

# The impact of DRT services in improving rural accessibility

A comparison with rural France

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# Rural definitions and population

## UK

- Rural-Urban Classification defines areas as rural if they fall outside of settlements with more than 10,000 resident population
- 9.7 million people were estimated to live in Rural areas in England in 2020, compared with 46.9 million people in Urban areas (based on LSOA-level data); over the last decade, these population figures have increased by 6.0% and 6.6% respectively

## France

- Low-density and very low-density municipalities, inferior to 300 inhabitants per square km.
- 30,000 rural municipalities and over 21m inhabitants.



# Rural mobility approaches

## UK



- Rural Mobility Future transport strategy
- Follows on from TotalTransport which included some rural areas

## France

- La LOM: La Loi d'Orientation sur les Mobilités (2019)
- Affirming everyone's right to mobility, aimed at better regulating, decarbonising and renewing the infrastructure of transport.
- Each region tasked with ensuring that transport provision enables people to avail themselves of their right



# Rural mobility approaches

## UK

- Rural Transport Fund
- Mixture of BSIPs, local area settlements, devolution, local authority funding

## France

- Devolved regional départements with overall responsibility
- Reorganised structures to deliver transport (some places didn't have transport bodies)
- Launched some trials and reorganised networks in 2019
- Diverse funding eg payroll taxes fund local transport budgets, tax on energy and from energy saving certificates.



# France: Context - not just DRT

- Fixed line bus
- Rail
- Integrations
- Taxis
- Official hitchhiking
- Mobility hubs
- Lift share official parking



# France: 'Systematic' DRT

- Trials of DRT in rural areas
- Overhaul of analogue 'dial-a-ride' style systems
- Systematic approach to connectivity around cities
  - Paris – Île-de-France
  - Orleans
  - Strasbourg
- Replacing poorly used and off-peak fixed line buses with DRT





