

Devon *on the move*



April 2008

Bus Information Strategy **2006-2011**


2006 Transport
local authority
of the year


2006-2007
Road Safety


Centre of
Excellence
Local Transport Delivery

Contents

Introduction	2
Why is a Strategy important?	
Objectives of Devon’s Bus Information Strategy	
Consultation	
A. Current Provision and Issues	3
1. Printed Information and Distribution	
2. Roadside Information and Bus Stations	
3. Electronic and Telephone Information	
4. Other Information	
5. Summary of Issues	
B. The New Bus Information Strategy	5
1. What information will bus operators make available to the public?	
2. How will information be made available to the public?	
3. How to ensure that the Strategy is implemented	
C. Action Programme: Delivering the Strategy	9
Appendix 1 – Legal Requirement for the Strategy	14
Appendix 2 – Consultation	15
Contact Details	30
Large Print Version	30

Introduction

Why is a Strategy important?

Public transport is essential to meet government targets on accessibility, and tackling congestion through providing an alternative choice to travel by car. It is therefore essential to improve information on bus services whatever form that may take, and to introduce measures which will ultimately make public transport more attractive. To this end, timetables and information on services must be comprehensive, accurate, complete and in formats that people can readily understand. Therefore high quality bus service information is essential, followed closely by frequency and reliability in travellers requirements. Whilst councils do not have direct control over commercial bus services, they do have an important role to play in the provision of information to raise awareness and improve the quality of information on all services, and to raise public satisfaction in public transport information.

Objectives of Devon's Bus Information Strategy

This Strategy has been drawn up:

- To meet the requirements of the Transport Act 2000 (Appendix 1)
- To set out standards for the provision of bus service information in Devon
- To set out the actions proposed to achieve this provision by 2011.

It supports the objectives and targets in the Devon Local Transport Plan 2 (LTP2). This Bus Information Strategy replaces that issued in October 2002, and covers registered local bus services only.

This Strategy recognises that other methods of providing information will increasingly be required by the public alongside traditional printed information: SWPTI (South West Public Transport Information – the partnership of local authorities and major bus companies) - is central to this in providing data to *traveline* (the national bus information enquiry service).

Working in partnership with the bus service operators in the county will be essential to achieving optimum benefit from this Strategy. It will cross reference with any future progress towards Quality Bus Partnership Agreements between Devon County Council and major bus operators in Devon.

The objectives of this Strategy are:

- To make it easy for people to get information on all bus services which may meet their needs, so as to facilitate the use of bus services across all sections of society
- To provide easy access to comprehensive information, in a wide variety of formats, to promote bus services
- To grow bus use measured through the targets set out in LTP2.
- To improve public satisfaction with bus service information, in line with Devon County Council's Corporate Performance Assessment (CPA) targets - from 55% in 2003 to 75% in 2011
- To reduce barriers to using bus services including meeting the aims of the Disability Discrimination Acts, Disability Equality Requirement and Devon County Council Equality Strategy.

Consultation

Consultation took place during three months ending 29th October 2007. The Strategy takes note of the comments received. As many comments were similar, Appendix 2 is a summary of comments received with the Devon County Council response to each comment listed.

A. Current Provision and Issues

1. Printed Information and Distribution

Devon County Council each year produces and distributes a considerable amount of printed material for bus services – area timetable booklets, a county bus map, service leaflets, promotional material and timetables at bus stops. Some bus operators in Devon provide information at bus stops and a wide range of leaflets; the quality and timeliness of leaflets and booklets varies between operators.

2. Roadside Information and Bus Stations

Of 5,500 bus stops in Devon, about 4,000 are marked with a bus stop flag: over and above this, buses also tend to stop on request in rural areas where it is safe to do so. As some operators have erected their own flags in the past, there is a lack of consistency in the provision and maintenance of bus stop flags and no complete record of roadside equipment.

Maintenance of timetable displays at bus stops is shared between Devon County Council and the large bus operators. Most displays show timetables for the service, there is little provision of other information such as “buses from this stop” and simplified route diagrams showing key places en route. The extent and quality of information on display at bus stations, main bus stops and well used interchange points, relative to the high usage, is often variable and could be improved.

There is currently little consistency in decisions relating to the provision of shelters: where they exist the display of information and flags varies greatly from location to location.

3. Electronic and Telephone Information

Devon County Council is increasingly involved in the development and support of electronic systems:

traveline

The *traveline* service is provided by a partnership of 15 operators and 18 local authorities covering the whole of the South West region plus the Hampshire/Portsmouth /Southampton area. It provides information on all bus services in the areas served through the telephone enquiry service and the website and online journey planner.

Telephone calls to *traveline* are running at 600,000 a year, up 46% over the last three years and still growing at 5% per year. Hits on the website are running at 800,000 per week, up from 40,000 in April 2004. Fares information in *traveline* is under development by SWPTI as a lead project for the UK and the upgraded website is to be launched early in 2007.

SMS Texting

During 2007 the stopfinder service for SMS mobile phone texting was introduced, using the *traveline* “naptan” database that assigns a unique code for every bus stop. This enables users to text their bus stop code and then receive back the timetable times of the next three buses from that stop. Use is running at 300 texts a week and growing, but not all stops are yet labelled with the code. Whilst the service has been on trial since September 2004, Devon has accepted the cost of the return text. The aim is to eventually provide real-time information on the times of the next buses from that stop.

Real-Time Information

Real-time information is available in a pilot scheme in Exeter at a number of bus stops on main (radial) routes into the city, using electronic displays at 31 bus stops with messages generated by a system with a combination of a tag and loop and GPS (global positioning system) bus location technology, operated in co-operation with Stagecoach and Cooks Coaches and funded by Devon County Council. It is intended to display real-time information on the Devon County Council website once the system is overhauled.

This system has proved problematical due to the number of issues concerning the different technical elements of the system, which can result in a lack of information, or wrong information, being displayed. While there may be scope in the near future to improve the system which may result from a link with new electronic ticket machines and common software, the details of how this will take place, and when, cannot be finalised yet.

4. Other Information

High Visibility On-bus Destination Displays

LED on-bus destination displays at the front, with additional displays showing the service numbers on the side and rear of the vehicle, are being introduced on many new vehicles, and retro-fitted on many existing vehicles to replace the old roller destination blinds. These displays are more visible from the bus stop as the bus is approaching, and can show more information on intermediate places on the route - including where there are route variations – by means of “scrolling”. However many older buses are not fitted with them.

5. Summary of Issues

- Provision of bus information is variable in extent and quality.
- There is variable public awareness of the extent of the bus service network.
- There are inconsistent standards of information and equipment at bus stops.
- While printed material is still relied on by many passengers, other sources of information are increasingly available and used, which in some cases may need to be developed and planned so as to complement existing information.
- There is no up-to-date inventory or database of all bus stops and their features.
- Responsibility for other bus stop features may rest elsewhere and are therefore outside the scope of this document - e.g. rubbish bins (district councils), raised kerbs/bus boarders (through Devon’s Local Transport Plan) and shelters (variously parish/town/district councils and shelter suppliers) – which nevertheless require a joined-up approach to ensure that a degree of consistency applies to all aspects of bus stops.
- There are variable standards relating to the quality of on-bus destination displays.

