

**TITLE:**

## **Reducing the Impact of Traffic on the Environment at University of East Anglia**



**DATE:**

July 2007

### **SUMMARY**

As early as 1998 the University of East Anglia (UEA) recognised the need to reduce the impact of its traffic on the environment and began the process of developing and delivering a travel plan. Finally approved in 2002, the plan has delivered a range of initiatives which has led to car use being reduced by 12%. The wider community are benefiting from reduced congestion, more frequent bus services and an additional service which provides a connection to the hospital.

**INSTITUTION PROFILE**

HE  
14,000 FTE students  
2,450 staff  
Edge of City Campus

### **EAUC COMMENT**

This case study shows how partnerships are vital to a successful travel plan. By working together with key stakeholders and sharing information and knowledge UEA have been able to produce impressive and continuous results. UEA have used the variety of methods of transport available to their staff and students, and have recognised the value that a good travel plan has on their community.

## **PROJECT PARTNERS**

UEA Bicycle User Group, First Bus Company, Liftshare.com, Norwich City Council, South Norfolk Council, Norfolk County Council.

## **THE PROBLEM**

In 1998 the university unveiled plans for an ambitious build programme. However, it recognised that planning applications for new buildings would have to be in the context of plans for transport management. This created challenges as car travel was predicted to grow by 30% in the next 15 years and the campus car parks would not be able to meet this need.

UEA recognised the need to ensure the university could grow and increase its activities without a corresponding increase in car journeys. A key step in the process was the development and implementation of a travel plan.

## **THE APPROACH**

A comprehensive consultation helped the team understand the needs of both the university and wider community. The results informed the development of the plan, which concentrates on reducing car journeys - especially single-occupancy ones - by supporting better alternative transport provision.

Early consultation with transport providers and local authorities was very important to the development of the plan. Exchanging information and understanding people's expectations allowed realistic objectives to be set and complementary initiatives to be developed.

Money has been invested in new pedestrian and cycle paths, cycle parking, showers, a car-sharing database and the subsidising of an annual bus season ticket. Car parking permits are also restricted.

## **GOALS**

- Ensure the rate of increase in car journeys is less than the rate of increase in university activity
- Reduce the university's environmental impact through a reduction in non-essential car use
- Create real travel choice for members of university community, enabling all to contribute to the aims of the travel plan
- Reduce congestion on local roads and ease pressure on campus car parks
- Be a good neighbour by reducing the impact of university-related travel on local residents and their neighbourhood

## OBSTACLES AND SOLUTIONS

Resistance to parking policies, in particular parking charges, often by staff on lower incomes:

- Senior Management must be fully supportive of a charging policy
- Set up a group to help deliver the plan. Include staff & student union reps
- Break the relationship to salary - this overcomes other agendas relating to perceived poor pay or terms & conditions
- Daily charges enable savings to be made for small changes in behaviour and therefore are more acceptable

Infrastructure and services provided by external bodies do not support travel plan aims and objectives:

- Work in partnership with providers and interest groups
- Share information – this will help your local public transport provider to be proactive, planning services which meet your travel needs and allow them to make a profit
- Always make a business case. Point out the advantages of providing services and what infrastructure is needed
- Be willing to subsidise new services
- Given the potential customer base of HE/FE institutions, use your buying power to achieve your aims
- Use the plan itself to convince local authorities of the need for improvements particularly where the plan is a requirement of planning consent

Loss of momentum/run out of ideas:

- Re-vamp existing initiatives to stir interest
- Attend a conference or trawl the net for inspiration

## PERFORMANCE AND RESULTS

The plan is now in its 5th full year and has surpassed its 15 year targets.

A survey in 2005 revealed that journeys by car have fallen by 18% since its introduction in 2000. Single occupancy car journeys have fallen from 58% in 2003 to 40% in 2005 for staff and from 30% to 13% for students over the same period.

Improved bus services and the annual season ticket which sells for 70% below list price have produced a 13% year-on-year increase in bus patronage.

Cycling levels are more than twice the national average at 19%.

## LESSONS LEARNT

One size does not fit all – all forms of transport need to be considered.

Avoid the plan being hijacked by the car parking fraternity, keep people focused on the big picture.

Be honest & transparent, show people where funding has been spent. Highlight positive outcomes and be willing to explain why something didn't work.

Partnerships produce results. Find mutual benefits and work together towards shared goals. Share knowledge, experience and costs.

Advertise, advertise, advertise!

Learn from others; use their experience to demonstrate what can be achieved.

Understand different perspectives and tailor your plan to take advantage of local conditions and meet local need.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

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