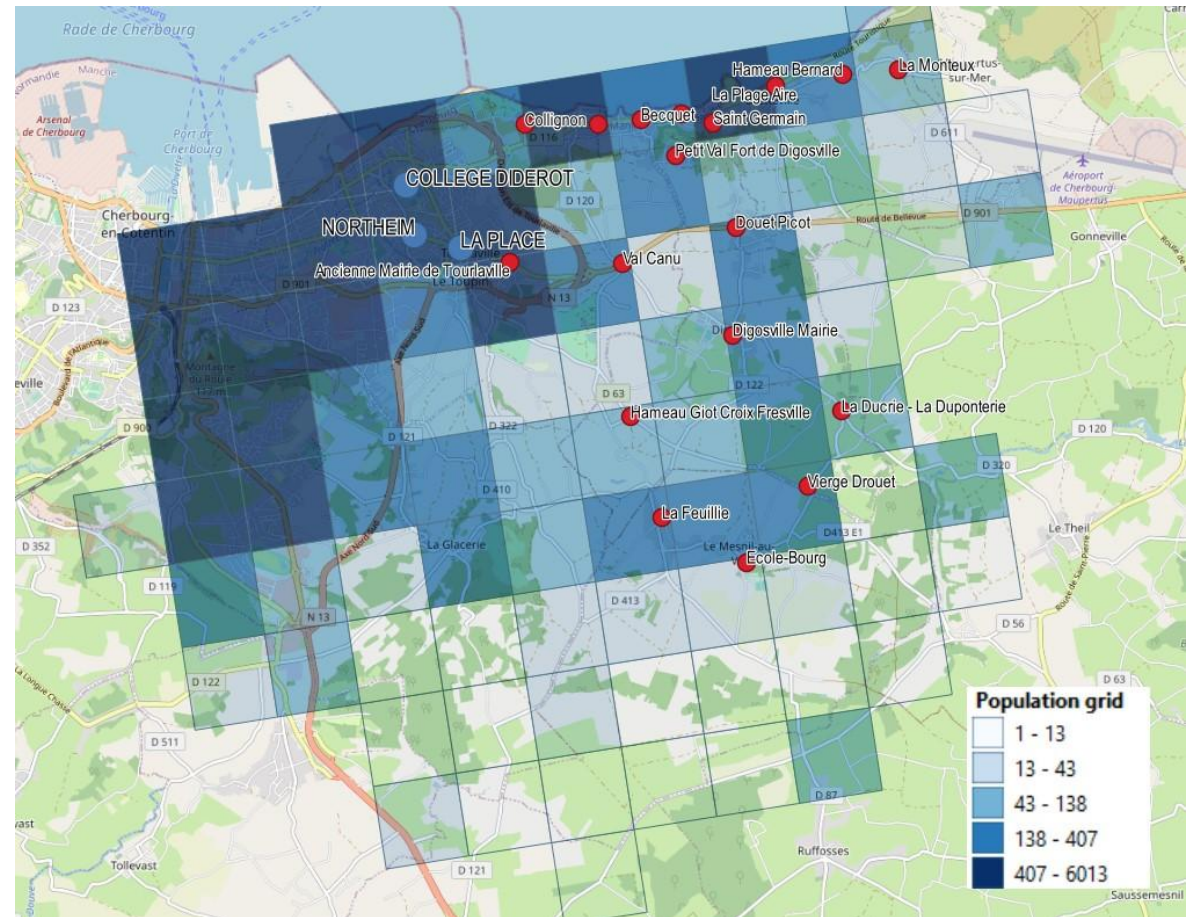
# Le Cotentin

Low density rural area to west of Cherbourg

The area established a new transport authority and decided to trial DRT as fixed line buses deemed too expensive to ensure public transport availability to everyone in the area.

Designed to connect villages to the school and also to three connection points for onward travel on the Cherbourg public transport network.

Expanded to cover 135 villages following trial 'until fixed routes become viable'.