B. The New Bus Information Strategy

1. What information will be made available to the public?

(i) Printed Timetable Information

All bus operators are expected to co-operate with Devon County Council in the display of public transport promotional material on board buses and at company offices. Commercial bus operators should provide printed route and timetable information:

- For each service operated, the bus operator will provide, free of charge, printed route and timetable information in sufficient quantity through the outlets mentioned in section 2(i)
- Printed information on details of bus service alterations, and fare changes, will be published at least seven days before the date of implementation of the change. The information will be distributed as widely as practicable, and will also be made available on board the bus of the service concerned, together with notices on the bus alerting passengers to any timetable, route or fare changes
- For supported services Devon County Council will provide this (see section 2(vii)), augmented where appropriate by maps showing all services – in either the whole county or parts.

Printed service and timetable information will incorporate the following:

- (a) The printed information must be on paper of at least A5 or A4 size folded appropriately. Information will refer to individual services or a number of services in which case a booklet will be acceptable.
- (b) Print size must be a minimum of 8 point and large print versions (14 point) must be available on request from the public direct to the operator. This facility must be referred to in timetables.
- (c) The information must include:
 - a route description (urban areas)
 - service numbers
 - a full timetable showing all registered journeys
 - indication of their days and periods of operation
 - the start and finish dates for seasonal services
 - identifying sections of a route which are limited-stop or non-stop
 - timetable headings which must highlight the route termini
 - references to any variations on Public Holidays, special events, school terms/holidays.
- (d) Timetables must be in conventional matrix format (for journey direction read downwards) using the 24 hour clock, and the significant points on the service route must be listed (timing points) unless as agreed otherwise by Devon County Council.
- (e) Reference must be made to the availability of any relevant network or 'rover tickets' and Concessionary Travel Schemes, and provide fares information.
- (f) The *traveline* telephone number and website address must be included.
- (g) Advice must be included as to how to complain about failures in service or to submit comments.
- (h) On routes, which Devon County Council may from time to time see fit to designate, where commercial and financially supported services are integrated or run in parallel, a composite timetable must be shown.
- (i) The information must identify those journeys which are normally operated with fully accessible (low floor) vehicles.

In the absence of such printed information, to the above specification, being provided by the operators in sufficient quantities to meet demand, or where it is not provided in a timely manner, or is not readily available, Devon County Council will provide it and will therefore recoup a sum from each operator towards the cost of producing it.

(ii) Telephone Information Service

Devon County Council considers that the *traveline* telephone information service meets the requirement for a telephone information service, and all bus service operators are required to maintain the accuracy and timeliness of supply to *traveline* of bus timetables, tracks and verification and to pay all invoices from SWPTI of over £50 per year on receipt. Devon County Council will recoup a sum from each operator towards the cost of providing the *traveline* service by SWPTI in proportion to the benefit received, unless the operators pay SWPTI direct. The benefit will be assessed by SWPTI on the basis of the number of public enquiries received at the *traveline* call centre for information about the operator's services. Devon County Council will pay call costs of less than £50 per operator per year but over this amount will recover from operators any charges outstanding six months after receipt of a valid invoice from SWPTI. This requirement on operators will only be waived for commercial operators if they will provide an equivalent impartial telephone information service.

As a result of national changes in telephone numbers by Ofcom to achieve more transparency in charge rates from January 2007, the *traveline* number is to change to 0871 200 22 33. The former number, 0870 608 2 608, will not be available after January 2008. Operators will be required to co-operate in informing the public of the new number.

(iii) Electronic Information

Devon County Council considers that the *traveline* website and services are the best way to meet the requirement to provide web-based information and an SMS texting facility, and operators are required to maintain the accuracy and timeliness of supply to *traveline* of bus timetables, tracks and verification. Commercial operators are only able to avoid these responsibilities if they will themselves provide similar electronic route and timetable information. *traveline* is continually developing and is likely to develop further to provide better and more individual information.

(iv) On-Bus Destination Displays

Devon County Council will set standards for electronic LED type on-bus destination displays on all new supported contracts, and will work with operators to convert existing supported services and commercial services to the same standard.

2. How will information be made available to the public?

(i) Distribution of Printed Information

The printed information referred to in section 1(i) must be distributed in sufficient volumes for the public to take up, free of charge, along the route. The following list provides guidance on where they may be distributed. Devon County Council will provide more specific details on particular areas upon request:

- principal points in adjoining local authority areas
- all bus company outlets
- on all buses on that route
- bus stations
- offices of other operators who operate the same service/route/corridor and, in addition, subject to agreement by the outlet, through the following:
 - Staffed railway stations
 - public libraries
 - tourist information centres
 - village shops and/or post offices (minimum one outlet per parish where they exist)
 - community transport offices.

Sufficient copies must also be sent to district, parish and town councils along the route so that any willing district and town/parish council may maintain notice boards and other facilities. Devon County Council will supply council contact details on request.

Copies must also be available on request by post for members of the public (a reasonable postage and packing charge may be made.)

Devon County Council also requires that reasonable quantities are sent to the Transport Co-ordination Service at County Hall.

Operators will also be required to distribute any Devon County Council bus service/ timetable leaflets or booklets that are relevant to their services which Devon County Council produces and has supplied to them.

If and when a Devon Day Rover ticket is introduced for travel on the services of all operators, operators will be expected to produce and distribute information about it.

(ii) Roadside Timetable Information

On all commercial services, and unless otherwise specified on supported services, the bus operator will provide and maintain roadside timetable information at all bus stops on the bus route which Devon County Council may designate as requiring this. Other stops, e.g. where a number of stops exist relatively close together on a route, or in isolated rural areas which are not well used, may not require a timetable display case.

In addition to providing the full timetable for each service at some bus stops, Devon County Council will consider the value of different formats, and if appropriate, provide them, e.g.:

- stop-specific information of "buses from this stop"
- a simplified route diagram/"stick map" of the bus service
- a map of neighbouring bus stops at interchanges or locations with a number of stops.

The extent of the information provided at each stop should be related to the number and types of service at the stop, and the number of passengers using the stop. Displaying the above additional information alongside the standard timetable may require bigger or additional timetable cases. The service timetables will comply with the standards and format set out in this strategy.

(iii) Bus Stop Timetable Display Cases

All service information will be contained in a watertight display case either separately mounted or as an integral part of a bus stop or shelter, in a type approved by Devon County Council to ensure that the public have consistency in the way in which timetables at bus stops are displayed.

Devon County Council will set standards to ensure that all villages and communities with more than a set population size, and bus stops identified as "key" due to the level of usage, will have a roadside timetable display at the main bus stop. Devon County Council will draw up a list of these sites.

(iv) Shared Bus Stops

Operators sharing stops will liaise with one another to ensure effective joint use of display space in timetable cases etc., and a reasonable charge may be made by an operator making display space in its own case available to another operator to insert information. Where the operators cannot agree to share, and where an additional timetable display case cannot be satisfactorily provided, Devon County Council will set up and maintain information and recoup a sum from each operator towards the cost of doing so.

(v) Bus Service Alterations

Notices about bus service alterations must be prominently posted at bus stops for significant changes where lack of information may result in a potential passenger missing a bus, and on bus no later than five days before the implementation of the change and the new timetables be posted at bus stops no later than the day of implementation. Information on temporary disruptions to service timetables or routes must be displayed at stops and on bus by the operators with as much notice as practical.

(vi) Service/Timetable Changes

In order to minimise disruption to the bus network Devon County Council will work with operators to establish a maximum of six common timetable change dates in each year, as recommended by the Department for Transport (DfT) but will seek to restrict service changes where possible to a common summer and winter change date, except in unavoidable circumstances such as changed school requirements, rail connections and where the Traffic Commissioner would normally grant short-notice dispensation.

