

The Essential Guide to **Travel Planning**

March 2008



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Contents

Foreword	04
01. Introduction	06
02. Benefits of a travel plan	08
03. Laying the foundations for travel plan success	10
04. Gathering information	14
05. Setting targets	19
06. Marketing your travel plan	21
07. Car sharing	24
08. Bus and rail	30
09. Walking	36
10. Cycling	40
11. Car parking	44
12. Business travel	49
13. Reducing the need to travel	53
14. Broader strategies	57
15. Area networks of travel plans	59
 <i>Resources</i>	
Sample staff travel survey	61
Constructing the business case for a travel plan	67
Contacts and further information	72
References	74
Acknowledgements	75

Foreword

As we travel to work and go about our daily business, we experience something of the twin economic and environmental challenges confronting our transport system in the UK. We need a transport system that can support the movement of people and goods in a growing economy, whilst ensuring impacts on both the local and global environment are within acceptable bounds. Travel plans, whether to the workplace, schools or for leisure, provide a means of addressing both of these challenges.

Congestion threatens economic growth in key places such as urban areas and inter-urban corridors. Travel plans are effective at exactly these critical congestion spots, particularly during the peak times when the transport network is under most pressure. So, despite their local focus, they have the potential to make a strategically important contribution to achieving better use of the transport system. In addition, companies and their employees can gain a wide range of benefits and savings from a travel plan.

Debate about how to tackle climate change has risen to unprecedented prominence during the past year, reflecting predictions of the likely effects. The Department for Transport has a range of initiatives, including the promotion of travel planning, which are aimed at reducing the impact of transport on the environment. A well-designed travel plan can typically cut 15%





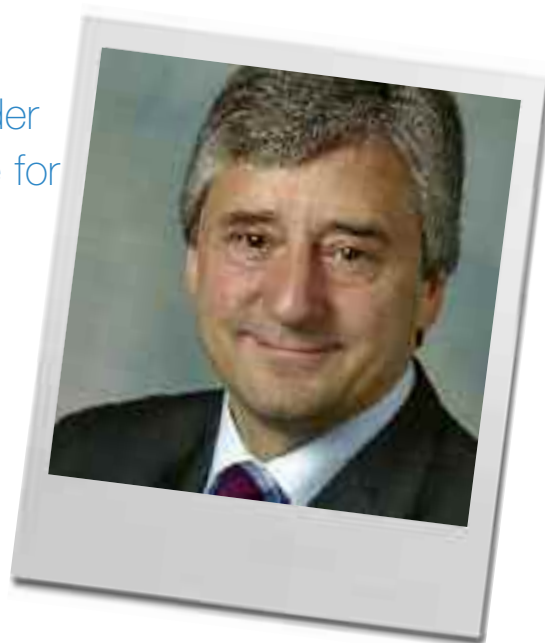
of commuter car use and may amount to over a million less miles for just a single company. Combined savings from travel plans across the whole of the UK could amount to millions of tonnes of carbon dioxide.

Whether viewed at the level of the individual employee or company, the local or national economy, or even at the level of the global environment, travel plans offer us considerable benefits.

This new guide on developing and implementing travel plans draws together the tried and tested experience of those already in operation, offering a lively and informative overview of what you need to prepare a travel plan and get it up and running.

Jim Fitzpatrick

Parliamentary Under
Secretary of State for
Transport



Introduction 01



01 Introduction

Our business isn't travel! Or is it?

Travel consumes business resources, but much of the cost is not immediately evident. Mileage claims are only the visible tip of an iceberg. Under the surface there are the hidden costs of staff time spent travelling on business, and a surprisingly high average annual cost of £400 to provide each parking space¹ – much more in locations where land is in short supply. Many firms are spending tens or even hundreds of thousands of pounds on parking every year. On top of this comes the cost to UK businesses of delays and unreliability due to congestion, estimated to run into billions of pounds annually.

If the impact on the balance sheet is worse than it first appears, the same is true of the impact of travel on the environment. Climate change is now seen as a core driver of corporate social responsibility strategies, recognising shareholder concerns that this is an unavoidable and pressing issue. Transport is the fastest growing source of greenhouse gas emissions, and commuter and business travel constitute nearly 40% of miles driven by car.² Measures to reduce excessive vehicle use are vital for any business that seeks to make its operations more sustainable.