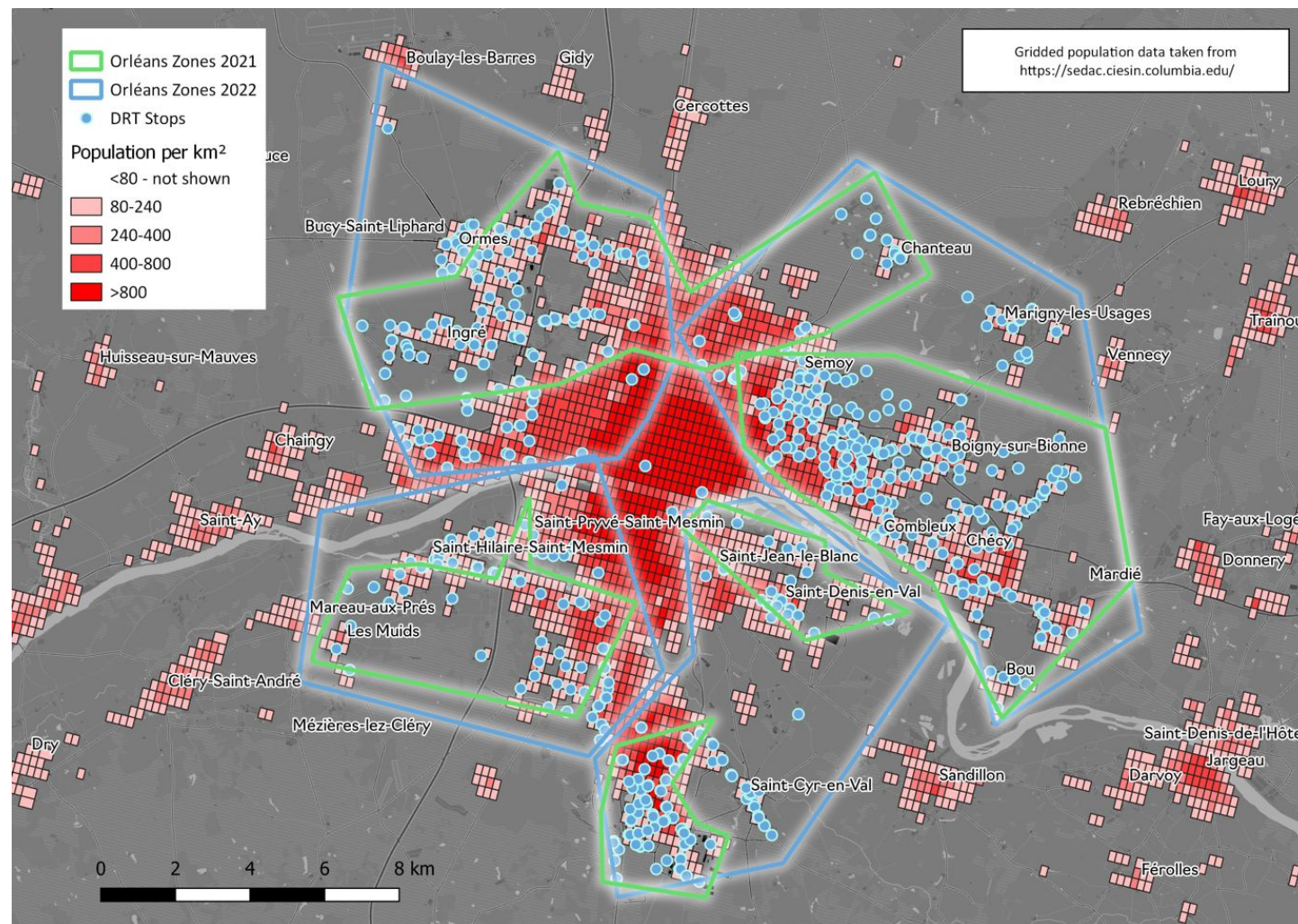




# Orleans



*We feel we're making better use of taxpayers' money, especially as Orléans Métropole's strategy is not to make economies of scale, but to offer a better service. Transport on Demand, an innovative solution that excludes no-one, not only complements the classic offer, but goes further by connecting 100% of metropolitans to the transport offer..." Romain Roy, vice-president in charge of transport at Orléans Métropole.*

