RTIG INFORM

improving public transport through technology

Non-Members Edition   **March 2020 – Issue 127**

What's on

The calendar below shows key events over the next few months, from RTIG and our associates. For further details of RTIG events please contact secretariat@rtig.org.uk

RTIG Committee
17 March 2020, Chelmsford

RTIG Workshop
17 March 2020, Chelmsford: Workshop & AGM

PTIC
18 June 2020, London

Conferences
Transport Technology Forum
4-5 March 2020, Bristol

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NEWS AND EVENTS

Newsletter Frequency and Email Alerts

The newsletters are produced on a monthly cycle.

They will be posted on the RTIG website and emailed out to the newsletter contact list.

If you think a colleague or contact would benefit from receiving the RTIG newsletter then please ask them to fill out the form on the website or use the QR Code.

RTIG on Twitter

RTIG is now on twitter as @RtigInform

https://twitter.com/RtigInform

Photo Library

To help liven up RTIG printed and digital outputs we are interested in receiving any images of public transport information real time or otherwise that you would be happy for us to use.

We will of course credit the appropriate source if published.

If you have any material you would be able to let us have access to please contact Tim tim.rivett@rtig.org.uk

N E W S   A N D   E V E N T S

Working Groups

These working groups are now underway, its not too late to become involved – just get in contact:

Integrating Disruption Information

There are many different systems where disruption information is available which are not normally part of the customer information process. This group will investigate how to practicably integrate the disparate systems in use across public transport: to provide more and consistent disruption information and if appropriate, to produce an advice document

Procurement Advice

This group is working to produce a 'Dummies Guide' to real time system procurement. An initial draft is already available.

We are still looking for volunteers to become involved in these groups which are about to be starting work:

Maintaining an efficient and effective RTI system

Whether you have you have just invested in your shiny new or upgraded system or if you've been running one for years, the challenge of how you maintain it is common to everyone.
We aim to provide an advisory guide on the best practice for keeping a real time system working efficiently and effectively.

Accuracy and quality of real time predictions

Following questions at the last two workshops there it is clear that there is not sufficient common understanding across the community on how to effectively measure the performance of predictions.
This group will produce a guide on how to measure the quality and accuracy of predictions.

If anyone wants to become involved in any of the groups then please feel free to discuss or commit by getting in contact with Tim tim.rivett@rtig.org.uk .

N E W S   A N D   E V E N T S

AGM & Workshop

On the 17th March we are holding a workshop, kindly being hosted in Chelmsford by Essex County Council.

During the workshop we will hold our AGM, these are short covering the minimum necessary processes and are largely focused on the plans for the coming year.

The workshop will introduce the Essex real time system and their plans for the future.

We have been working with Transport for the North on their disruption information project using SIRI SX, you will be able to learn about SiRI SX and how to use it for disruption information. Our recent paper on RTIG and the connected world introduces an increased perspective on the information and support we can provide, we will elaborate on those ideas and you will hear from speakers on how this fits with work on accessibility and Mobility as a Service.

The event is hosted by Essex County Council at the Essex Record Office, Wharf Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 6YT. It is still 20 minutes' walk from the bus and train stations.
The website with directions and mapping is
http://www.essexrecordoffice.co.uk/visit-us/

Book your ticket(s) now:
https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/workshop-and-agm-tickets-86796457541?aff=newsletter

EU Commission presents its strategy for Europe's digital future

The European Commission unveiled on 19 February its digital strategy, setting out its vision for the next five year on how to address the challenges and opportunities brought about by digitalisation. Besides the General Digital Strategy, the European Commission presented a White Paper on Artificial Intelligence and a European Data Strategy to make sure the EU becomes a role model and a leader for a society empowered by data.

Moving forward with artificial intelligence in public transport

It is undeniable that artificial intelligence (AI) is growing its importance in every sector, including public transport. The use of AI applications in public transport could be one of the critical solutions that efficiently unlocks the value of data to improve the quality and efficiency of the public transport sector.

If you are new to Artificial Intelligence, or want to know more about how it is being, and could be used in public transport then this is a good starting point:

https://www.uitp.org/sites/default/files/cck-focus-papers-files/Action%20Points%20-%20AI.pdf

Transport Secretary launches campaign to improve disabled passengers' journeys

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps has launched a campaign to improve disabled passengers' journeys on public transport.

https://everyonesjourney.campaign.gov.uk/

This is re-launch of the previous 'it's everyone's journey' advertising campaign to highlight how "we can all play a part in making public transport inclusive" which was overtaken by last year's general election. The campaign is being supported by more than 100 partners, including RTIG, First Group, WHSmith Travel and the Alzheimer's Society.