How can travel plans help?

A travel plan sets out to combat over-dependency on cars by boosting all the possible alternatives to single occupancy car use. By reducing car miles it can not only benefit the environment but can produce financial benefits and productivity improvements, saving both the business and its staff money and time.

Do workplace travel plans actually work?

At first sight it seems unlikely that significant change in the travel pattern of a workforce could happen without some major change to the transport infrastructure serving the worksite. However, travel plans often involve only limited capital expenditure, on items such as new cycle shelters, footpaths, bus stops or car park barriers. Mostly they concentrate on improving existing travel choices whilst giving incentives to use more sustainable travel and disincentives to solo car use. This is backed up by information campaigns to inform staff about travel alternatives that offer them realistic options.

Good travel plans have typically succeeded in cutting the number of people driving to work by 15%.³ This modest sounding percentage translates into a lot of car miles and congestion avoided. For a firm with 2000 staff mainly travelling to work by car this amounts to about one million miles fewer per year. An equivalent cut to the UK's total commuter mileage would be 13 billion fewer car miles.⁴ The difference to congestion is proportionately much more because the difference between a jammed road and a free-flowing one can be just a small amount of traffic that tips it over capacity. Travel plans reduce traffic most during the key periods – the rush hour peaks.

Because travel plans are so effective for small outlays, national planning guidance now says that all planning applications with significant transport implications should be covered by a travel plan.⁵ Businesses looking to expand



Transport is the fastest growing source of greenhouse gas emissions, and commuter and business travel constitute nearly 40% of miles driven by car.



or relocate will often find that a travel plan is required by the local planning department.

And travel plans bring benefits beyond traffic reduction. Staff travel stress can be reduced and punctuality improved. Staff recruitment and retention can be enhanced. In the face of epidemic levels of cardiac disease and obesity the World Health Organisation has officially prescribed each of us moderate exercise for half an hour five times a week, which can fit perfectly with walking or cycling to work. Staff who are physically active for 20 minutes a day take less than half the annual sick leave of staff who are only active for 10 minutes a day.⁶

But people are very attached to their cars!

Cars are more than a means of transport. They are also valuable possessions, symbols of our status, and for many represent the embodiment of personal freedom. But none of us are motorists all of the time and we all experience the environmental degradation that can be caused by traffic. Moreover, driving itself can be a stressful experience. When drivers are surveyed, about half say they wish to drive less and of these, over a third say they already make some effort to curtail their car use.⁷ This explains why travel plans can achieve so much.

Travel plans primarily work with this group of the willing. Even so, they take care to respect emotions generated by car ownership: cars are still allowed! The point is to cut their unnecessary use where alternatives are easily available. Some travel plans offer employees the option of cashing in their car-based perks in favour of a salary hike or free annual season tickets, and have received good take up.

Purpose of this guide

This guide draws together experience built up by businesses with leading-edge travel plans to explain how you can set up a travel plan for your company. It will enable you to:

- explain the benefits of a travel plan to colleagues
- work out the essential ingredients for success
- identify potential savings, costs and income streams that could form the basis of a business case for a travel plan
- decide what data you need to gather
- determine which actions should be included in your company's plan.

A company travel plan is...

a strategy for managing the travel generated by your organisation, with the aim of reducing its environmental impact. Travel plans typically combine measures to support walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing. These are reinforced with promotion and incentives and by the management of workplace parking. Travel plans also include action to reduce the need to travel, such as telecommuting. They can focus on both commuter and business travel.

Benefits of a 02 travel plan

Experience shows that the benefits accruing from a travel plan can be extensive. Which benefits are most important to your company will depend on local circumstances and will partly determine the emphasis of your travel plan. Your organisation, its staff, its customers and your wider local community all stand to gain.

For **your company** a travel plan can:

- solve problems caused by demand for parking
- help meet shareholder demand for corporate social responsibility improvements, including meeting environmental targets such as the ISO14001 standard or global warming emissions targets
- enable a planning application for a new site or for new accommodation on the current site – local authorities are increasingly stipulating implementation of a travel plan as a legal condition of giving planning permission
- save money on the cost of providing and maintaining parking spaces
- release land under car parks for more productive use
- enable higher occupancy of existing buildings
- cut mileage claims and other business travel costs
- reduce staff downtime spent travelling on business
- reduce the costs of running a fleet
- solve problems caused by traffic congestion on and around your site
- enable more customers to access your site
- provide a better experience for customers travelling to your site
- improve your image with both customers and neighbours
- ease delays to deliveries and movements of goods off site
- improve staff health and reduce absenteeism
- assist with recruitment and retention by making staff journeys to work easier and cheaper
- improve staff punctuality by reducing congestion delays and supporting more reliable means of transport.