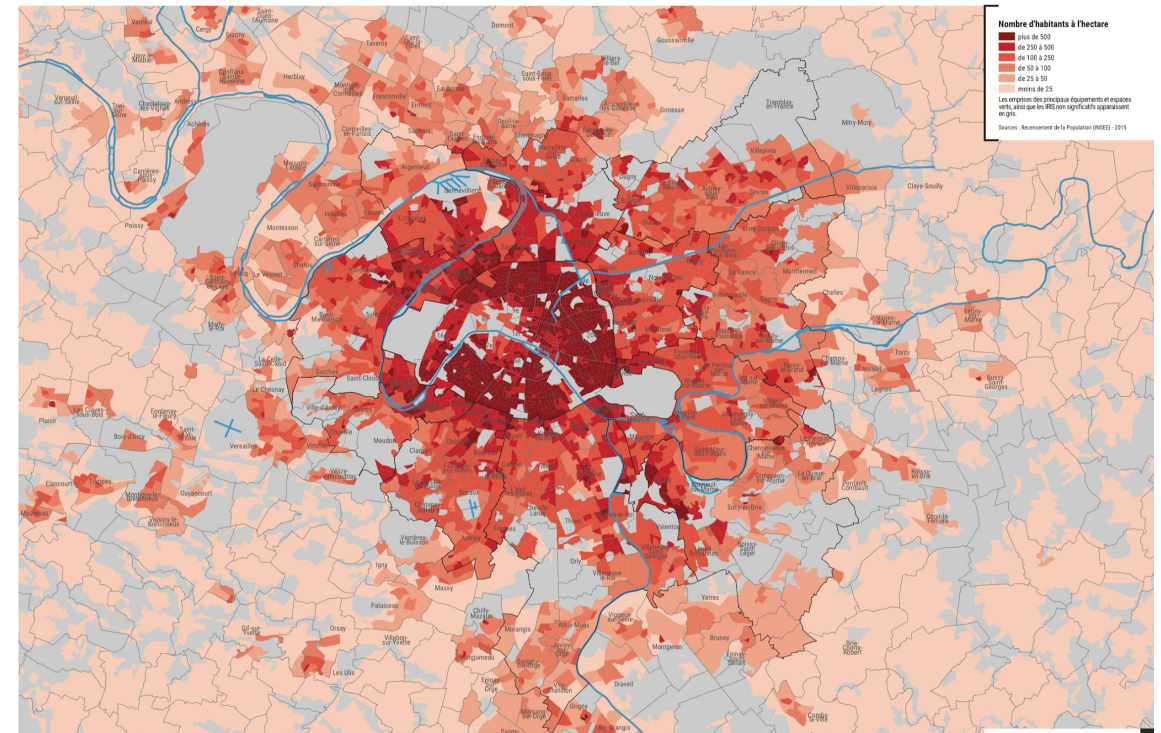




# Île-de-France

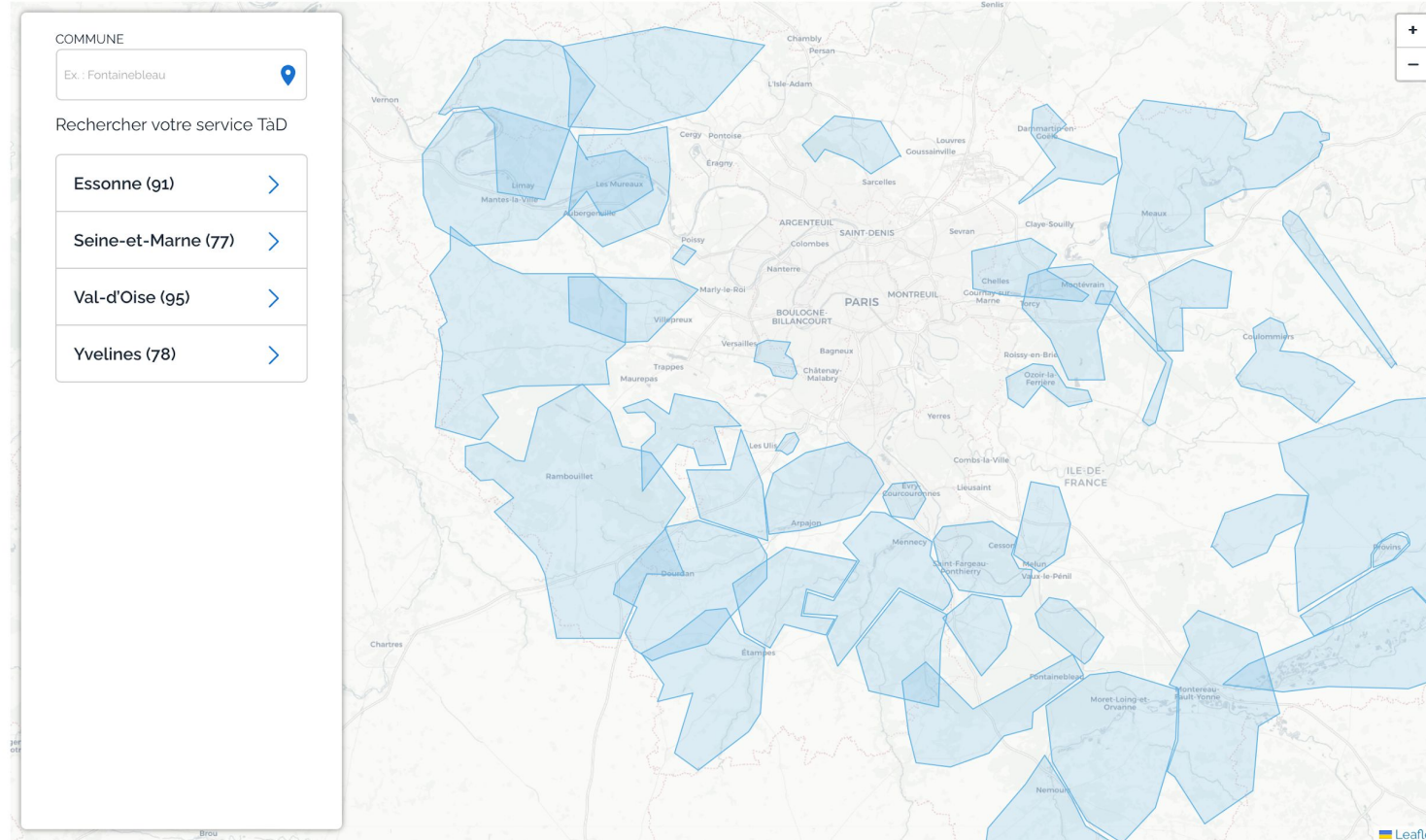
- The area around Paris
- Famously disconnected from central Paris (in both transport and lifestyle!)
- Recent financial settlement acknowledges this with massive investment in connectivity
- However, TAD network has been growing over the recent years in an effort to connect outlying areas to the current train, tram and bus network

