THE FIRST ONLINE TRIBUNAL
Efficient, intuitive quality justice. Digitally

Caroline Sheppard OBE
Chief Adjudicator and Transformation Champion
I have had cause to observe that Adjudicators have an extremely difficult task. They perform what seems to me to be an important yet very difficult judicial function.

It is important because thousands of appeals are adjudicated upon each year in circumstances where many people who appeal parking tickets will have no other cause to become involved with the judicial system.
About the Traffic Penalty Tribunal (TPT)

- **25,000** cases a year
- **28** part-time independent lawyer adjudicators
- **12** customer support staff
- Appeals against penalty charges for parking, minor traffic and road toll offences (England and Wales, outside London)
- Funded by 300+ stakeholder local authorities
TPT guiding principles

ACCESSIBILITY

TRANSPARENCY

PROPORTIONALITY

VELOCITY

FINALITY
Digital by default: The only way forward

Continuously striving to embrace new and emerging technologies to refine and enhance its services, while driving efficiencies

• COMPLETE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OVER LAST DECADE

• ONLINE / DIGITAL TRIBUNAL PLATFORM, SUPPORTED BY HUMAN CUSTOMER SERVICE

• SCALABLE ACROSS ALL PROCESSES – IT’S NOT JUST ABOUT THE PLATFORM!

• FIT FOR THE AGE OF AUSTERITY
Online is not just about the platform

‘CAROLINE’S TRIANGLE’
BLUEPRINT FOR CONTINUING SERVICE IMPROVEMENT
The user always at the centre
Our *modus operandi*: More for less, but better
Justice is not a service, but access to it is

ENGAGEMENT AND PROGRESS FROM THE START:
MORE LOLLIPOP, LESS GOBSTOPPER
Multiple award-winning online system

- Appeals submitted and processed fully online
- Authorities see appeals and respond in real-time
- Bespoke dashboard for authorities to manage cases
- Evidence submitted and reviewed online by both appellant and authority
- Accessible on all devices with access to web (smartphones, tablets, laptops)
Active form of customer engagement with appellants to ‘walk through’ the online appeal process and / or complete it on their behalf

- CASES PROCESSED ONLINE BY PROXY
- APPEALS SUBMITTED THROUGH PREFERRED CHANNEL
- GUIDANCE ON ALTERNATIVE METHODS OF APPEALING
- ALLOWS COLLATION OF FEEDBACK TO CONTINUALLY IMPROVE PROCESSES
Deciding an appeal: Decision process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motorist submits appeal and uploads evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authority uploads evidence, photos, notices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appellant comments on evidence and decides to skip hearing or opt for telephone hearing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjudicator can then:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) send messages to clarify issues; b) decide case without hearing; or c) decide case after telephone hearing, with both parties participating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjudicator types decision, to be read on-screen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If grounds apply, unsuccessful party (Appellant / Authority) can apply for review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No appeal to superior court – only Judicial Review in High Court</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Real-time interaction between all users

SYSTEM

APPELLANTS

ADJUDICATORS

AUTHORITIES

ADMINISTRATORS

System functionality enables all users to interact, express themselves and present their case in a rich and compelling way:

- INSTANT MESSAGING
- LIVE CHAT
- EVIDENCE UPLOAD / SHARING
- EXTERNAL EMAIL / MESSAGE PROMPTS

Distinct colours represent different users in the system.
Fast resolution through a ‘virtual’ hearing

MESSAGING CONVERSATION
BETWEEN USERS

Adjudicator addresses point of law to Appellant and Authority

Appellant acknowledges in context of their appeal

Authority agrees to discount of penalty charge payable
Intuitive process enables user skills
Case management dashboard for Authorities

**EVIDENCE PORTAL**

Case can be downloaded / taken offline if required (e.g. PROXY CASES)
Hearings: Impact of the online system

FACE-TO-FACE HEARINGS: FROM 2014
• Demand for face-to-face hearings dwindled with onset of the online system (phased out in 2017)

TELEPHONE HEARINGS: FROM 2017
• No travel required for parties
• Adjudicator decision during hearing in most cases
• Authorities take part; makes for a fair hearing
• Positive feedback from both parties
• Transparency: ‘Virtual’ visitors can be present

VIDEO HEARINGS: PILOTED IN 2018
• Benefits of telephone and face-to-face hearings combined
• Adjudicator controls display of evidence on parties’ screens
• Meets the demand for face-to-face engagement
• Works well for complex cases
I was very impressed by your efficiency and fairness, and the effective interaction with the parties

RT HON. LORD CARNWATH, JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT
Video hearings humanise the situation – you get more of a human connection when you can see who you are taking to. Even if the appeal didn’t go your way, you feel you have been listened to.