For **your staff** a travel plan can:

- improve equal opportunities by shifting from travel perks based on seniority to incentives for sustainable travel available to all staff, including those without access to a car
- assure parking for those with most need to access a vehicle
- help provide less stressful options for travel to work
- give opportunities to build healthy exercise into daily life
- reduce journey times to work
- reduce the cost of travel to work, or avert the need to buy a car.

'There are 100 empty spaces in the car park today, and we've done it without any expansion in car park capacity.'

Mark Taylor, Bentley

case study

Ending parking chaos

As Mark Taylor arrived at Bentley's site in Crewe on his first day as travel plan coordinator he was immediately confronted with the problems he had to solve: cars parked all over the place, some illegally, obstructing the essential movements of lorries carrying goods to and from the factory, and spilling over into surrounding residential streets. **Eighteen months on, the workforce has grown from 3200 to 4500 but the travel plan has relieved the pressure.** 'There are 100 empty spaces in the car park today,' says Mark, 'and we've done it without any expansion in car park capacity.'

Computershare's free bus has benefited both the company and its employees, and is full every day.

For your local community a travel plan can:

- make local streets less dangerous, less noisy and less polluted
- enhance public transport
- improve the environment and the routes available for cycling and walking
- help create a place which is better to live in, work in and visit and which attracts investment.

case study

Aiding staff retention

Computershare has laid on a complimentary staff bus which does three trips morning and evening between the site and Bristol city centre. Chris Llewellyn who runs the travel plan says, 'Existing public transport services were inadequate and staff retention was a big issue because the expense of public transport was consuming a significant portion of the wages of our call-centre staff.' The free bus has benefited both the company and its employees, and is full every day, carrying about 14% of staff.



Laying the foundations for travel plan success

There is a clear pattern to the characteristics of successful travel plans. **Most share the following key features.**

Buy-in at the top

Senior management support will be important to ensure the necessary resources are allocated to your travel plan. Perhaps even more important is for corporate managers to lead the way by travelling by sustainable means whenever they can. Travel plan success depends ultimately on whether staff will change their behaviour and they'll be reluctant to make much effort to change if, for example, they see that the director thinks it is acceptable to drive a few hundred metres between different company sites.

good practice

Travel plan essentials

Jeremy Prince, who promotes travel plans for Nottingham City Council, identifies 'seven cardinal virtues of travel planning' that he wants to see before approving any plan as capable of achieving change:

- ✓ **Travel plan coordinator** – a named person, with clarity about how they engage with decision makers in the company.
- ✓ **Travel plan document** – published and made available to the public.
- ✓ **Concrete measures** – evidence that the measures involve tangible outputs e.g. cycle storage, teleworking, showers, database of car sharers.
- ✓ **Smart targets** – the travel plan contains targets that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound.
- ✓ **Committed resources** – a specific allocation of resources, financial and non-financial, has been committed for the implementation of the travel plan.
- ✓ **Baseline data** – a staff travel survey and a site audit have been undertaken at the start to establish baseline trip mode data and car parking.
- ✓ **Monitoring mechanism** – evidence of a systematic approach to measuring the performance and thus impact of the travel plan.

In Jeremy's experience, a travel plan with this profile stands a good chance of delivering what it sets out to achieve.



Buy-in from the staff

Wide support will be necessary for your travel plan to deliver its potential. Three guiding principles should underpin your strategy to achieve this.

- **Fairness:** The plan must be seen to be fair, across all levels of seniority and across the gamut of personal circumstances. People's ability to change their travel will vary.
- **Concrete evidence of company commitment:** The company must be seen to be putting in serious support for change.
- **Communication:** The reasons behind the travel plan and how individuals can benefit from it must be given the highest possible profile, and the company must also be seen to be listening and responding to concerns.