(vii) Financially Supported Services

For financially supported services Devon County Council will provide the printed information described in section 1(i) by agreement with each operator. Devon County Council will also distribute the information as required by section 2(i) and supply information to *traveline* for use by the *traveline* telephone information service and website SMS texting.

The Devon County Council logo will be included in a prominent position on each timetable to indicate a service supported/secured by Devon County Council. Operators of supported services should also refer to the relevant paragraphs of the Conditions of Contract for Financially Supported Local Bus Services.

3. How to ensure that the Strategy is implemented

The 2000 Act requires Devon County Council to ascertain whether the required information is being made available to the public in the appropriate way as set out in this Strategy. If, in Devon County Council's opinion, the required information is not being made available or is not being made available in the appropriate way, the County Council must seek to make arrangements with local bus operators to make the required information available in the appropriate way.

If it is not possible to make satisfactory arrangements with operators, the County Council must take steps to ensure that the required information is made available in the appropriate way and may then recover its reasonable costs from the operators.

If operators cannot or will not meet the standards set out in this Strategy, Devon County Council will make the necessary arrangements and will recoup reasonable costs from bus operators.

C. Action Programme: Delivering the Strategy

To deliver this strategy Devon County Council will, over the period of the second Local Transport Plan (LTP2) up to the end of March 2011, in partnership with the bus operators and through the SWPTI/*traveline* partnership, implement a programme of actions, set out below.

To help develop the new strategy, market research has been commissioned to gather views about the existing information provision and how it could be improved – using an external market research company. 1200 interviews were carried out throughout Devon, focussing on how information is obtained and how the present publicity material could be improved. In-depth interviews were also carried out with those involved in the provision of information, such as Tourist Information Centres and bus enquiry offices. The research provides a robust statistical sample and findings which will play a significant role in the development, delivery and presentation of information in the future.

1. Bus Stop Inventory

Building an inventory, establishing the standards and identifying the gaps in provision will take priority in the first year of the Strategy followed by implementation of the improvement programme through to 2011.

This will include all equipment and facilities at bus stops and at other points away from stops (on or off the highway) involved in the provision of bus information. It will be linked with the Devon County Council Asset Management processes and where appropriate will feed the *traveline* database.

It will be used to identify gaps in provision across the county against the specifications for flags and timetable displays and the criteria referred to below, and will help to draw up a programme of improvements and implementations.

2. Partnership with Operators

An operator/Devon County Council implementation group will be established to agree the detailed role of each in implementing the strategy, i.e. in the creation and dissemination of bus service information by all mediums/formats, the specification and maintenance arrangements for equipment, the formats for information displays and to have input into the implementation of the strategy.

3. Bus Stop Standards Criteria

Working with bus operators, criteria will be established for the extent, and type, of equipment and information to be provided at each bus stop, bus station and interchange point which could include patronage, number of services using a stop, population served, village/community size. This will include identifying “key bus stops” at an early stage in the implementation of the Strategy. A standard specification and design will be developed for:

- bus stop flags; this will also show the *traveline* telephone number and website address for travel enquiries
- bus stop/roadside timetable information cases and equipment

- including considering use of integral bus stop flag and display units.

4. Bus Stop Maintenance

A process will be set up for ongoing maintenance of bus stop equipment and roadside timetable displays, utilising both Devon County Council and operator resources:

Equipment/Info

Flags
Poles
Timetable cases

Timetables in cases

Maintenance Responsibility

Bus Operator/Devon County Council
Devon County Council
Bus Operator (Devon County Council when new case is needed)
Bus Operator

The operator will be responsible for cleaning bus stop flags and timetable cases.

5. Bus Stop Upgrades

Having established the criteria above, and having undertaken an audit to produce the inventory, the following priority for upgrades will be followed:

1.
 - (i) Provide bus stop poles and flags at bus stops where this is absent but where this is required, to the standard design (see section C(3)).
 - (ii) All bus stops with a shelter to be provided with a timetable case to be used to provide up-to-date timetables and other information as outlined in this Strategy.
 - (iii) Working with operators, identify key bus stops, those with: a high level of usage; where a number exist in a relatively small area; in remote areas at a distance from other bus stops with timetable cases; at interchanges - and provide them with timetable display cases.
2. In parallel with the above:
 - (i) Replacement of poor, damaged and outdated poles, flags and timetable cases.
 - (ii) Parallel with this, where LTP2 funding will be used to enhance bus corridors etc., flags and timetable displays will be proved to the same standard on these corridors - which might involve some replacement of existing equipment.
 - (iii) Devon County Council will set up a process for the siting of new bus stops which will ensure bus operator involvement.
3.
 - (i) Once all stops in the above categories have been properly equipped, consideration will be given to the merits of upgrading existing flags, poles and timetable cases to provide a standard level of design provision across all bus stops.

Devon County Council will set up targets to upgrade bus stop poles and flags between 2007/8 and 2011.

During 2007 the *traveline* telephone number posted on bus stop flags will have to be changed. This work should be co-ordinated with other work on bus stops as far as possible. SWPTI will provide some funding for this.

Attention will be given in applying this standard to the sensitivity of local built/rural environments and to local schemes for groups of bus stops in an area/town centres, such that localised schemes will be worked up and implemented as appropriate.

Devon County Council as Highway Authority already owns most of the bus stop poles and some timetable display cases, and will consider at a later date whether to incrementally assume ownership of flags as these are replaced.

6. Other Timetable Formats

Devon County Council will evaluate software, including through South West PTI/*traveline*, with a view to acquiring software to enable the production of stop-specific departure times, service diagram "stick map" displays, and plans of neighbouring bus stops, for display at bus stops – using the *traveline* database.

7. *traveline*

Devon County Council is committed to:

- maintain the commitment on data supply for timetables and bus stops and funding to *traveline*, as required under the contract with SWPTI, and support future developments including the provision of accurate fares information and real-time SMS text service
- meet local targets validated by *traveline* for the accuracy, timeliness and verification of bus timetable data input set at 99% average each year over 2006/7 – 2010/11 which more than meets the regional *traveline* indicators in the LTP

- utilise the potential for the *traveline* database to provide input to bus station and bus stop displays and travel planning initiatives including considering the purchase of software to share with operators, in conjunction with *traveline* regional initiatives
- support the further development of the *traveline* website including the journey planner which is growing rapidly in use. Users want easier-to-use systems that give them access to information 24/7 and whilst on the move. This includes reading timetables on line or on WAP enabled phones
- maintain the annual contribution to SWPTI as set out in the LTP.

8. Electronic Data Displays

The cost of providing real-time bus information - e.g. throughout the county at key stops, bus stations and interchange points, hospitals, shopping centres and employment centres - needs to be assessed relative to how that money can be spent elsewhere on public transport, together with identifying which sites are of highest priority. The cost of installing this can be considerable in the context of the limited nature of bus services in many parts of the county. Suitability of a site is not always straightforward, as it needs to balance the need for real-time information at "important" locations such as bus stations, rail stations, interchange points and other "key bus stops", with those more remote locations where buses are infrequent where this information may be seen as particularly needed. For any scheme Devon County Council will identify the specification for equipment and the information displayed; it will, in partnership with operators, consider the benefits of providing/upgrading/maintaining equipment that provides comprehensive transport information including electronic displays, maps etc.

Devon County Council will examine the benefits of establishing partnerships with operators to develop county wide provision of real-time information using GPS and other vocational technology e.g. at bus interchanges/stations and key stops such as shopping centres, hospitals, employment centres.