DENSITE DE POPULATION

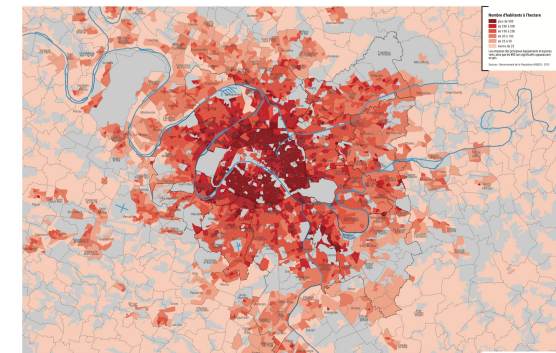


# Île-de-France TAD areas

Retrouvez les Transports à la Demande en Île-de-France

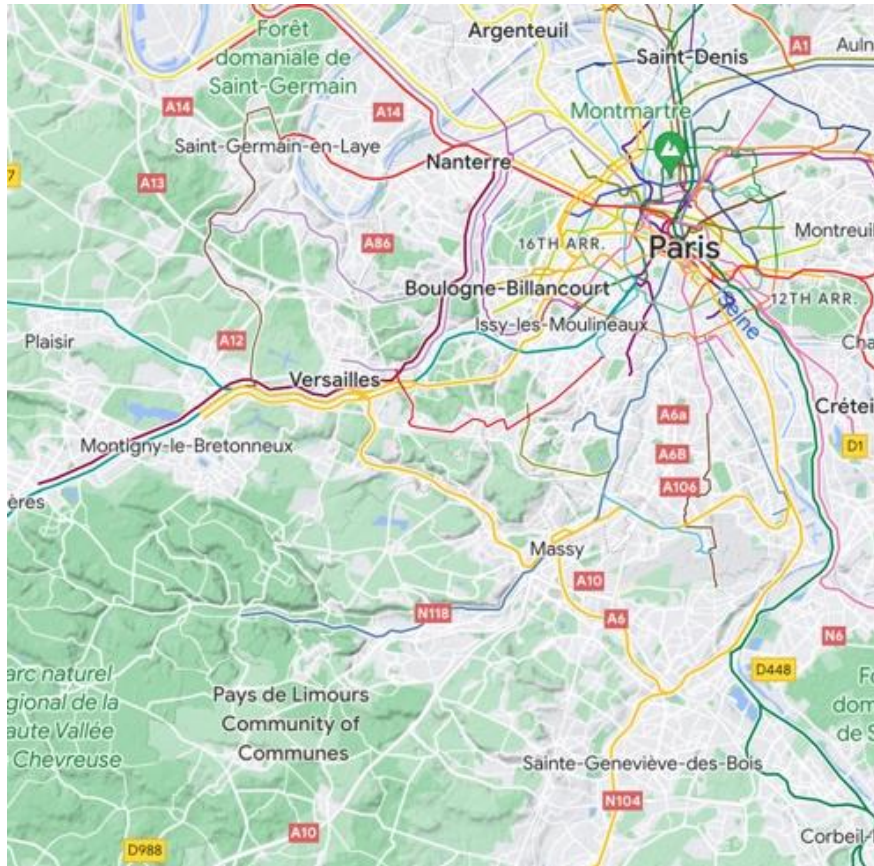


DENSITE DE POPULATION





# Pays de Limours (Île-de-France region)



- 14 small towns and villages  
30km in Essonne, southwest of Paris
- 23,000 inhabitants, with  
biggest settlement 6,500
- 230 people per km<sup>2</sup>



# Pays de Limours (Île-de-France region)

Zones desservies par le TàD Pays de Limours



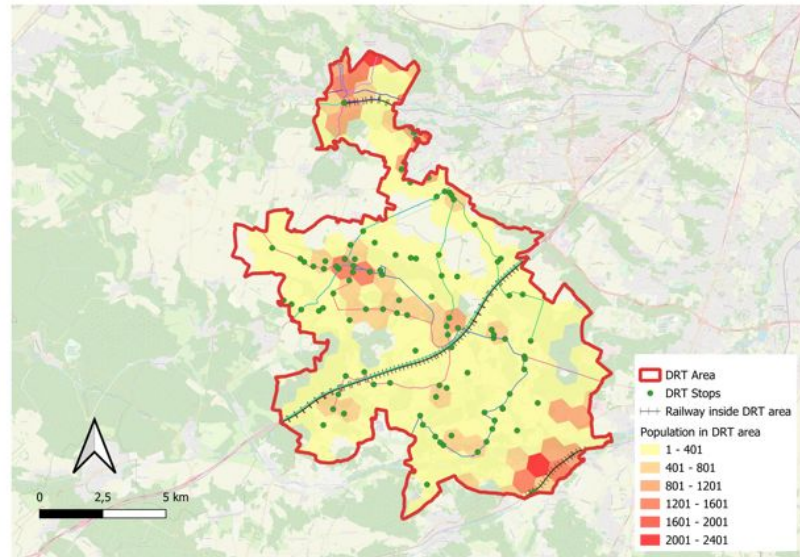
- DRT zone is 9 miles north to south and 7 miles east to west total area 63 miles<sup>2</sup>.
- Hourly or more fixed route bus services connect key points to bus station on rapid bus route to Orsay.
- DRT connects to bus or rail station during peak hours and is free floating between villages in area off peak.