In practice, setting up a steering group with representatives from different departments can be a good way to ensure that the travel plan meets different requirements and viewpoints within the organisation and can help achieve cross-departmental support. Useful members of such a group may include: the facilities manager, personnel manager, union rep, fleet manager, communications manager and managers of any departments whose work generates business mileage.

Some companies have introduced line management responsibility for travel plan targets. This brings communications about the travel plan into the existing management structures. It can also be arranged to give managers a budgetary incentive to cut down single occupancy car travel.

Allocation of staff time

Setting up and running a travel plan will take time and effort. Jobs that may be required include:

- conducting a staff travel survey
- setting up a car share register
- negotiating better public transport with operators and local authorities
- installing better cycling and walking facilities
- setting up an incentive scheme to encourage sustainable travel
- communicating the travel plan and encouraging people to change, including running special initiatives to boost awareness of the plan
- introducing a car park management system and enforcing it
- monitoring progress against targets.

Some tasks may fall under the existing work areas of facilities managers or fleet controllers but, without question, a specific member of staff should be allocated responsibility for implementing the travel plan and given dedicated time to work on it. For a large company a full time travel plan coordinator post will be justified.

The chosen person must be a good communicator and have sufficient authority to move forwards the aspects of the plan that cross departmental boundaries. The hallmark of a successful coordinator is a commitment stemming from a personal understanding of the value of reducing traffic. Your recruitment process should include questions such as 'What steps have you personally taken to reduce your car use?' or 'Tell us how you would lead by example in the implementation of our travel plan.'



case study

The importance of a travel plan champion

B&Q was lucky enough to get Trudi Fisher as the company's travel plan coordinator. She won Travel Planner of the Year award after being nominated by a colleague who described some of her work: 'I have never met anyone so full of enthusiasm and fresh ideas to encourage and inspire people to get out of their cars and to try a different mode of travel. Over the past year Trudi has promoted all the usual travel planning initiatives but in her own unique and proactive way. For example, she organises lunchtime and after-work events to promote walking, cycling and running. She redesigned the car share stickers into a funky new style and launched a Car-mates Bingo competition. Car sharers are encouraged to display the new stickers to be in with a chance of winning £100 in fuel vouchers. She arranged successful try-before-you-buy electric bike trials and is currently persuading Halfords to introduce a scheme for families to try out trailer bikes and toddlers' cycle trailers. Trudi's most recent success is a running club, launched three weeks ago with over 40 members, specialist advice sessions on the most appropriate running shoes, lunchtime and after-work runs, and of course she practises what she preaches by running to work herself.'

Allocation of money

Your travel plan coordinator will require a budget to cover items such as travel surveys, publicity materials and activities, installation of cycling facilities, or subsidised travel passes.

In some circumstances a travel plan can pay for itself. For example, it may facilitate the introduction of car parking charges alongside the introduction of new travel options, or substantially reduce business travel in private cars, and so cut expensive mileage claims. Where parking charges are introduced, then ring-fencing the revenue, to support sustainable travel options for staff, can help to gain acceptance for the scheme (see page 45). A business case for a travel plan that is designed to pay for itself through achieved savings can be found on page 70.

Organisations actively implementing travel plans have been found to spend an average of around £50 per employee per year, although there is a wide variation in this figure.

Travel plans can also be tax-efficient.

A long term strategic approach

A travel plan is an ongoing strategy, not a one-off fix. Although certain initial improvements can result in higher expenditure early on, the effort to move the company culture towards reduced car use will require long term communication, backed up by suitable encouragement and incentives for staff to leave their cars at home. Target setting should reflect an ambition for continued progress year on year and there should be a mechanism to review targets in the light of annual monitoring surveys.

A travel plan is an ongoing strategy, not a one-off fix.

The plan must be seen to be fair, across all levels of seniority and the gamut of personal circumstances.



Travel planning as part of ISO14001

More and more organisations are committed to improving their environmental performance as a result of shareholder pressure, customer pressure or enlightened senior management. Many such companies seek to achieve certification under the ISO14001 environmental management standard. ISO14001 does not itself specify environmental standards, rather it aims for continuous improvement in environmental performance, and insists that a robust management system is put in place to oversee this process. A major focus of environmental performance is global warming emissions, which for many companies will include a substantial proportion from vehicle use, particularly if journeys to work are included, as they should be. A travel plan can make a strong contribution to achieving emissions reductions required under an ISO14001 standard. Equally, ISO14001 can be a useful way to help ensure that a travel plan is kept on course. For example, at Oracle, the travel plan for the HQ near Reading enabled the company to exceed its initial ISO14001 accreditation targets. An overall aim for the travel plan is set as part of the yearly ISO14001 review process.

