



3 August 2026

Welcome! to the Smarter Information, Smarter Journeys (SISJ) Newsletter

Good customer information gives people the confidence to travel, make informed choices and complete their journeys with less stress. This is especially important during disruption, when customers need clear updates, options and support. From real-time updates and accessible formats to wayfinding, station facilities and assistance information, good customer information builds trust and helps more people travel with confidence. Below are SISJ projects supporting this aim:



Enhanced On-Train Passenger Announcements system via GSM-R

The Enhanced On-Train Passenger Announcements system (OTPA) via GSM-R system went live with a ScotRail business trial launched in time for the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. Passengers are benefitting from this [new technology](#) designed to deliver clearer, real-time information during disruption.

The system allows teams in Scotland's railway control centre to send announcements directly to trains, helping passengers receive timely, consistent updates when services are disrupted. The system uses the railway's own mobile telecoms system, GSM-R, which covers almost all of the network and allows multiple trains to be contacted at the same time. It also reduces the need for drivers to make additional announcements during disruption, with control teams able to provide timely updates to passengers.

OTPA exploits existing capability and data with innovative technology and was delivered through cross industry collaboration to enhance the customer experience and support operational efficiency. ScotRail's experience will help inform plans for wider adoption across Britain's railway network.



British Sign Language - Greetings

signature.org.uk

British Sign Language information for rail customers

A national British Sign Language (BSL) solution for the railway will be delivered in 2027 as part of the Accessibility Roadmap. It will translate key journey information, including delays, disruption and platform changes, into BSL in real time, helping D/deaf customers travel with greater confidence, independence and safety.

The work is being shaped by research with the D/deaf community and the University of Manchester, who are preparing their final report, which will be reviewed with Transport Focus, the project team and the steering group before feeding into the next phase of the project, including Request for Proposal requirements and documentation. Further engagement with TOCs will also help build a joined-up national BSL approach and reduce the risk of separate solutions being developed.



Live status of rail replacement bus services

Following approval by RDG's Governance, the project is moving into delivery phase. This will involve working with TOCs and their bus tracking suppliers to provide customers with real-time tracking information for rail replacement services. Several trials have been completed over the last 12 months to test the solution and the customer proposition. Rollout will now happen on a TOC-by-TOC basis, with most TOCs expected to be live by March 2027. Once implemented, customers will be able to see the real-time status of their rail replacement service and whether it is 'on-time' or by how long it is delayed.



Customer Information Systems - Minimal Viable Product - Brilliant Basics Development

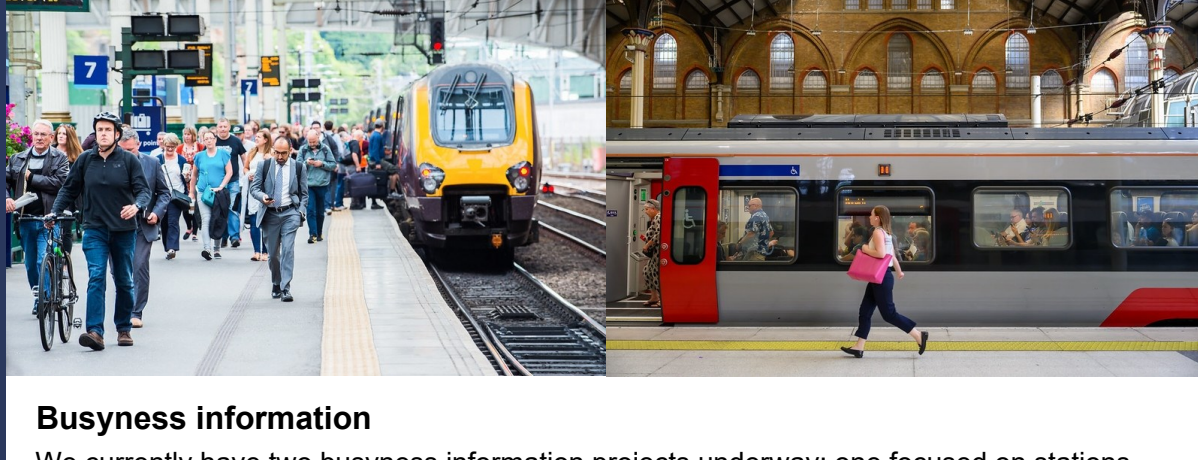
Many Customer Information System (CIS) capabilities are already available to TOCs, but they are not used consistently across the industry. The CIS minimal viable product work is about turning those existing capabilities into a clear, shared baseline, so every TOC has a common minimum standard for customer information. Rather than focusing on new system development, the project is looking at how to unlock under-used functionality, improve process management and deliver quicker, practical improvements for customers.