IN OTHER NEWS

FIT Fellowship 2020: Transport and Climate Change

Foundation for Integrated Transport

Transport is the UK's biggest contributor of greenhouse gas emissions, with the large majority coming from road transport. And while UK CO2 emissions have fallen 38% since 1990, in road transport they have continued to grow.

Delivering transport carbon reductions requires immediate, innovative and radical thinking in terms of transport and planning policies, technical interventions and changes in our travel behaviour. Steady progress is no longer enough.

FIT's flagship fellowship for 2020 will develop the skills and expertise of activists uncovering and developing solutions to this problem. The fellowship could take a variety of approaches, focusing on measures to reduce our dependency on cars (and the associated changes to our ways of life); improving the quality and accessibility of alternatives including public transport, walking and cycling; and designing our towns and cities to make this shift a reality.

Outcomes
The Fellowship will run for two years, offering £35,000 per year and will result in a comprehensive report, deliverable proposals and options for funding for delivery. The report and proposals will be officially launched at an event co-organised with FIT.

FIT will also help identify mentors; provide access to other FIT fellows with similar interests; help with the publication of results; and provide a logo for fellows to use.

Closing date for applications is 18 May 18, 2020, with decision made in June and the fellowship to begin in September 2020.

For more information see:
http://integratedtransport.co.uk/fit-fellowship-2020-transport-and-climate-change/

IN OTHER NEWS

Bus Open Data Update

The Bus Open Data Service publicly launched on 28 January 2020. Operators can now create timetable data files, check the quality of their data files and publish data files onto the Publish Bus Data Service.

The service is in public beta, and the DfT are sending emails to operators across the country in a series of tranches inviting operators to register for an account and publish their timetable data.

To publish data and find out more visit:
https://publish.bus-data.dft.gov.uk/

TransXChange Creation tool

For operators that don't have access to software to create the required TransXchange files. It's important to the Department for Transport that we create a system that works for everyone.

The free to use TxC tool developed by the Bus Open Data Service Team is now publicly available for use and can create a v2.1 export. During Spring 2020, a 2.4 export will be made available.

Data Quality Checking Service

A key goal of the Data Quality Checking Service, provided within the Bus Open Data Service, is to improve the quality of data published onto the Bus Open Data Service.

There are two stages to this process.

The first stage is a validation check to ensure that files are in the correct TransXChange format, are in an XML format, follow the correct schema and that all mandatory fields have been completed.

Next, we move on to the Enhanced Data Quality Checking Service which runs over twenty different tests on the datasets identifying issues such as: missing stops, duplicate services and incorrect stop orders.
A web-based report is then generated for listing any observations. This will allow the operators to understand the areas of data that

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can be improved before deciding whether to submit their data to the Digital Service.

TransXChange (TXC) Profile

The development of the Bus Open Data TXC profile is important in driving greater standardisation of openly published TXC data.

The profile will be mandated during 2021 with the aim of having one consistent TXC profile used consistently by all operators and more easily consumed by application developers.
A powerpoint description of the profile requirements can be downloaded from here:
https://bit.ly/2vlrA4F

We are currently finalising the documentation which will be made available by the end of March 2020. From 2020, any version of TxC (2.1, 2.4, 2.5) will be accepted but the harmonised TxC 2.4 BODDS profile will be mandated from early 2021.

NaPTAN Data Quality

The Bus Open Data Service team has been working with the Data Unit and the Data Scientists in DfT to improve the quality of the bus stop datasets, otherwise known as the National Public Transport Access Nodes Dataset. High quality bus stop data is really important to ensure that we can effectively knit together timetable, fares and location datasets and provide higher quality information to the travelling public.

What are we doing?
- We are supporting local transport authorities to make a one-off improvement to their NaPTAN dataset during 2020
- We are running commissioning a discovery project to review the legacy systems and decide upon new To Be systems.
- We are delivering a discovery project to identify whether we can use location data to automate quality assurance of data about bus stops i.e. National Public Transport Access Nodes (NaPTAN). We are in the process of obtaining data for one area, but are still keen to include an additional pilot area for a rural location.

If you'd be interested in providing additional sample data, or have explored this idea yourself, then please get in touch with
lizzie.baggott@dft.gov.uk

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M E M B E R S   N E W S

Keeping in touch with you

As well as keeping you up to date with all the latest news from RTIG, this newsletter aims to provide a community forum for members. We therefore offer RTIG members the opportunity to submit a short article here on any issue or innovation that might be of interest to the community.