Local alliances

Draw to the full upon support available from your local authority. Many now employ an officer with responsibility for travel plans, who can offer practical help as well as advice and information. Some may even be able to undertake your staff travel survey. As one of these officers put it, 'Any obstacle that gets in the way of someone being sustainable – we will try to sort it out – whether it is cycle parking, street lighting, poor bus routes that don't meet shift patterns or an access route from a business park to a station.' Your authority may be able to offer a small grant to assist with travel plan measures and may already be operating a car sharing database that you can make use of. Some authorities have negotiated standard discounts on public transport that they can offer to your employees as part of your travel plan. In some areas the authority may be able to offer your staff a 'personalised travel planning' service to provide personalised information and advice specific to each individual's journey to work. Even where there is no dedicated officer for travel planning, officers with responsibility for promotion of cycling and walking and public transport departments should be an early port of call in your efforts to improve your staff's travel options to your site.

The local authority can also put you in touch with other local firms that have introduced travel plans so that you can work together to tackle transport issues which affect you all (see page 59).



If you find out more about the travel habits of those coming to your site and scrutinise transport possibilities in your local area, you will soon start to see which travel plan measures are likely to be most effective. Several exercises can help with this process. Many local authorities have standardised audit, survey and monitoring procedures, making it easier to compare results among organisations. Requirements are likely to be most specific where a travel plan is part of a planning agreement. Check with your authority before you start.

Site audit

A site audit assesses the ease with which the site can be accessed by different forms of transport, and the space and facilities provided for this. It will also help you identify opportunities to improve links to the site for non-car journeys.

The audit should consider questions such as:

- How many staff come onto site each day?
- How big is the car park? Is it over-full and if so where do people park? How is parking controlled?
- Is there traffic congestion on and around the site?
- How safe and pleasant is it to walk or cycle to the site – are there any obvious obstacles such as complicated junctions that might be improved?
- Are walking routes and cycle routes on the site itself safe and pleasant?
- Is there sheltered, well-lit, secure and conveniently placed cycle parking? If so, is it well used and is there enough of it?
- Are there showers, storage lockers and drying facilities for cyclists?
- Does the site have video or phone conferencing facilities?
- What are the local bus and train services? Just as important, do waiting areas and routes to them feel safe and clean, and are up-to-date timetables displayed?
- What is the cost of public transport journeys? Check whether reaching the site requires interchanges between competing operators that add disproportionately to journey costs.
- Are there missing links to reach public transport services or the local cycle network? For example, is there a nearby bus route that might divert to serve the site? Could a rear entrance to a nearby station reduce walking times, or might a poor link to a station be bridged by a shuttle bus service?
- Do the company directors have reserved parking spaces outside the front entrance whilst cycles are shackled to railings in the rain? If so, you might just have identified the ideal spot for a smart high-profile bike shed!

Staff discussion group

A small discussion group with a cross-section of staff can provide both detailed local knowledge and insights into the most fruitful ways forward. This can throw up some specific possibilities that you may wish to test in the staff survey, which in practice means convening the group before finalising the survey if your timetable permits. To inform the discussion it is useful to have already completed a physical audit of your site. You should take the opportunity





to draw out:

- opinions and experience of obstacles to travelling to the site by sustainable means
- views about which potential travel plan measures would make most difference.

Staff travel survey

A staff travel survey is an essential foundation for a travel plan. This gives a numerical breakdown of the present travel patterns and collects information on what would most help staff to travel differently. It also offers a good way to start engaging staff in the idea of a travel plan and the reasons behind it.

A sample survey can be found on page 61. Paper-based surveys are still essential to reach staff who are not on line, but email and intranet now provide the best means to contact many staff, and there are even software packages that set up the survey so that answers are automatically entered into a database as respondents type them in. A good rate of return makes the survey more valuable, and an incentive such as a prize draw is likely to be worthwhile. If possible the survey should be undertaken in spring or autumn to avoid distortions that can be created by summer holidays or extreme winter weather. Tuesdays and Thursdays tend to be the most typical travel days.