Evaluation will also take place of on-street electronic information kiosks; remote display screens; and the development of integral bus stops featuring electronic displays, ticket sales and identifying specific requirements for information displays.

9. Advances in Technology

With the continuing technological advances, Devon County Council will investigate the potential contribution to the aims of this Strategy from further developments in technology regarding how people can access information.

Other issues that will be investigated are:

- Use of GPS systems to drive real-time information, SMS and other means of displaying bus service information to the public.
- Potential for alerting passengers to disruption to bus services from planned road works and closures
- Using highway variable message displays for car drivers to actively promote bus use
- SMS - the feasibility of developing the system to provide real-time information. Seek the early completion of the *traveline* stop finder software
- Travel Planning - to assess the feasibility of using software to produce printed bus timetable information in varying formats to support travel planning initiatives, both for workplace/school/attractions/events and for Personalised Travel Planning – e.g. for individual homes, new developments etc.

10. Addressing Equality

To meet the needs of ethnic groups and people with disabilities and reduce barriers to using public transport for all, the following will be provided by Devon County Council unless otherwise stated:

- A leaflet providing information on how to access transport services including a signpost to information that is available on the Devon County Council transport website

- Access wallets to help bus users who may have communication difficulties (including those who do not speak English)
- SMS service to be designed for maximum benefit to the deaf
- Large print timetables for the partially sighted - available from operators on request
- Translation service for individual requests - available in print/large print and electronic formats
- High-visibility LED destination displays – operators will be encouraged to upgrade all buses using electronic/LED equipment
- Consideration of the benefits, and dis-benefits, of using colours on the contents of timetable and other publicity display cases at bus stops.

In the course of drawing up this strategy an Equality Needs Impact Assessment has been carried out. This has identified that there are no adverse effects resulting from this strategy; the improvements in information to the public are intended to be of benefit to all sections of the community.

11. Improving Awareness and Quality of Information

To improve awareness of the bus network, Devon County Council will:

- Commission market research -
 - (a) into the effectiveness of bus information methods and formats for different groups of people. This will assess public transport maps, area timetable guides, timetable leaflets, network leaflets, with the aim of identifying the most effective ways to inform the public about bus services
 - (b) to monitor public satisfaction in bus service information satisfaction.
- Supply timetable and other relevant publications as available to the public on request, free of charge.
- Produce appropriate literature promoting tourism by public transport which operators will be required to make available to the public by all appropriate means.
- Co-operate with any organisation producing tourist information to include public transport material in brochures and conduct joint promotions.

12. Promoting Bus Use

Devon County Council will address the following:

(i) Joined-up approach

Seek to ensure that Devon County Council's own publications include appropriate reference to public transport, and that proposals are made for every development S106 agreement to contain a provision to fund the production and distribution to house buyers, employees etc, of travel planning material and bus timetables.

(ii) Concessionary travel schemes

Produce (in addition to information produced by Travel Concession Authorities) and distribute information on concessionary travel schemes where appropriate; operators will be required to make this available to the public by all appropriate means.

(iii) Joint promotions

Promote the bus network through partnerships with the business community by including "how to reach us by bus" on websites for attractions, events etc.

(iv) Media, advertising and local events

Promote the awareness and use of bus services through all appropriate media, awareness campaigns etc, in conjunction with travelwise, travel planning initiatives and *traveline* and in partnership with operators.

(v) Bus awareness campaigns

Organise campaigns to raise awareness of bus services, in partnership with bus operators.

(vi) Route and other vehicle branding

Implement route and vehicle branding in partnership with operators for specific projects and campaigns.

(vii) Disruption to bus services

Set up, to enable operators to provide information on short term changes to the public, a process to inform operators at an early stage of planned road works assessing the severity of the impact on bus services followed by joint action with operators to minimise the disruption to bus services and allow adequate notice to passengers.

(viii) Parish Councils and local groups

Co-operate with, and assist, parish councils, town councils, community transport operators and other appropriate local groups in producing and distributing local transport information leaflets or booklets, and other formats.

(ix) Devon County Council Website

Maintain a public transport website showing the current Devon public transport map, an explanation of how bus services are provided (commercial and supported) and Devon County Council's role, plus links to *traveline* and other relevant sites.

Appendix 1 - Legal Requirement for the Strategy

The Transport Act 2000

Section 139 of the Transport Act 2000 states that each local transport authority must from time to time determine, having regard to their Local Transport Plan:

- what local bus information should be made available to the public ("the required information"), and;
- the way in which it should be made available ("the appropriate way").

The 2000 Act empowers Devon County Council to require certain standards for bus operators' information provision and, where operators fall short of those standards, to recoup from operators the County Council's reasonable costs in meeting those standards in the operators' stead.

The Transport Act 2000 refers to *local bus services*, i.e. registered local bus services, not long-distance coaches or rail services.

In carrying out this function, Devon will seek to establish partnerships with operators and shall co-operate with bordering councils – Torbay, Plymouth, Cornwall, Somerset and Dorset – on providing information for cross-boundary services.

The provisions set out in this Bus Information Strategy are also in accordance with the aims set out in the new draft Local Transport Bill presented to parliament in May 2007.

Appendix 2 – Consultation

Please note - Where a response from an individual is included below, this is shown as "Individual respondent".

Consultee	Comments	Devon County Council Response
Individual Respondent	<p><u>Electronic Information</u> What about keeping the websites up to date?</p> <p>Why not consider some sort of standard bus and train combined book of tickets to use on all routes.</p>	<p>Devon County Council makes every effort to keep its website up-to-date. Would expect transport operators to do the same.</p> <p>Joint tickets are not within the statutory scope of an Information Strategy.</p>
Budleigh Salterton Town Council	Another set of Government targets.	Noted.
East Allington Parish Council	Important to encourage people to use public transport.	Noted.
East Devon District Councillor	<p><u>Roadside Timetable Information</u> All bus stops should have timetable information on them. It is probably even more important in rural areas where buses are infrequent.</p> <p>The 'East Devon Guide' is an excellent publication. Maybe a supply of them should be placed in locations where motorists might pick them up, Post Offices and secondary schools?</p>	<p>The Strategy does not propose posting timetable information at all stops due to excessive updating requirements, the number of stops and varying degrees of usage. A more focussed approach is sought.</p> <p>All willing information outlets are welcomed. Post Offices are already included (but Crown Offices will not accept outside material).</p>
Barnstaple Town Council	<p><u>Electronic Information</u> Would like to see a "real-time" clock/timings display at the bus station and the Boutport Street Green Lanes stop and more information at the bus station when it is shut.</p> <p><u>Roadside Timetable Information</u> Timetables should be displayed at all bus stops.</p>	<p>Devon County Council is currently mapping out a possible roll-out of real-time facilities.</p> <p>Please see above.</p>
Braunton Parish Council	<p><u>General Comments</u> More communication between operators.</p> <p>Better integrated services between operators and bus and trains.</p> <p>Cross availability of tickets between operators.</p>	<p>Competition law prohibits collusion between bus companies.</p> <p>Bus/rail integration is not within the statutory scope of an Information Strategy.</p> <p>Joint tickets are not within the statutory scope of an Information Strategy.</p>