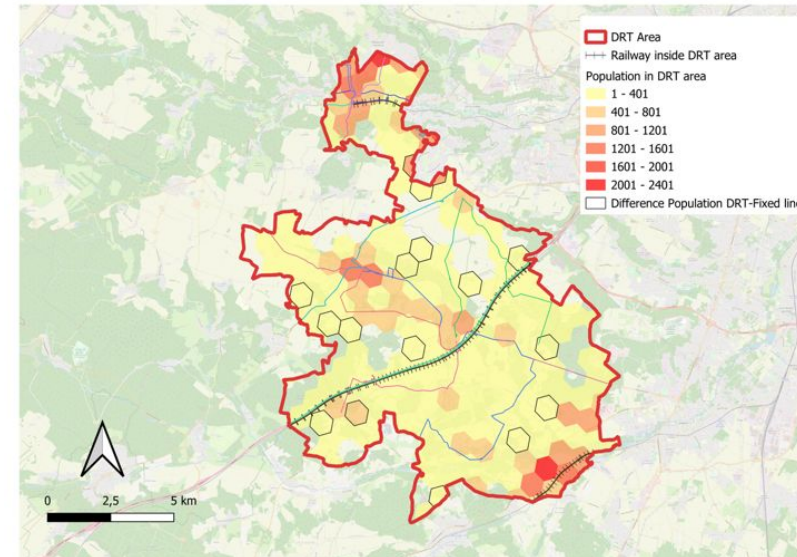


# Pays de Limours (Île-de-France region)

DRT Virtual stop



Additional population served

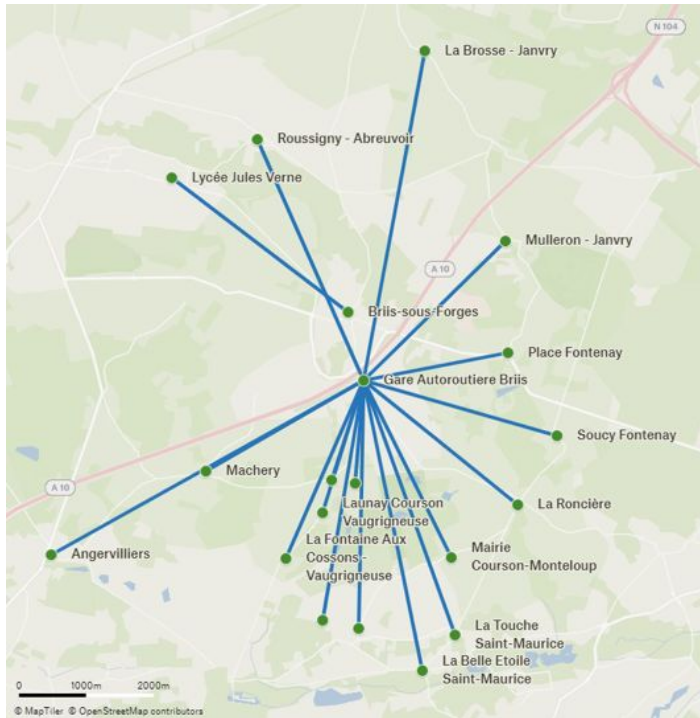


Additional population served: 5,000



# Pays de Limours

TAD top ten origin destination pairs



Journey times and frequency

- For four popular journeys

| Destination                            | Car       | Fixed line bus    | DRT            |
|--|-----------|-------------------|----------------|
| Mairie Vaugrigneuse                    | 3 minutes | 24 minutes *      | 6 minutes 12s  |
| Lycee Jules Verne – Limours            | 8 minutes | 25-33 minutes **  | 12 minutes 18s |
| La Fontaine aux Cossons – Vaugrigneuse | 5 minutes | 33-46 minutes *** | 12 minutes 42s |
| La Touche Saint Maurice                | 8 minutes | 25-58 minutes     | 12 minutes 18s |