There are two ways of becoming involved in this:

▶   Email pieces to us when you have them – press release format is fine, and pictures are welcome.

▶   Nominate a marketing contact who will be included in the editor's monthly process of 'chivvying'.

A 21st Century totem at the newly refurbished Walsall bus station.

MEMBERS NEWS

Fares tool to unlock benefits of Government's 'big data' ambitions for region's bus passengers

Following the Government's recent announcement on the launch of the Bus Open Data Service, Transport for the North have confirmed the development of a new 'Fares Data Build Tool' which will help regional bus operators comply with upcoming national regulations requiring the 'open' publication of bus journey information, including fares data.

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The Fares Data Build Tool will be free to use for bus operators and local transport authorities (LTAs) who are responsible for publishing this data. Ultimately, it will benefit bus passengers by making it easier for them to find out how much a journey will cost and compare options before they travel.

The tool is being developed in collaborative partnership between Transport for the North, the Department for Transport's (DfT) Bus Open Data programme and Traveline Information Ltd. The shared approach has been agreed to complement and enhance industry aspirations for better data provision to make public transport, especially buses, more accessible. It is being delivered as part of Phase Two of Transport for the North's £150 million DfT-funded Integrated and Smart Travel programme.

Leeds-based software developers Infinity Works have now been awarded the supplier contract after a competitive procurement process.

The tool will help bus operators comply with upcoming Government regulations – being introduced under the Bus Services Act 2017 – that will require fares data for local bus services across England to be published in a standardised, open-source data format from January 2021. It is part of a wider digital transformation programme to make bus information available to leading journey planning app providers – such as Google, Moovit

and Citymapper and other open data developers who can deliver it to customers via existing platforms and innovative methods.

With the regulations soon to be enshrined in law, Transport for the North market research identified the need for a tool to support bus operators who do not already have adequate specialist software or technical capabilities to easily comply.

The proposed solution will be able to combine fares tables and rules with timetable data and output this in the emerging UK NeTEx profile. This standardised NeTEx data will then allow users to match fare information to routes and determine the cost for any given journey.

Once created, the fares data will be published and accessible via both the DfT's Bus Open Data Service and Transport for the North's own regional Open Data Hub (also currently under development for launch later this year).

The Fares Data Build Tool will be delivered first in the North, but subject to a final decision from the DfT could be rolled out as a national solution. Transport for the North and Infinity Works will work with both operators and LTAs throughout the development and testing of the tool. Delivery is expected be completed by late 2020.
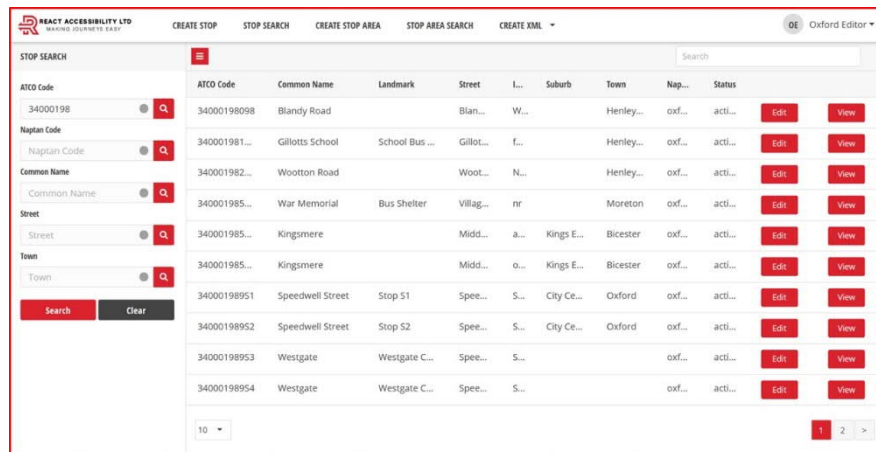
Steve Howes, Integrated and Smart Travel Director at Transport for the North, said: "We are looking forward to collaborating with Infinity Works to deliver our innovative Fares Data Build Tool.

"By helping operators and local authorities improve the provision of bus fares information, passengers will benefit from knowing more about how much their journey will cost and being able to more easily compare different options available to them. Combined with the Department for Transport and Transport for the North's wider 'smart' initiatives, this will make planning journeys on public transport easier than ever and help make it the preferred choice for travel across our region."

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React NaPTAN editor

In response to the new legal requirement on Local Authorities to manage and maintain their NaPTAN database, React Accessibility are today launching their React NaPTAN editor.