BUS INFORMATION STRATEGY 2006 - 2011

Consultee	Comments	Devon County Council Response
<p>Individual respondent</p>	<p><u>Roadside Timetable Information</u> Devon County Council designates 'key stops' as requiring roadside timetable information. What are the criteria for a 'key stop'?</p> <p><u>Timetable Changes</u> Using the VOSA Bus Registration Search website (that Devon County Council links to from their transport pages) to find out about advanced bus service changes is very difficult. Is Devon County Council complying with its own specification by including this link? Does the current Strategy make any provision to ensure that passengers will not be caught out by a change in service?</p> <p>Are all these changes listed anywhere?</p>	<p>Currently there are no formal criteria for a "key stop." The Strategy refers to stops with a high level of usage; where a number exist in a relatively small area; in remote areas at a distance from other bus stops with timetable cases; at interchanges. The strategy proposes that criteria are set for these stops.</p> <p>Yes.</p> <p>The timescales for publication of timetables must take into account bus operators' legal entitlement to alter services by giving statutory notice, and local authorities need to deal with contracts and consequential changes thereafter. Hence public information being required no less than seven days before the service change. By VOSA.</p>
<p>Campaign for Better Transport Devon Group (New name for Transport 2000)</p>	<p><u>Electronic Information</u> Re-introduce the "Timetable Updating" page on Devon County Council's website.</p> <p><u>Printed Timetable Information</u> Produce a monthly timetable-updating list for the whole county, so that out-of-date timetables are no longer given out without correcting information.</p> <p>Operators' timetables must always be available, not out of print. Operators' timetables must be available from drivers.</p>	<p>Devon County Council does not propose to duplicate the up-to-date timetable service provided by <i>traveline</i>.</p> <p>Not considered practicable re timely distribution and the resources needed to do this. Better to ensure that individual or grouped changes are effectively communicated.</p> <p>Agreed.</p> <p>The Strategy requires printed information to be available on all buses on the route in question.</p>

BUS INFORMATION STRATEGY 2006 - 2011

Consultee	Comments	Devon County Council Response
<p>Campaign for Better Transport Devon Group (New name for Transport 2000) - continued</p>	<p><u>Printed Timetable Information - continued</u></p> <p>Timetables must indicate days when services are normally varied or cancelled.</p> <p>Timetables must emphasise columns of "exception" odd-day or part-week journeys.</p> <p>Timetables must show non-stop sections of route.</p> <p>Town and city maps must show all operators' routes, not just the biggest operators'.</p> <p><u>On-bus Notices</u></p> <p>It is essential for on-bus notices of route and timetable changes to be read by passengers therefore notices must show route numbers in very large type, bold print.</p> <p><u>Bus Stops</u></p> <p>Bus stops must show "both sides of road" wherever the opposite direction lacks a bus-stop flag.</p> <p>Bus stops must be indicated by a visible projecting flag, not just carriageway markings.</p> <p>Bus stops must show route numbers. Passengers may reasonably expect any passing bus to stop, unless the stop itself shows certain route numbers only.</p> <p><u>Roadside timetables</u></p> <p>Provide more roadside timetables. "Better bus-stop displays" is a "key element" of Devon County Council's Local Transport Plan Strategy 2006-2011, but many pick-up points still lack information.</p> <p>Specify maximum height above ground, especially for wheelchair users.</p> <p><u>Real-Time Displays</u></p> <p>Real-time displays must be restored to operation, and show actual rather than scheduled times.</p>	<p>The Strategy requires timetables to show any such variations.</p> <p>This is a basic requirement. Would otherwise not meet bus service registration requirements.</p> <p>This is a basic requirement. Would otherwise not meet bus service registration requirements.</p> <p>Devon County Council maps do show all operators' services. The Strategy does not include a requirement for maps published by bus operators to include all other operators in the area – would be difficult to enforce.</p> <p>Agreed. Difficult to enforce but operators will be informed of the need to use the largest font possible.</p> <p>Agreed.</p> <p>Agreed - but not necessary where a shelter exists.</p> <p>Not agreed, due to the resources needed to maintain this in a timely manner.</p> <p>Strategy refers to progressive improvement in number and quality of displays.</p> <p>Agreed in principle but some sites make this difficult or impractical.</p> <p>The Strategy outlines the current position, including technical issues.</p>

BUS INFORMATION STRATEGY 2006 - 2011

Consultee	Comments	Devon County Council Response
<p>Campaign for Better Transport Devon Group (New name for Transport 2000) - continued</p>	<p><u>Real-Time Displays - continued</u> If some overhead displays can only show scheduled times, then the display itself must make this clear - since "real-time" is incorrect and misleading in such cases. <u>General</u> Is the word "should" appropriate for the numerous matters which it is intended? I suggest "must" will be the appropriate word when referring to a requirement, "should" when it is a non-obligatory aspiration</p>	<p>The Strategy outlines the current position, including technical issues.</p> <p>It is considered that both words convey a sufficient element of requirement.</p>
<p>Crediton Town Council</p>	<p>Devon County Council should notify the public when routes or timetables are altered.</p> <p>More roadside timetable information on the town bus should be provided. Devon County Council should clearly specify a maximum height for roadside timetable boards to assist those who cannot read the timetable information at the current height.</p>	<p>The Strategy sets out how such information is to reach the public. Devon County Council does not propose to take on all such work itself. The obligation rests initially with the bus company. Subject to designation of key stops. Agreed in principle but some sites make this difficult or impractical.</p>
<p>Individual respondent</p>	<p>How much will it cost? Please take into consideration that just because new innovations are now technically practicable they do not have to be used. E.g. texting, GPS.</p>	<p>Some aspects are funded by the bus companies. Devon County Council work is prioritised according to extent of public benefit. Devon County Council recognises that new technology is not used by many people and that traditional standard timetables etc. will continue to be important.</p>
<p>East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)</p>	<p><u>General</u> The East Devon AONB Beauty Partnership sees this strategy complementing our efforts to encourage the usage of Public Transport to access the World Heritage Coast and the East Devon AONB. <u>Roadside Timetable Information</u> When considering which key stops should be provided with timetable cases consideration should be given to the coastal zone of the AONB as an international destination for tourism and the future potential for increasing the number of visitors who might use the bus service to access the area.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>This will be considered in the context of the Strategy – and could be taken on board in the context of specific promotions.</p>

Consultee	Comments	Devon County Council Response
<p>East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - continued</p>	<p><u>Roadside Timetable Information - continued</u> The provision of timetable cases can also be used as a tool for raising awareness of a particular bus service helping to overcome the general perception that there are no bus services operating in rural areas. These timetable cases can also be used to strengthen the branding of particular services such as the Coast Hopper 157 and the X53 service and could be extended to the supported 899 service which has great potential as a tourism based service.</p> <p><u>Stop-Specific Information</u> We would support the provision at key bus stops of stop-specific information that is in an easy to understand format and is in an appropriate font size. On the above three mentioned services the information should be extended to make links with the Rights of Way network and where appropriate the South West Coast Path in order to integrate these aspects of the Devon Local Transport Plan and to allow walkers to make more use of the available bus services.</p> <p><u>Bus Stop Flags</u> Consideration should be given to identifying the actual location of the bus stop on the flag in order to confirm the location that the passenger disembarking from the bus actually finds themselves.</p> <p><u>traveline</u> We would commend Devon County Council's continued support of the <i>traveline</i> website as this is an excellent format for making bus information available to visitors before they arrive in order to aid in their planning of their visits and is an important resource that allows many providers of website information to link to bus services provision for their particular attraction.</p> <p><u>Improving Awareness and Quality of Information</u> Produce appropriate material promoting tourism by public transport in order to encourage greater usage of the bus network and to reduce dependence on the car.</p>	<p>Agreed, as above.</p> <p>Agreed, as above.</p> <p>Some locations are more suited for stop-specific information and other for timetable matrices. In "recreation" areas the timetable matrix is often favoured to help awareness of different destinations on the route.</p> <p>In practice many stops have several names which may add to confusion for those not familiar with the area; also <i>traveline</i> names differ, due to a different format.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Strategy includes commitment to go on producing material which encourages use of bus services for tourism.</p>

