Street Manager

Future service updates and APIs – 9th June 2020

Following the information we provided in the Street Manager Newsletter 23 which was sent out on Friday 4th June on API versioning, we wanted to provide some further explanation of how this will work from now on. We have also been asked by the Governance Group for a stand-alone note that people can send to their IT departments.

This note therefore explains the process we have put in place for releasing future service improvements and changes to the User Interface (UI) using the Street Manager website and via the Street Manager API.   As you may know, we will now be continuing to improve Street Manager so there will be, for example:

- new functionality or services added. Some of these may be for the UI only, e.g. to mapping. Some of them may need to be added to the APIs as well;
- there may be changes made to the existing service based on user feedback. Again, some of these will only affect the UI and some both the UI and the API;
- changes will affect either the mandatory information, e.g. a new refusal code that needs to be provided or it may be voluntary, e.g. project reference code for the Promoter.

You may remember that continuous improvement is one of the benefits of Agile, as changes and new services required by users can be built and released into the service more quickly than in the old world of Waterfall/ Project portfolio management type services where you might have to wait once a year or once every two years for improvements to be released. Having said this, we also understand that API integrators need a regular cadence of changes, they need as much notice as possible of the changes that are coming and they need time to integrate them into the other systems being used.

The Roadmap

PO Paul maintains a backlog list of improvements users want to be made to the service, gathered from a range of sources / contacts with users. This list goes to the Governance Group for agreement and they meet monthly and set the priorities for the Street Manager Roadmap. We provide regular updates for all users of the Roadmap and what is coming in terms of service improvements during each phase. Phase 1 covers April - September 2020, Phase 2 covers October 2020 - March 2021, Phase 3 April - September 2021 and Phase 4 October 2021 - March 2022 which is the end of the current contract.

We will, as part of this Roadmap, also flag where new or amended functionality will be UI only features or whether it will affect the API, and we will add whether it is mandatory or voluntary.

<u>UI only improvements</u>

As new or amended features are built, e.g. to the mapping or to filtering, we will release them into the UI on fortnightly basis for users.

<u>APIs</u>

For users who are connecting their own systems with Street Manager via an API, there will be a delay before such information or features are available. This is because API integrators (IT departments, existing EToN developers, etc.) will need time to develop and test the changes or the new features.

Where the changes affect mandatory information, they will need to be adopted into APIs. Where information in voluntary, then it is up to the API integrators if they want to include this or not, in consultation with their clients or users.

We will manage this process of the Street Manager team releasing information and details of the new or amended information or features and the API integrators building into their linked systems via Street Manager's API specification and versioning. We will always let users know when a new version is being published and what mandatory changes in particular are being included in the latest version.

We want to manage the process with the principle that any mandatory changes need to be integrated no later than 6 months after they are included in the relevant API version. This should give integrators enough time to build and test the changes and ensure that changes can be brought through in a timely way.

As new versions are issued, the Street Manager team will support the previous version for a period of time. It is important that no more than two versions are being supported at any one time as support does require resource from the development team that we need to manage, and that we remove the need to support the old version after a period of time to ensure all users are using a current and up to date Street Manager service.

Integrators have asked the team for early sight of new versions, so they can begin their work. We therefore also want to enable this by making them available in an 'unstable' version on the understanding that breaking changes may still be made for those that want to use this. Otherwise, integrators can wait for the 'stable' version of the API spec and use that.

The diagram below illustrates the cadence of how we will manage API versions:
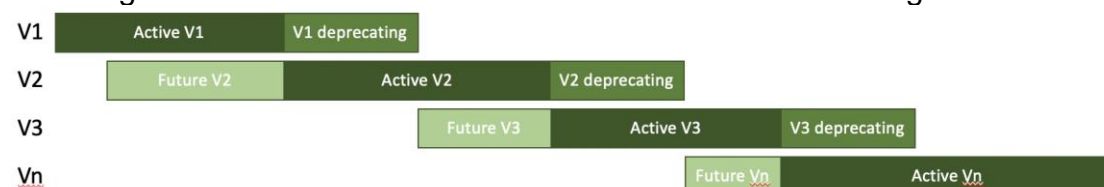
The "active" version is therefore the current and stable version and should not change, and no breaking changes should be introduced to this version. Obviously, if we identify a bug that needs to be fixed, then we will have to make such a change to help the users.

The key date for the next "active" version of the API is 18th June 2020 and is named V1. As soon as this is finalised and released, the Street Manager team will shortly after, publish the "future" API version (V2) which is expected to happen during July this year. This will, at some point in the future, become the "active" version. Once V2 becomes the "active" version, a V3 version will be published and so on.

After a new version of the API becomes the new "active" version, users will have a reasonable period thereafter to switch across to the new "active" version of the API, e.g. 6 months, before the old "active" version is no longer supported.

The principle is that, once we have an "active" API version which shouldn't change, all new functionality which could include breaking changes, will be published on a fortnightly basis as part of the "future" API version. In e.g. July, such new functionality would be included in "future" V2 of the API.

Having two versions of the API being available in parallel allows for two things to happen.

Firstly, and most importantly, the Governance Group will decide, for a variety of reasons, that some new functionality should be seen as mandatory and therefore should be made available to the users as soon as possible. The API integrators will have 6 months to integrate and release this new mandatory functionality via their systems to ensure compliance with Street Manager. Where new non-mandatory functionality is built and included in the "future" version of the API, there will be a reasonable period after this becomes part of the "active" API and users are required to switch across to it and start using this API version.

Secondly it gives API integrators:

- early and continuous visibility of the future API and they can therefore start to integrate and test against this without having to wait for this to be finalised at some point in the future.
- API integrators may even decide to add functionality published to this "future" version of the API and thereby giving their users access to it before it formally becomes part of the active API version.

We would always encourage users to integrate to new functionality against the "future" API version on a continuous basis to give users access to new functionality as soon as possible to maximise the benefits of Street Manager.