime in August
- Processed 278 files
- TfGM and TfL take 90 secs to 2 mins per file, but most of rest of Local Authorities, mostly process 10 files in under 5 minutes.

'Previously on NaPTAN'. Now CMS on site and we're gathering information in places where it has previously been shared for NaPTAN.

Managed removal - can now split ATCO codes. Northants as one example. Duplicate stops for a part of Northamptonshire - we are on it, and software/access granted to do this.

Accessibility

Beryl and Beverley, Bristol and Birmingham, want to travel and meet, needing:

- multi-operator
- multi-modal
- multi-local authority

Since NaPTAN has existed - people have wanted to see accessibility at a bus stop. It has been tried several times, and there are difficulties.

Problems of last attempt, that we need to try and solve:

1st quarter of this year - we ran a GDS alpha - 3 months: ambitious user testing and proof of concept. Discovered we could create data, combine with NaPTAN and give to end users. Other global programmes looking at accessibility are often starting at the Kings Cross / St. Pancras level of problem, while we are focusing on bus stops.



Beginning with wheelchair users, questions you need to know the answer to are:

- can buses take a wheelchair or not? (Bus operators report in TransXChange accessibility and ability to take wheelchairs on each bus)
- Is the bus stop you want to use accessible?

Brenda needs to go to lots of different places to try and organise a journey, checking with each operator, mode and local authority for each leg of the journey and she finds that the information is not consistent in use of terminology (step free, wheelchair accessible, ramp, but no definition of what this means). Because its so complicated, she decides not to use public transport.

Our goal is for Brenda to use a single travel planner to plan her journey. She has the information she needs to have agency and autonomy over her choices and feels confident travelling.

Many will say we did this in 2010 for the Olympics dataset - why don't we use it?

- it had one accessibility matrix - true or false
- 400k bus stops to look at - need a new system
- Need to create a new olympic dataset for all ATCO codes (old one only covered a 1/3 of ATCO codes)
 - using AI to help this process
 - measurement of stop / context info of location - trunk areas are more likely to be accessible (more buses, eyeballs and users, so efforts have been spent improving accessibility)
 - data pipeline to bring the data in, process it and spit it out in API
 - created an CMS
 - publish accessibility schema - people can use it, play with it and comment/feedback. **Published in 'draft' - get in touch if you want access to explore it.**
 - bringing in street furniture from Local Authorities. Proved with 1 Local Authority so far.
 - publishing how the data is described
 - working with journey planners on how this can be presented to users. Language, terminology etc
 - introducing A, AA, AAA rating to give an indication of accessible features
 - add in a second persona - not just looking at wheelchair accessibility - also adding in blind / visually impaired user
 - will later be looking at stations and interchanges
 - electric / manual wheelchairs have different needs. Need to make this distinction very clear
 - visually impaired x 2: 1 x white cane and 1 x guide dog. Have different accessibility requirements and considerations for the surrounding area



What are we doing?

- AI can't see for accessibility. It can tell us what is physically there (street furniture that exists). Hand cranking to develop machine-learning AI for teaching. Find trunk stops, priority ones from this list, and gather information (surface, kerb height etc)
 - look for advertising - busy bus stops tend to be the ones that have adverts
- then inference for accessibility
 - various factors that combine to be an accessible stop, or not.
- currently: building AI to do the selection criteria - AI to tell us what street furniture exists.
 - two models competing against each other
 - dependency is that stops are located accurately on google maps (using Google StreetView)

Coach services:

looking at bringing in 999 ATCO codes - only for use for stops for use in scheduling system not for passenger use, but things like M6 drivers break locations needs to be in system but its not a passenger on/off stop.

QA / discussion:

Ben: comments in chat on Northamptonshire

Dr J: will respond separately to your asks.

Nic: Absolutely invigorating. Brilliantly presented. Guaranteed a world tour!

In terms of signage, aware of Gaist, who do an annual survey of highways in GB. Road condition and signage. Scrolling through Streetview is hard work, might be a quicker way to get your hands on the information you need.

Dr. J: also needed to know pathway width. Want to indicate these, and currently working with OS to get access to this. Want to try and get earlier access, as it is definitive width.

Nic: chat with Paula, might be able to procure through LCRIG?

Rob: add congrats too! What we've needed for so long. Had earlier attempts at this and great to see it happening, and that AI being harnessed to use where relevant, as part of considered approach. 'Schema' - are we talking about a new NaPTAN schema (in the sense of version 2.x) or more informal?



Dr J: we will be creating A+ NaPTAN, and provide accessibility as an add-on. Want to define the Add-on schema, and I can put Rob West in touch with user research team for early access to review. Not planning any big changes to NaPTAN, so just these add-ons, like accessibility and managed removal. A dataset linked to but separate from NaPTAN, and user information on how to link and use these add-ons with NaPTAN.