The Editor allows authorities to easily modify their stop information and both down and upload to the DfT system and includes stop group maintenance and a map feature.


It is unique in that it is web based, and includes loads of additional fields that make it easier to find and manage stops and records – like additional asset numbers (to take account of third party shelters, for example), stop accessibility status (ready for the Accessibility requirements currently planned), and current equipment fields.

In addition, the system will be able to advise neighboring authorities when you change a stop that affects them (and vice versa) and features to allow automated listing of stops requiring publicity or equipment updates are near completion.

A really exciting optional enhancement is the React Bus Stop Wiki, which allows real time assessment of stop accessibility features, like digital displays, audible announcements and paper publicity using crowd sourced information, including inputs from your staff or any other interested party. This feeds directly into the database and makes it much easier to know the state of your stop stock and associated equipment.
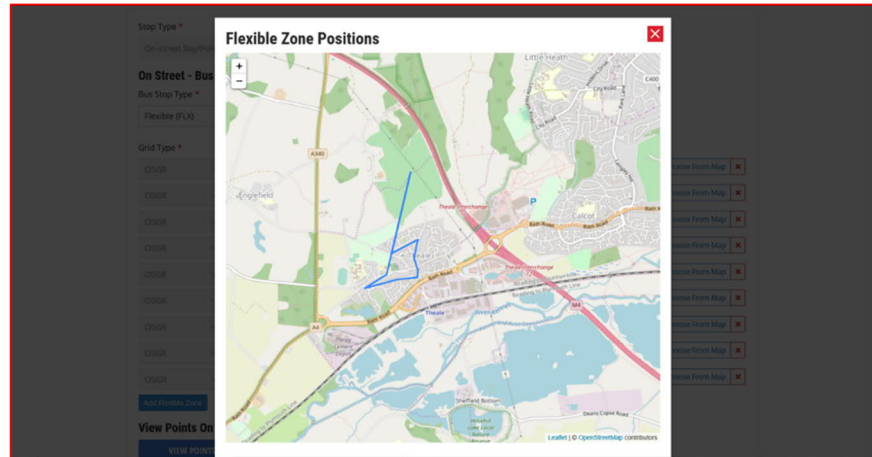
And finally, it is very good value and well below most authority formal tendering limits. To make procurement as simple as possible we are also a Crown Commercial Services supplier through the G-Cloud framework.

If you want to know more please contact Charlotte on 01457 861431, email info@react-access.com or see more at www.react-access.com

New Head of Hardware for Ticketer

Ticketer has started the new decade with another high-level appointment, welcoming Nick Sutherland as its new Head of Hardware. Nick has a Cambridge Engineering Degree, and extensive industry experience across hardware, software and international operations. Nick joins Ticketer from another industry leader, Masabi, where he was Product Manager.

Nick will lead Ticketer's rapidly expanding Cambridge-based hardware team. His previous experience in hardware and software development has given him an in-depth understanding of what it takes to deliver innovative and reliable solutions in this environment.

His philosophy that the best products are carefully crafted to be loved by installation and maintenance teams, as well as the

passengers and drivers who use them every day, was recognised as a perfect fit with 'the Ticketer way'.

John Clarfelt, Ticketer CEO, comments: "Filling this role has been no mean feat, as it allows fellow Ticketer founder Richard Guy to retire. Richard designed the hardware that has been a key part of Ticketer's success, and we owe him a huge debt of gratitude for his contribution. Nick clearly shares the Ticketer ethos and drive. He has both the technical and commercial ability to support and help drive forward the really exciting work we are doing in our newly expanded Cambridge offices on the development of our next generation hardware."

John continues: "I am really chuffed by Nick's appointment. Although we recently celebrated 10 years in business, we all believe that Ticketer's journey is still only just beginning. With all our great new talent coming on board, and the massive amount of development going on both in software and hardware, the next 10 years look very exciting indeed.

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Management Committee Members

The Management Committee for the year 2019-209 was appointed at the AGM on 12 March 2019. Membership is currently as follows:

Chair:

Members: Andrew Wilson (Hants), Graham Davies (WYCA), Russell Gard (React Accessibility), Darren Maher (21st Century), Tony Brown (Atkins), Chas Allen (Stagecoach), Simon Gold (Reading Buses), Meera Nayyar (DfT)

Contact us

Best by email: secretariat@rtig.org.uk.

https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8557065

Next issue

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Please send all contributions to secretariat@rtig.org.uk at any time up to Monday 30th March 2020.
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