

## TOTSCo Bulletin No 47

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### Subject: Guidance on formatting the address element of match requests

This bulletin has been written by the Industry Process Group to provide additional guidance on the formatting of the address element of OTS match request messages.

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TOTSCo  
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#### Documentation of address element

The **OTS Message Specification** defines that a **residentialSwitchMatchRequest** message should contain an **address** element, with child elements of **uprn** (desirable, but not mandatory), **addressLines**, **postTown** and **postCode**, and gives the following example:

```
"address": {
  "uprn": "12345",
  "addressLines": ["Flat 1", "Rose Cottage", "22 Cheshunt Mews", "Cypress Street", "Tyre Industrial Estate", "Blnatyre"],
  "postTown": "Glasgow",
  "postCode": "SW1P 3UX"
},
```

The specification documents that the **addressLines** should be formatted according to PAF rules ( a reference to how the PAF Programmers Guide documents the layout of an address as lines on an envelope), and the **OTS Matching Best Practice Guide** at §3.7 defines algorithms for this formatting, starting from either LPI or DPA records.

<https://app.swaggerhub.com/apis/TOTSCO/letterbox/0.4.0> defines **addressLines** as an array of strings, with a min of one string in the array.

The **OTS Message Examples** has examples of several OTS match requests, with samples of both a complex address and a simple address.

#### Observation from testing – formatting of multiple address lines

It was observed during RCP to RCP integration testing that some RCPs are sending multiple address lines in a single string, i.e:

```
"addressLines": ["Flat 1,Rose Cottage,22 Cheshunt Mews,Cypress Street,Tyre Industrial Estate,Blnatyre"]
},
```

An address which has multiple **addressLines** (excluding the **postTown** and **postCode**) must be sent as an array of strings, which should look like:

```
"addressLines": [
```

```

    "Flat 1",
    "Rose Cottage",
    "22 Cheshunt Mews",
    "Cypress Street",
    "Tyre Industrial Estate",
    "Blnatyre"
  ],

```

The above JSON sample is fully “pretty-printed” to emphasise the correct use of an array of strings (the addressLines have been flattened onto one line to save space in every published document, which may have made the correct use of an array less obvious).

### **Observation from testing – inclusion of other PAF elements**

It was observed during RCP to RCP integration testing that some RCPs are including elements from PAF that do not form part of an address as it would normally appear on an envelope.

RCPs are strongly encouraged to read the **OTS Matching Best Practice Guide** which includes the following table of elements of a UK postal address at §3.5:

Element	Comments
Sub building name	E.g. ‘Flat 1’, ‘Apartment 1’ Also known as “sub premises”.
Building name	E.g. ‘Rose Cottage’, ‘Mandela House’ Also known as “premises”.
Building number	E.g. ‘1’, ‘123’ Also known as “street number” or “thoroughfare number”. Note that the PAF specification defines that buildings such ‘1A’ and ‘101-102’ must be held as building name.
Dependent thoroughfare	Only required where the thoroughfare name is not unique within the locality information.
Thoroughfare	Aka street name
Double dependent locality	
Dependent locality	The name of a small town which is not a post town will appear here. Also known as simply “locality”.
Post town	Mandatory – Royal Mail defines which towns are considered to be post towns. <sup>1</sup>
Postcode	Mandatory

Elements such as PO Box, organisation name, county, country and delivery point suffix should not be included in the addressLines.

<sup>1</sup> Royal Mail Programmers’ Guide documents that there are 1661 post towns.