- In addition fixed line buses run in the morning and evening

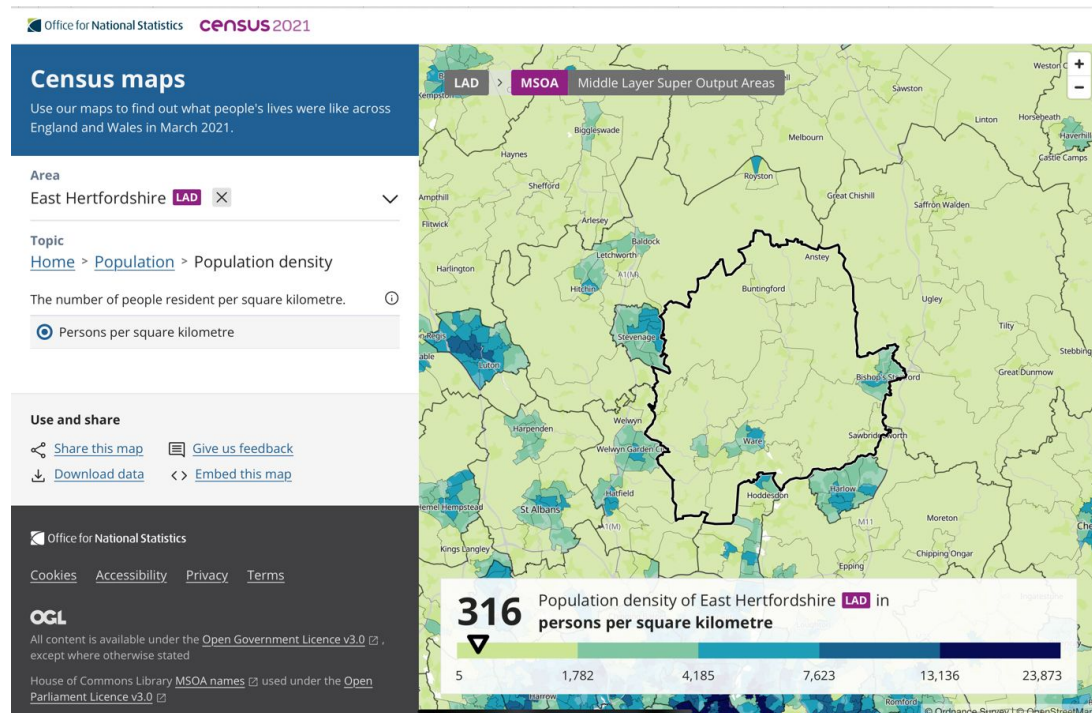


# UK context - fragmented

- Funding complexity and challenges
  - BSIPs
  - £2 fare
  - Devolved settlements, some re-regulation
  - S106, Rural Transport Fund, various innovation funds
  - Piecemeal
- Policy interpretations of obligations by local authorities
- Careful not to conflict with commercial services
- No obligation to integrate timetables with rail



# Hertfordshire



- Market town of Buntingford (pop 6,844) plus lots of hamlets and villages
- HCC found 4,000 people with no access to bus of any kind prior to launch of HertsLynx
- 40,000 people living more than 15 minute walk from an hourly or better bus service.





# HertsLynx DRT

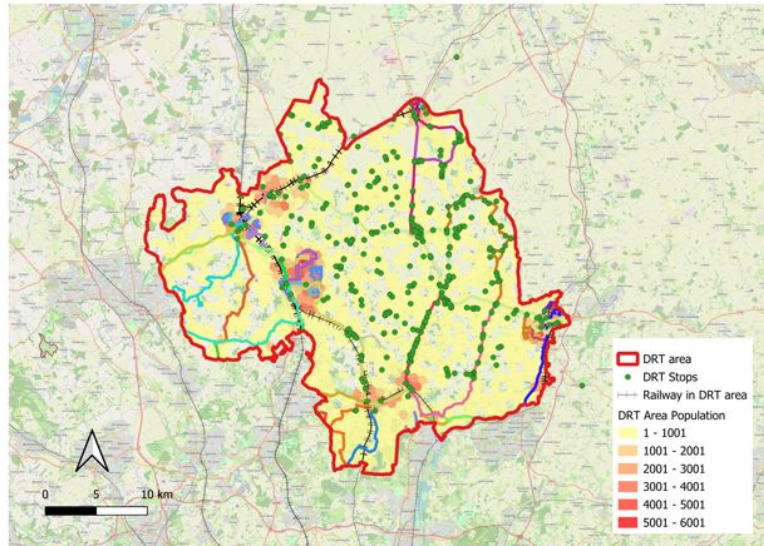


- Serves Buntingford and rural villages and hamlets
- Connects to key hub towns – limited stops including bus and rail interchange, hospital etc
- Zone is 14 miles north to south and 15 miles east to west (area 150 miles<sup>2</sup>)