BUS INFORMATION STRATEGY 2006 - 2011

Consultee	Comments	Devon County Council Response
<p>East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - continued</p>	<p><u>Route and Vehicle Branding</u> Route and vehicle branding has allowed services in the World Heritage Coast to be given a higher profile and allowed visitors to see them as a service which might be useful to them rather than just providing for local needs. These initiatives should be maintained and encouraged and form part of the marketing of the area as a truly accessible coast.</p>	<p>Not enforceable through the Information Strategy, but can be part of service subsidy agreements, subject to cost. On commercial routes, this relies on bus company co-operation.</p>
<p>Individual respondent</p>	<p>It is all getting far too sophisticated. As a motorist I find the moving information on the destination boards on the fronts of buses a distraction. Most importantly is a stable bus service which is not continually changing. There is no integration of services whatsoever.</p>	<p>Noted. Noted. Agreed. Not true; Devon County Council powers are limited given that most bus services are entirely commercial, but Devon County Council integrates wherever possible.</p>
<p>Exeter Senior Voice</p>	<p><u>Printed Timetable Information</u> There needs to be a clear statement on all printed information such as bus timetables stating the length of validity of the information since the lack of an end date can mean that users are in permanent uncertainty as to the validity of the information.</p> <p><u>Print Size</u> Wherever space permits, the aim should be to supply bus information in larger print (i.e. minimum font size 14) and that this should be the default size, with smaller size being used only where there is insufficient space. There are many people for whom small print (i.e. size 12 or smaller) is unreadable.</p> <p><u>General Point</u> Electronic information at bus stops is only useful if buses keep to it and if it is accurate.</p>	<p>Bus companies have a legal ability to give notice of service changes at any time which precludes publication of definitive end dates. Devon County Council does not have power to override this.</p> <p>While this is to be commended where possible, this is not a practical minimum size, given the limitations of timetable display cases. Where possible larger fonts will be used.</p> <p>Agreed.</p>
<p>Exmoor National Park Authority</p>	<p><u>Delivering the Strategy</u> We would welcome the opportunity to work with both Devon County Council and bus operators to ensure that information and promotion of public transport is accurate, timely and available in locations, formats and at times that are convenient to users (or potential users).</p>	<p>Welcomed.</p>

BUS INFORMATION STRATEGY 2006 - 2011

Consultee	Comments	Devon County Council Response
<p>Exmoor National Park Authority - continued</p>	<p><u>Delivering the Strategy - continued</u></p> <p>We would welcome early discussions regarding routes, promotional activities, innovative links to walks/events or key locations that would help this Authority achieve a stated aim of becoming a carbon neutral National Park by 2025.</p> <p>Specific targets from the National Park Management Plan 2007-2012 include: H 2.3 The potential for a new year-round bus route linking Dulverton to Lynton and Lynmouth via Winsford, Exford and Simonsbath will be established by the end of 2009. Lead organisations: Exmoor National Park Authority with Somerset County Council. This will require 'joined-up' thinking between the local authorities involved (i.e. Exmoor National Park Authority and the Devon and Somerset County Councils).</p> <p>Current observations from users within the National Park are the limited amount of routes, inadequate information, confusion relating to bus stop locations/changes to bus stop locations, occasional (but too frequent) non-stopping of buses at recognised stops and information being available too late to enable pre-visit planning to minimise car use.</p>	<p>This is a rather broader aim than that covered by the Information Strategy.</p> <p>The existence of a particular route is not a Bus Information Strategy matter.</p> <p>The Strategy aims to improve extent, quality, accuracy and timeliness of bus information.</p>
<p>First Devon & Cornwall</p>	<p><u>Printed Timetable Information</u></p> <p>We would suggest that when referring to each service, this may actually refer to a group of services, or a corridor of services.</p> <p>Whilst no charges are currently made for publicity, and we do not envisage this changing, we would retain the option of making a reasonable charge for certain material.</p> <p>To stipulate that timetable material must be either A4 or A5 does not provide enough flexibility in terms of publicity material. DL sized timetable booklets are common within the industry, as are pocket timetable guides. We believe that the size of printed material should be a decision for the operator, particularly as large print material is also available.</p>	<p>Agreed.</p> <p>Devon County Council currently favours information being supplied free of charge.</p> <p>Agreed.</p>

BUS INFORMATION STRATEGY 2006 - 2011

Consultee	Comments	Devon County Council Response
<p>First Devon & Cornwall - continued</p>	<p><u>Printed Timetable Information - continued</u></p> <p>In relation to the large print timetables, our normal practice would be to enlarge current material to a larger size print, and paper. An example would be to enlarge an A4 display to A3.</p> <p>Your proposal states that information must contain start and finish dates of seasonal services – we believe that this should be amended to say “where known”. With ever increasing climate change and global warming, the “summer season” is changing, and therefore, it is sometimes appropriate to continue operating seasonal services beyond, say the “usual summer period”.</p> <p>We believe that this should additionally include the comment “if space is available”.</p> <p>The point is unclear, however we would propose the following wording: “On routes which are commercial, but which also have elements of services which are financially supported by the local authority, and provided by a different operator than the commercial element of the service, then the tendered operator will provide timetable information on a composite basis for both the commercial and the tendered element of the service”.</p> <p><u>Telephone Information Service</u></p> <p>We are fully supportive of <i>traveline</i>, and share in the success, with the local authority, and other partners, in the development and delivery of South West Traveline. However, we are concerned that some operators, of a substantial size, fail to pay their <i>traveline</i> costs, without deductions through recovery means by the local authority. We believe that greater emphasis should be placed on this issue, and refusal to pay <i>traveline</i> costs should be considered when awarding tendered services.</p>	<p>This is acceptable.</p> <p>It is not agreed that each seasonal end date is not known at the beginning of that season.</p> <p>Will be considered case-by-case.</p> <p>Agreed.</p> <p>Agree with importance of operators paying their share of <i>traveline</i> costs but will deal with this through appropriate financial channels, not by withholding route contracts.</p>

BUS INFORMATION STRATEGY 2006 - 2011

Consultee	Comments	Devon County Council Response
<p>First Devon & Cornwall - continued</p>	<p><u>On-Bus Destination Displays</u> We are fully supportive of the move to change and further introduce LED style destination displays. However, we would also consider that internal bus displays should also be considered, providing next stop information internally in the bus. This would probably be linked to a real-time information system.</p> <p><u>Distribution of Printed Information</u> As mentioned above we wish to retain the right for a possible reasonable charge for material.</p> <p>It will not always be practically possible to have the printed material "on all buses on that route".</p> <p>As mentioned earlier the size of material should be left to the operator, for example, to make available material of A4 size may not be feasible without eliminating possible luggage space on the vehicle, depending on the thickness of the publication. We would suggest that the words "where practical" are inserted into this bullet point.</p> <p><u>Roadside Timetable Information</u> Whilst we support the provision of roadside publicity at bus stops, the number of bus stops which are equipped with timetable information, must be in relation to stop usage and also where the stop is in relation to the terminus. For example, it would probably be inappropriate to erect a timetable case at the penultimate bus stop before the outer terminus. However, this would have to be viewed on an individual route-by-route basis.</p> <p>The strategy proposes that full timetable information be provided for each service at designated roadside information bus stops. We believe that operators would have the choice of either providing full timetables at stops or stop-specific information, i.e. buses from this stop.</p>	<p>Welcomed. But given the expense if universally applied it may not be the highest priority.</p> <p>To encourage public access to good information, Devon County Council does not currently favour a charge being made.</p> <p>Do not see why not in principle. The only exceptions should be vehicles allocated at last minute or in emergency.</p> <p>Would prefer to consider exceptions on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Agreed. Will feed into process of designating key stops.</p> <p>The format of information displays is under discussion and will be discussed with operators.</p>