Tricia: Nottinghamshire have commissioned a full bus stop audit. Audit all 4,600 stops, and will take about 10 weeks, then will provide this back to Dr J to see how that can be imported. Collecting for maintenance and NaPTAN too (do stop names on flag match NaPTAN? Do timetables and service numbers match what's on the timetable? Is the timetable in the case at the stop up to date? Also, lighting, seating, footway widths, tactile paving etc.

Dr. J: Tricia's data is what we referred to earlier. Using the data that has been collected for other purposes. Hampshire have a 200-field spreadsheet - can we beat that from Notts?!

Cognitive accessibility needs as a persona - we don't think about very much. Deaf passengers - very little for deaf passengers that aren't meeting their needs at stop, but on the bus it is more of an issue. Open call to connect with more deaf communities etc.

Mike Nolan: working on accessibility data. What number of stops fall into trunk category, and branch category. Branch stops will be categorised inaccessible. With your AI work, although possible to expand AI work on branch sides, but there are a number in cities etc are accessible, such as school routes. Proportions that fall into any category?

Dr.J: no, as depends on Local Authority and the number of buses they have running. Trying to find an inaccessible bus top in London is pretty tricky. In some other areas, e.g. , Orkney Isles - very few accessible stops. Want to get the bulk of the nod data through from trunks, then once this works, we can expand.

Local Authority data - generally for every stop in their district - so that is giving the definitive read of all stops. Here's what we know is physically there. Then start to talk about branches a lot more. We will get to them with nod eventually, but want to get information from local transport authorities then with this definitive understanding.

Places like Midlothian, Argyll and Bute - don't get data from them.

Dr. J: don't want to throw AI at everything. Every AI decision wastes a lot of CO2.

Mike N: Northamptonshire: lessons learnt for changing ATCO codes etc - prove the means to remove the old stops?



Dr J: there were a particular mix of issues with staff changeovers, and software issues, and don't have a solution to process. Sometimes we just need to do the split. But once suppliers are ready for managed removal, then it should be easier.

Mike B: not unprecedented the splitting of ATCO codes. Nottinghamshire might have split theirs 10 or so years.

Dr J: was done in 2007 / 8, but there was no documentation with it. Had to trawl documents, but didn't find answer to how / when.

Mike B: google forms to collect data from Tricia - how are you processing this?

Dr J: our team normalise the data and make it ready for use in our system.

5. Traveline Update (1:10:20 - 1:14:25)

Update from Mike Nolan:

Web services procurement:

Went out to procurement a few months back with 4 lots: website, timetable search and display, PlusBus website, and Traveline data website.

Now at ITT stage, and meeting with shortlisted bidders this week. Best and final offer in the next few weeks.

Hopefully contracts signed this side of christmas and development can begin asap

Plusbus e-ticketing trial

Launched quietly a few months ago in West Yorkshire, Cambridge and Weston-super-Mare.

Retailers are on board (e.g., LNER, GWR) offering plusbus ticket on relevant journeys and providing you with QR codes you can use as flash pass to bus drivers, with manual validation on ticket machines.

We are seeing modest sales coming through. About to move to loud launch in those areas, with press and promotion in these areas and generate bit more sales and activity

In parallel, we've been working with retailers and ticket machine providers to validate the tickets - hurdle we need to close out before national trial.



Tim: Moving plusbus to digital is a huge step forward.

QA and discussion:

Dr. J: aware that there are 2 plusbus datasets - one in NaPTAN and the one Mike runs. Use the one Mike runs. We are reviewing what we do to resolve the problems with the NaPTAN one. No use having two datasets called the same thing, and them not the same.

6. Christmas Data (1:14:25 - 1:19:38)

Tim update:

Christmas data guide out this morning. In TransXChange you need to code days differently each year.

Anything you think is wrong or needs to be added, let Tim Rivett know and update it. Especially if there are more suppliers wanting to put things in about their products.

If you want data into journey planners in time for Christmas, need to be doing it in about 7 weeks time. 24 November is the date to allow people a few weeks to plan a journey.

QA/discussion

Peter Stoner: meeting about changes to the 'eve codes.

Tim: Not been rolled out through updates to BODS so not available this time. But will be addressed for next time. Making slow progress!

Peter: great - not so crucial this year, but 2027 is.

Mike Baxter: criticality of codes is that it is relevant to BODS. For RT systems there is a degree of hacking the systems to make it do what you need it to.

Tim: if the guide is followed, the the life of managers of RT systems life will be eased. But it is very obvious through BODS if it's not done right.