Engagement with TOCs is underway to confirm what they currently use, and a working group has started mapping and prioritising functionality. The next step is to validate these quick wins with CIS suppliers and TOCs, understand any cost or resource implications, and move towards an agreed industry baseline that supports more consistent, reliable and confidence-building customer information. The project team is also working closely with the Network Rail-led CIS Steering Group to ensure customer information systems remain consistent.



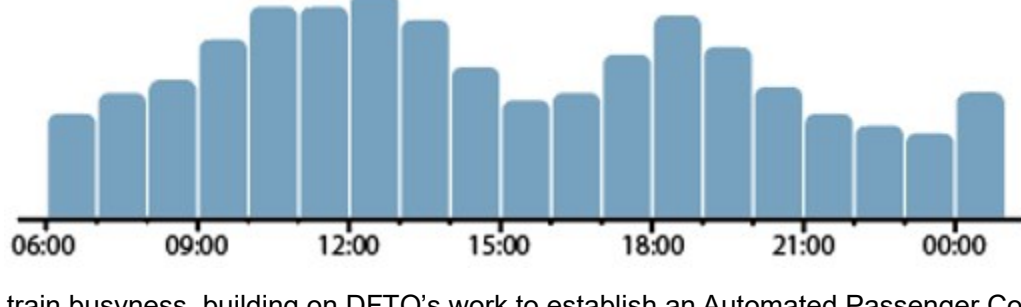
Facilities - Stations and Onboard

Facilities at stations and onboard trains are essential to helping customers plan and complete their journeys. Clear, reliable and consistent information about what is available, including accessibility features, helps customers make informed choices, avoid unexpected barriers and travel more independently. We are carrying out research to understand how enhanced information about facilities, both on trains and at stations, could give customers greater confidence when travelling. This includes facilities such as car parks, lifts and toilets.



Busyness information

We currently have two busyness information projects underway: one focused on stations and the other on trains. For Station Busyness funding has been secured through the Accessibility Roadmap to introduce station busyness information on National Rail Enquiries. Customer research and design is under way, as well as feedback from TOCs and accessibility groups. Historic busyness information will be available for all stations from December 2026, followed by live information for the first Network Rail managed stations from October 2027. Next step is for TOCs to review and sign off the daily (Monday to Sunday) graphical profiles (example below) for their stations.



For train busyness, building on DFTO's work to establish an Automated Passenger Count data pipeline and wider industry collaboration, the project plans to identify how forecast and real-time busyness data can be gathered, standardised, and shared through key customer information channels and assess the feasibility of sharing real-time busyness data. While some train operators already provide forecast busyness information, the approach varies and opportunities to show live train data have not been fully explored.

Together, these projects will help make busyness information across stations and trains more consistent, accessible and useful for customers. By giving passengers clearer information before and during their journey, they will be better able to plan ahead, travel with greater confidence and choose services that meet their needs. This is particularly important for disabled and neurodivergent passengers, where overcrowding can be a barrier to travelling independently and comfortably.

Thank you for reading!

SISJ Programme Team

Get in touch!

We are proud of the impact the SISJ programme is making across the industry and are keen to share our story. If you would like to hear more about our work, we would be happy to talk through recent developments with you, either face-to-face or virtually.

We would also welcome any feedback on this newsletter. Please share your thoughts with the SISJ Programme Team at SISJProgramme@raildeliverygroup.com.