BUS INFORMATION STRATEGY 2006 - 2011

Consultee	Comments	Devon County Council Response
<p>First Devon & Cornwall - continued</p>	<p><u>Bus Stop Timetable Display Cases</u> We suggest you define the population size for bus stops that attract a timetable display within the strategy.</p> <p><u>Bus Service Alterations</u> It is not always practical to provide notices at all bus stops for significant changes, due to the length of the route, and the number of bus stops associated with long rural services. We suggest notices are displayed at key bus stops on the route, as a minimum.</p> <p><u>Electronic Data Displays</u> We believe that the above is a key part of any Bus Information Strategy. Whether a service is high frequency or every two hours, a Real-Time Information (RTI) system provides customers with confidence that the bus is operating and will arrive shortly. Customers tend to know the walking distance from their home to the bus stop, and therefore can perceptually cost this time; customers also have some idea of the journey length they are intending to make, and again can perceptually cost this time. The difficulty arises in respect of waiting time, as this can be perceptually priced at infinite cost. An RTI system provides the facility for the customer to perceptually price waiting time, and therefore instils improved confidence in public transport. Most RTI systems provide a Schedule Adherence element, which is key in providing both operators and Local Authorities with data that can enable them to plan services, in relation to timekeeping more effectively, but can also highlight deficiencies in the highway infrastructure. To deliver RTI effectively, a holistic view needs to be taken, especially with neighbouring authorities, where existing RTI schemes may well already be in place.</p> <p><u>General</u> We are keen to promote bus usage and delivering information is one of the keys to success in this regard. The comments mentioned above are provided to further enhance the Bus Information Strategy, as well as making the content deliverable.</p>	<p>Will be considered.</p> <p>To avoid unnecessary inconvenience to the travelling public, notices should be displayed at all stops which have a timetable display.</p> <p>Noted. The cost of universal provision is considerable and may result in a targeted approach.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>Agreed. Where possible and practicable, Devon County Council will extend neighbouring councils' RTI systems, with their agreement, onto routes in Devon.</p> <p>Noted and welcomed.</p>

BUS INFORMATION STRATEGY 2006 - 2011

Consultee	Comments	Devon County Council Response
Hennock Parish Council	Better facilities should be available for disabled people on rural buses.	Not within the scope of a statutory Bus Information Strategy.
Holcombe Burnell Parish Council	More timetables at locations where there are not bus shelters. E.g. laminated copies on lamp posts	The Strategy aims to define those stops where timetable displays should be maintained. Increasing the number beyond bus stops increases the maintenance requirement.
Kentisbury & Trentishoe Parish Council	Very important that Kentisbury Ford Post Office has ample supplies of all information as this shop/PO is the main source of information for this very rural parish.	Devon County Council will supply as many copies as any outlet is willing to take.
Individual respondent	<p><u>Roadside Timetable Information</u> Every bus stop should have a timetable in a display case regardless of location. Roadside information is essential, especially to the casual or first time bus user.</p> <p>Format of roadside information in Edinburgh on the Lothian Bus stops is very good. It is clear, detailed, comprehensive and customised for every stop. Before they introduced flat rate fares it was even possible to workout the fare from the displays.</p> <p><u>Other Information</u> Real-time displays should also form part of the strategy in section B. They can, it seems, be made to work. In Edinburgh there has been a wide scale rollout out of "BusTracker" displays.</p> <p><u>Electronic Information</u> The <i>traveline</i> website is not accessible while on the move. Real-time bus information and bus timetables should be made available on a website viewable on mobile phones. National Rail has such a system for train times (mobile.nationalrail.co.uk and pda.rtti.kizoom.co.uk). This is far easier to use, and I suspect cheaper to run, than the system of SMS text messaging. Also, you don't have to be at the station to use it because you can search for your station name. Perhaps the SMS text messages or bus stop flags could publicise such a facility.</p>	<p>The Strategy aims to define those stops where timetable displays should be maintained. Increasing the number beyond bus stops increases the cost of maintenance which needs to be balanced against other enhancements to bus information.</p> <p>Noted.</p> <p>The Strategy sets out Devon County Council's intentions on real-time.</p> <p>The system is continually being reviewed by South West Traveline and the development of new facilities is actively being considered.</p>

BUS INFORMATION STRATEGY 2006 - 2011

Consultee	Comments	Devon County Council Response
Individual respondent - continued	<p><u>Electronic Information - continued</u> If real-time bus information was available, internet data feeds could be made available allowing local companies to publish live bus information to their employees on their internal websites. Companies subscribing to this information should be encouraged to display it prominently as a means of encouraging bus use and reducing demands on company car parks.</p>	<p>The system is continually being reviewed by South West Traveline and the development of new facilities is actively being considered.</p>
Newton Abbot Local Transport Forum	<p>Endorses the comments already submitted by Newton Abbot Town Council.</p> <p>Resources identified for the introduction of new technology such as real-time information and SMS messaging could be better used in improving the bus services generally to the public and in particular providing a roof over the bus station in Sherborne Road, Newton Abbot.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Noted.</p>
Newton Abbot Town Council	<p><u>Printed Information and Distribution</u> Example - Teignbridge District Council allows bookings via the Tourist Information Office.</p> <p><u>Roadside Information and Bus Station</u> Example - Sherborne Road needs clearer information on where services 'pick-up'.</p> <p>It is important that all shelters are marked and show number of services stopping there.</p> <p><u>Electronic and Telephone Information</u> <i>traveline</i> - Only considered useful for out of area requests. SMS - Unlikely to be embraced by older users but would be especially useful for younger users. Real-Time Information - Generally been well received, but is only considered useful at main stops.</p> <p><u>Other Information</u> High Visibility On-bus Destination Displays – considered to be a vital service.</p> <p><u>Printed Timetable Information</u> Strongly agreed with.</p> <p><u>Printed Timetable Information</u> Considered very important for disabled visitors and those with pushchairs.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Improved roadside displays as outlined in this Strategy would address this. Improved roadside displays would address this.</p> <p><i>traveline</i> offers information on all services. Acknowledged that SMS may be currently more attractive to younger people. Noted.</p> <p>Agreed and included as a desirable item in the Information Strategy, but not enforceable by a statutory Information Strategy.</p> <p>Welcomed.</p> <p>Noted.</p>