The video hearings give appellants the opportunity of having a face-to-face hearing from the comfort of their own home.

I liked not having to travel, but still getting to present my case.
On-screen decision and next steps information

• DECISION DISPLAYED ON SCREEN

• EITHER PARTY CAN APPLY TO REVIEW DECISION DIRECT WITHIN THE ONLINE SYSTEM

• REVIEWS PROCESSED END-TO-END WITHIN SYSTEM

• FEWER THAN 3% OF CASES HAVE A REVIEW APPLICATION AND 0.2% RESULT IN DIFFERENT OUTCOME
No demand for face-to-face hearings

Accessibility and efficiency of online system led to drop in demand for face-to-face hearings, ahead of decisions being made

- 90% OF ALL DECISIONS NOW REQUIRE NO HEARING AT ALL (e-DECISION)
- TELEPHONE HEARINGS INTRODUCED TO REPLACE FACE-TO-FACE
- TELEPHONE HEARINGS REQUIRED IN JUST 10% OF DECISIONS
Swift outcomes for all

12% of cases are now resolved in

ONE DAY

33% in
7 DAYS

46% in
14 DAYS

78% in
28 DAYS

Cases with telephone hearings up to 42 days
Online system and processes infinitely scalable

Business transformation and online system facilitated an 85% increase in workload (new workstreams)

57% reduction in variable costs
Significant savings for Tribunal and Authorities

**DEVELOPMENT COSTS BALANCED BY OPERATIONAL SAVINGS**

**ONGOING**

**AVERAGE COST PER CASE (INCLUDING ADJUDICATOR TIME)**

£88

**STAKEHOLDER AUTHORITIES HAVE REPORTED SAVINGS OF**

£160 **PER CASE**

**EQUATES TO**

£4m **SAVINGS TO AUTHORITIES OVER TWO YEARS**
Digital Case Management System (AIMS) Supporting remote-working Adjudicators to submit decisions electronically

Appeal Form online

Authority evidence submission via webmail

Developing user stories for online system

Early online prototype launched

Review of prototype and user experience

Respondent authority workshops begin

Birmingham University user survey

Technology / innovation awards received for FOAM

Launch

Rollout to 309 authorities complete

Video hearings introduced

Regulations – service by electronic data transmission

Stakeholder Engagement Manager recruited from Brighton & Hove City Council (former Parking Manager)
Keeping on top of our ‘Supply Chain’

Continual engagement and synchronisation with stakeholders (Authorities and Appellants) has been instrumental in refining the processes and functionality of our system.

- Pathfinder authorities and commitment from IT teams
- Shared Pin number with authorities provides consistent case details, algorithmically
- Digital library of traffic regulation orders for pinpoint references without the paper
- Triage questioning for appellants
From Agile to ‘Nimble’

Development of the online system began in Agile. But with a quick launch available – and to allow us to move more swiftly and effectively with tweaks – a shift came in our approach

AN END-TO-END PROCESS MUST BE ESTABLISHED:
DISPUTE RESOLUTION IS AN INTERACTIVE PROCESS BETWEEN THE PARTIES

• 1: Appellant portal developed

• 2: Authority portal developed

• 3: Adjudicator decision functionality developed

• 4: LAUNCH – good to go!
Development continued in response to user experience
Three years later...an affirmation!

‘(Agile)...works well for video games, but less so for delivering court processes.’

Civil Procedure Rule Committee, October 2018
No to data migration!

- **CASES ARE FINITE**
- **OLD SYSTEMS / CASES ARCHIVED AND ACCESSIBLE**
  Just like the legal registers of old
- **AVOIDS COMPLEXITY AND HOLD-UPS WITH ONGOING / FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**
  Removes one of the most popular obstacles of new IT systems
- **MULTIPLE SYSTEM USE INVIGORATING FOR STAFF**
  Feeds positively into ongoing change process
Now it’s time to see the real thing...