[News story: Real time information to transform bus travel in England](#)

Bus passengers up and down the country are set to benefit from easier journeys with up-to-the-minute information under plans to be announced today (Thursday 5 July 2018) by the Buses Minister.

Nusrat Ghani will visit Reading Buses to launch a [consultation on legally requiring bus operators to share their data so that passengers can get real time information on bus routes](#), timetables and fares at their fingertips.

It will also look at [making companies provide audio and visual information on buses, ensuring disabled people and the elderly are able to travel confidently](#).

Together, the 2 initiatives will ensure that passengers have the information they need, when they need it, regardless of their location and the company running the service.

Buses Minister Nusrat Ghani said:

> Nobody enjoys waiting at a bus stop for 20 minutes not knowing when the next bus is going to turn up, only for 2 to then pull up at the same time.
>
> By requiring bus operators to share their data, we can make sure that passengers have the information they need to catch the bus with ease, equipped with the right information about the time and cost.
>
> This move will also open up opportunities for innovation within the industry, support local services where demand is falling and help increase bus usage across the country.

Requiring bus companies to share their data would pave the way for improved information across all modes of transport, meaning quicker, easier journeys for passengers travelling on more than one form of transport.

Reading Buses is already using open data to improve bus journeys for people in the area. Through a number of initiatives to make information more easily available, the company has seen a 48% increase in passenger numbers since 2009.

During her visit the minister will travel on a Reading bus which includes accessibility features such as next stop screens, voice announcements and 2 wheelchair spaces.

John Bickerton, Reading Buses' Head of Engineering and Innovation said:

We are delighted that the Department for Transport is highlighting the importance of open data for the bus industry. Here at Reading Buses, we have long been advocates of giving customers more information to help them on their journey – and importantly to help them decide to travel with us in the first place.

We have long had a commitment to on-board audio and visual next stop announcements and have put information literally in our customers' hands with the Reading Buses app, which not only shows when buses are due, but can also show the buses moving in real time on a map of the route.

James White, senior campaigns manager at the charity Guide Dogs said:

Accessible information on board buses is absolutely vital to help people with sight loss travel with confidence.

We welcome this consultation as an important step towards a comprehensive and much needed network of talking buses.

Transport data is already widely shared within the rail industry and across modes in the biggest cities, with apps such as Trainline and City Mapper helping passengers make informed choices about their method of travel.