BUS INFORMATION STRATEGY 2006 - 2011

Consultee	Comments	Devon County Council Response
<p>Newton Abbot Town Council - continued</p>	<p><u>Telephone Information Service</u> This section is supported.</p> <p><u>Distribution of Printed Information</u> This section is supported.</p> <p><u>Roadside Timetable Information</u> The locations of the roadside information should be mutually agreed and not imposed.</p> <p><u>Bus Stop Timetable Display Cases</u> Display cases should be updated regularly, together with regular cleaning schedules and damage checks.</p> <p><u>Bus Service Alterations</u> Alterations should be clearly displayed and displayed in reasonable time.</p> <p><u>Bus Stop Standard Criteria</u> Should be established as a priority.</p> <p><u>Bus Stop Maintenance</u> This should be set up as a priority.</p> <p><u>Bus Stop Upgrades</u> Provision of a timetable case is imperative.</p> <p><u>Bus Stop Upgrades</u> Provision of siting new bus stops should have a timeline.</p> <p><u>Bus Stop Upgrades</u> Assuming ownership of all flags would speed up the replacement process.</p> <p><u>Electronic Data Displays</u> Not considered as the most cost-effective method.</p> <p>Would there be the provision of touch screens at the main centres?</p> <p><u>Advances in Technology</u> Agree with the initiative to investigate Travel Planning.</p>	<p>Welcomed.</p> <p>Welcomed.</p> <p>Agreed, dependent on definition of key stops.</p> <p>Agreed; servicing of timetable cases must include maintenance.</p> <p>The Strategy aims to achieve this.</p> <p>Agreed.</p> <p>Agreed.</p> <p>Agreed, at designated stops.</p> <p>Dependent on the characteristics of each site.</p> <p>Currently, as many are owned by operators this would entail added cost which needs to be balanced against other bus information priorities.</p> <p>Such information has a place and is seen by some as important.</p> <p>Not currently being considered, due to cost and other improvements that can be achieved by using funds in other ways.</p> <p>Welcomed.</p>
<p>Okehampton Town Council</p>	<p>Bus timetables should integrate with railway timetables.</p>	<p>Not within the scope of a statutory Information Strategy.</p>
<p>Individual respondent</p>	<p>It sounds like Devon County Council is planning to discontinue timetable books and replace them with leaflets provided by each operator. This would be a major step backwards.</p>	<p>This is not the intention.</p>

BUS INFORMATION STRATEGY 2006 - 2011

Consultee	Comments	Devon County Council Response
<p>Chair of Ivybridge Town Council Transport Sub-Committee</p>	<p>We recommend that in addition to a start date, timetable booklets should also have an end date.</p> <p>Why can't Devon produce one timetable booklet like Cornwall? The Cornwall one is particularly good since it includes other public transport info including rail.</p>	<p>Bus companies' legal ability to give notice of service changes at any time precludes publication of definitive end dates. Devon County Council does not have power to override this.</p> <p>The Cornwall publication often went out of date quite quickly due to the number of changes in such a large area. Area books are therefore more manageable. Cornwall have now resolved to cease their county book and have area books instead. Devon area books also include rail information.</p>
<p>Individual respondent</p>	<p>Rural communities will be thrilled Devon County Council has produced a document on the layout of bus timetables and where they should go.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Shirwell Parish Council</p>	<p>Highly dissatisfied with much of the document. We have for over two years been trying to get someone to review the bus services provided to our parish, but with no success. We find that the few services provided start in the wrong part of the village, and do not allow passengers long enough in Barnstaple to shop before they have to return.</p>	<p>These issues are outside the scope of the document.</p>
<p>South Tawton Parish Council</p>	<p>Concerned that the 'discretionary stops' are maintained and not lost in a general move to save money and upgrade the flagged stops.</p>	<p>Definition of key stops is essential. Additional funding has been made available to improve bus stop information across Devon.</p>
<p>Stagecoach Cooks Coaches</p>	<p><u>Printed Timetable Information</u> Printed information on details of bus service alterations should be in the public domain and this should also include details of a new operator if the contract/service is to be provided by someone new and details of where to get hold of timetable details.</p> <p><u>Distribution of Printed Information</u> The strategy should contain an undertaking that Operators with travel offices/shops have on display details of all Operator's timetables even though these may be seen as "competing" with those of the organisation owning the Travel Shop.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Agree this is desirable but unclear as to how it could be enforced.</p>

BUS INFORMATION STRATEGY 2006 - 2011

Consultee	Comments	Devon County Council Response
<p>Stagecoach Cooks Coaches - continued</p>	<p><u>Distribution of Printed Information - continued</u> Pleased to note that sufficient copies of printed timetables must be sent to district, parish and town councils. It would be very useful to be sent a list of contact details and addresses of the councils concerned so that we can send promotional/information publicity to the correct people. <u>Roadside Timetable Information</u> Mention is made of the need for bus operators on supported services to provide and maintain roadside timetable information. Presumably this requirement will be contained in future tender specifications as they are issued by Devon County Council and would need to be costed in the overall provision of the service in question. Can the price of providing roadside publicity be shown as a separate item to the provision of the bus service to allow comparisons to be made. I welcome the reassurance that Devon will seek to establish partnerships with operators and will co-operate with bordering councils on providing information for cross-boundary services.</p>	<p>Agreed. Strategy embraces this. Available on request or via council websites. It's not a standard requirement that contracted bus operators are required to maintain roadside displays. This is a matter for individual agreement. This could form part of an alternative tender submission. Noted.</p>
<p>Strete Parish Council</p>	<p>Agreement with the strategy and the proposals laid out and support any recommendations.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>
<p>Tiverton Town Council</p>	<p><u>Introduction</u> Bullet point three, which reads – to grow bus use measured through the targets set out in LTP2, is not very good use of the English language, and should be suitably amended. <u>How to Ensure that the Strategy is Implemented?</u> The reference to what happens if an operator cannot, or indeed will not meet the standard, is rather vague and needs to be expended.</p>	<p>Agreed. The statutory process is vague and protracted.</p>
<p>Individual respondent</p>	<p>Fully support a text messaging service. The free bus travel arrangements are good.</p>	<p>Noted. Noted.</p>
<p>Western Traffic Area Office</p>	<p>No comments.</p>	<p>Noted.</p>

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<p>Young Peoples Scrutiny Forum</p>	<p>We found it difficult to comment on this as there were no questions to help us and we would have liked this. We found it difficult to get our heads round the document and we were surprised there was no short version as under Hear by Right Devon County Council have said that whenever a consultation is run with adults there is also a version for young people to be able to comment on.</p> <p>Point 8 is really hard to read. We understand point 14 would be in the large print versions but these may not be as available.</p> <p>We need a clear and really easy to understand how to use it information section that is really visible - not hidden away.</p> <p>Maps and other pictorial bits would help, some of the group have learning difficulties and it would help to know where a place was.</p> <p>We like the idea of texting although will it cost us money?</p> <p>Although we can see that you are working really hard to make information more accessible it's no good if when you get on a bus the driver is grumpy and unhelpful - the best source of information is often from someone who works for the company.</p> <p>We would be really happy to have a look at leaflets when they are in the design stage if that would help you at all.</p>	<p>Hear by Right was initiated part way through the consultation.</p> <p>Large-print timetables are available on request.</p> <p>Work is under way on different formats and initiatives to make information easier to understand.</p> <p>Maps would be considered at key stops where appropriate.</p> <p>Yes, there is a cost in using SMS texting, as with other information sources such as telephoning. The return text is free.</p> <p>Agreed, but driving standards and customer care are not enforceable by a statutory Information Strategy.</p> <p>Noted.</p>

Contact Details

If you would like to make a comment about public transport information or any aspect regarding local bus services in Devon please contact –

Public Transport, Transport Co-ordination Service, Devon County Council, Matford Offices, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4QW

devonbus@devon.gov.uk

01392 382800

Large Print Version

A large print version of the Strategy is available on request from the above details.