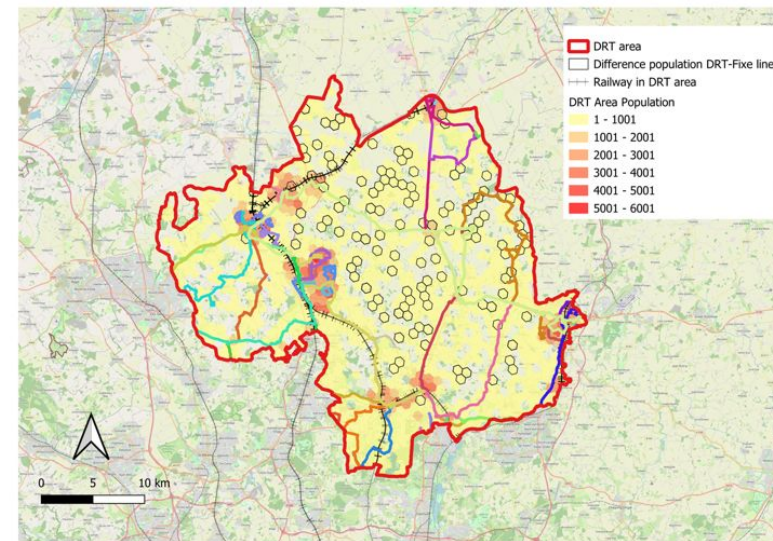


# HertsLynx population served

## DRT virtual stops



## Additional population served

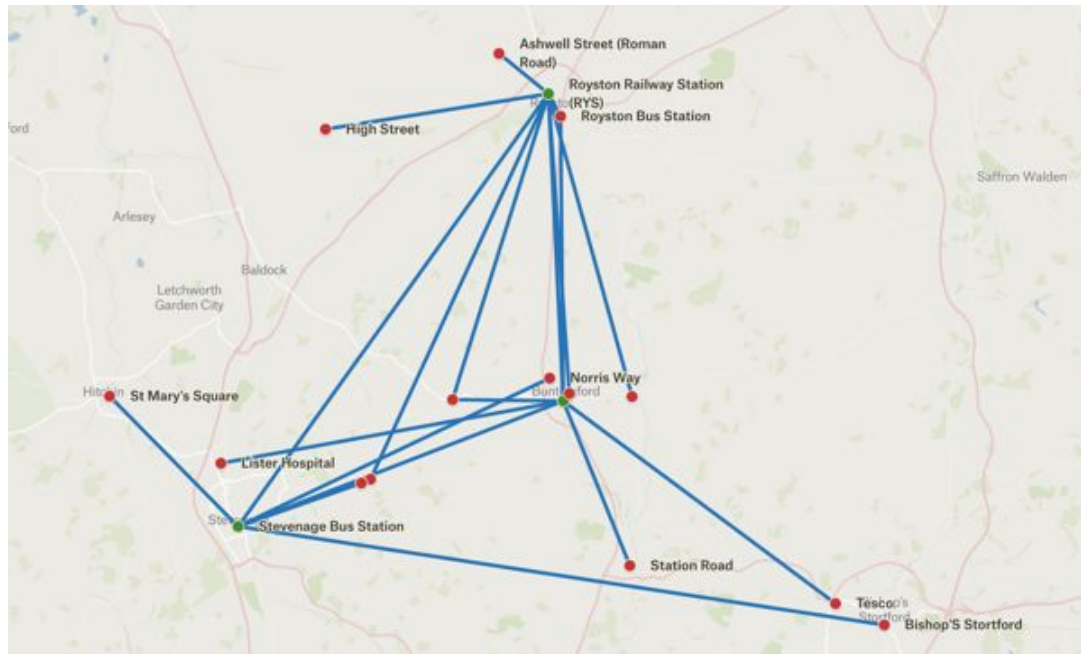


Estimated increase of 40,000 people



# HertsLynx experience

## Top ten origin destination pairs



## Journey times and frequency

- To Royston station

| Journey      | Car        | Fixed line bus                                 | DRT           |
|--------------|------------|--|---------------|
| Paddock Road | 17 minutes | 43-53 minutes                                  | 30 mins       |
| Buntingford  |            |  |               |
| Hare Street  | 20 minutes | 84 - 704 minutes (later in day it's overnight) | 32 minutes    |
| Buntingford  |            |  |               |
| High Street  | 14 minutes | 27 - 55  | 27 minutes    |
| Ashwell      |            | overnight                                      |               |
| High Street  | 24 minutes | 79 overnight                                   | 41-50 minutes |
| Walkern      |            |  |               |

- Some options are not possible by fixed bus, others are served by bus every 2-3 hours



# Conclusions

## France

- More people have access to buses
- Journey times are reduced
- Enables people in rural areas to access work, social activities and key services
- Part of strategic network planning to enable universal access to public transport and funded as part of overall network

## UK

- More people have access to buses
- Journey times are reduced
- Enables people in rural areas to access work, social activities and key services
- Limited strategic bus network planning, piecemeal funding





# Thank you!

Data and additional analysis: Padam Mobility

[www.padam-mobility.com](http://www.padam-mobility.com)

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