Dr J: Roadworks. October stop status. How we should represent and suspended and reorganised bus stops. **If you are interested in timetables, you might also be interested in letting Dr. J and NaPTAN team know what you would like to know about stop status.**



7. Accessible Information Regulations (1:19:38 - 1:24:11)

Update from Tim Rivett

We've talked about what the regulations are and expectations on operators, there are a few things this group needs to be aware of:

1. **rail replacement** became an issue for accessible information because where you've got a branch line that is closed and you are doing rail replacement, it becomes a local bus service, because you are stopping within 15 miles and paying fares. This has meant that lots of coaches needed to be fitted with accessibility information equipment. This has in turn led to a debate and discussion about where rail replacement stops, and lack of consistency and awareness of where those stops were in NaPTAN and timetable systems etc.
 - a. Rail replacement just got a 2-year exemption. It gets a bit technical for those exemptions but if you are involved in rail replacement and operators in a local authority area because the message is still getting out to operators.
 - b. for PTIC - at the moment there isn't a way for a Train Operating Company (TOC) to provide to an operator information about the route they want to run for rail replacement. It needs separate programming in each Audio-Visual system, and so discussion going on about need to have an open standard, so we can create these routes and share them. RTIG doing something with suppliers - based on TransXChange, to come up with an agreed approach to sharing route information and audio (a bit harder) so that a Train Operating Company can pre-do the routes and hand over to operators as they allocate vehicles. **If you want to be involved, let Tim know**
2. **Welsh Language Act.** Welsh stop names and how to make things multilingual. Mark Jones is leading this technically in Transport for Wales and hopefully something to push out on what's happening and how you need to interpret the data shortly.

8. Content Management to Display Interface (RTIG T047) (1:24:11 - 1:25:48)

Update from Tim Rivett

This was developed a few years ago for a Welsh project - plug and play displays into existing Content Management System. Has been implemented in a few places. '00s and '000's of displays using it now.

V1 of standard doesn't last for long usually, so there is work going on with those implementing it, to update it and that everyone can still talk to everyone in open and and learn lessons from those first implementations.

Second revision coming out fairly soon.



9. EU Standards Development (1:25:48 - 1:27:14)

Update from Tim Rivett

Things moving at a glacial pace.

Big progress is on **historical reporting** (performance and operational data on what happened previously). Work to define the standard for this has started. We have a mirror group here has been very helpful at identifying our UK use cases, e.g., TfL data, and to need to export data from one reporting system to put it into a new supplier. **If you want to be involved, let Tim know.**

10. Bus Centre of Excellence (BCoE) (1:27:14 - 1:35:25)

Update from Tim Rivett

Whilst not specifically about data standards and format, there is a lot going on that is linked, so worth highlighting for PTIC:

Free learning modules available on:

- **Introduction to bus scheduling**
- **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)**
- **Stakeholder and public engagement**
- **Understanding disability - really eye-opening, with transport slant**
- **Designing highways and transport for people with dementia - new eye-opener**

Events

- **Quality Bus conference just happened in Manchester (organised by Landor Links)**
- **Webinars**

Social Value

- **important part of BSIP objectives - measuring social value of public transport and help politicians understand it**

Networks:

New since March - there are now a number of networks / communities of interest

- **incident network - rail been doing for a while - copied for bus. Sharing and lessons learnt. Builds on CRASH and road safety**
- **Zero emission buses - lot of sharing taking place on these, and lessons learnt [First Group are taking the lead, with lots of experience on enabling depots etc]**
- **Public sector members network - share your experience of BSIPs and bus stuff**

QA / discussion

Ian Barratt: sounds interesting - link for more info?

Tim: link in chat.



Mike Baxter: can join CIHT too?

Tim: there is no longer the free double joining offer. Might be another offer next year?

Ian: been on a few of the BCoE webinars. Talks and presentations. Multiple topics open for discussion.

11. Issue Log (1:35:25 - 1:36:15)

If any problems or difficulties with standard that needs to be raised a fixed, let Tim Rivett know. Don't believe there are no problems though...!

Ian Barratt: were looking at a NaPTAN category for a school-bus only stop, but that DfT weren't happy with that.

Dr J: two differing views on ways - a solutions for whichever way is agreed. Awaiting agreement from policy teams in liaison with DfE to agreed preferred approach.

- it is stops outside people's houses that is the potential issue. Risks raised re: personal address details in open data of vulnerable children
 - Dr J offer solution: do what you are doing, and when we know which way we need to do it, I'll help you do it the right way round. Closed section of NaPTAN available to authorised people. Nice problem for data people to solve.
 - if we include them and keep them open, that's another problem to solve
 - if we need to remove them, then we can do that.

Comes up in every SRO meeting. Still awaiting direction.

12. Next Meeting

Thursday 5 December 2024 14:00