Spot-counts of how employees have travelled to work – see page 18 – are generally undertaken at intervals after the travel plan is established in order to monitor its effectiveness. However, you may wish to undertake such a count at the outset in addition to your staff travel survey if you want to have the closest possible like-for-like comparison of before and after the travel plan.

Business travel data

The nature of your business will determine whether business travel will be an important component of your travel plan. The staff travel survey on page 61 contains questions that will show whether many journeys in the course of work are to a small number of locations and whether these might be amenable to car sharing or other means of transport.

Total business vehicle mileage is generally available through staff mileage expense claims or, if your company operates a fleet of vehicles, from records of vehicle mileage. If these records don't exist, you can find out where vehicles are going and why by placing a log in each vehicle for a month and instructing all drivers to enter mileages, trip purposes and destinations.

High reimbursement rates for business mileage can lead to a corporate culture of driving everywhere. It is a challenge to change this kind of culture once it is established, but for organisations that have developed this pattern of inefficient expenditure it can provide a basis for a business case for a travel plan (see page 67).

Map of where staff live

Mapping out staff addresses visually can reveal concentrations of staff in particular areas. This will give some strong indications of where travel plan policies could usefully be directed. Personnel or payroll departments normally have addresses for all staff, a more complete source than travel survey forms. For large organisations, mapping is usually done from an anonymous list of postcodes using geographical information systems (GIS) software.

Do the company directors have reserved parking spaces outside the front entrance whilst cycles are shackled to railings in the rain?

Audit of company policy

Even before any travel plan exists, it is probable that there is a range of company policies that influence employees' travel habits. It is important to assess at the outset which policies are already encouraging sustainable travel, and conversely which ones threaten to undermine your travel plan. Your travel plan should include actions to strengthen the helpful policies and to remove damaging ones.

Choosing the right location will result in a far more sustainable pattern of travel than choosing a car-dependent site, and then trying to staunch the resulting flow of traffic.

At the broadest level, if you are considering travel planning as a company-wide exercise, the most important question is whether the company has a policy of establishing its sites at locations well served by public transport and other sustainable routes. Choosing the right location will result in a far more sustainable pattern of travel than choosing a car-dependent site, and then trying to staunch the resulting flow of traffic by applying a travel plan like a sticking plaster.

Several other aspects of policy need to be audited.

- **Car parking:** Do staff have parking permits and, if so, what determines eligibility? Is parking free or do staff pay and, if so, how much? If money is raised from parking, is it ring-fenced for sustainable travel measures? How much does provision of car parking cost the company?
- **Recruitment and employment:** Is a company car offered as a perk? If the company offers new staff a relocation package, does it restrict eligibility to those who move to within a sensible travelling radius of the site? Does the company make a special effort to recruit people who live locally? Are interest-free loans for season tickets, or other public transport perks, made available to new staff?
- **Business travel:** Are staff expected to use public transport first and foremost? What is the reimbursement rate for use of a personal car, and is it set at a level that acts as an incentive to drive? Is a pool car available or are staff expected to drive their own car to work in order to make business journeys? Does policy allow sensible use of taxis, for example to link to trains or other public transport? Is there a mileage rate for travelling by bike?
- **Working practices:** Does the company support homeworking? Does the company offer flexitime (which can facilitate use of awkwardly timed public transport but on the other hand can militate against car sharing or provision of company shuttle buses)?

Visitors

If you receive large numbers of visitors – as hospitals or tourist attractions do – then you need a travel plan specially tuned to them, based on data gathered via a visitor survey. There will be overlap with your staff travel plan because staff may be able to benefit from measures introduced to help visitors.

Deliveries

For sites where suppliers constitute a significant proportion of the vehicle movements, you will need to assess what deliveries take place and where they come from. Also check timings of deliveries. Those in peak-time can create significant additional congestion. Sites with several firms may be able to reduce vehicle movements and achieve economies of scale by developing common policies for purchasing or recycling.

Often the substantial maintenance costs of car parking are buried in a facilities manager's budget.



The hidden price of free parking

Companies that rent car parking space for their employees may be more aware of the costs involved – sometimes as much as £2000 per space. But often the substantial maintenance costs of car parking are buried somewhere in a facilities manager's budget. A study of 21 organisations with travel plans showed that their average annual spend on maintaining each space was £400.⁸ Any company that is considering building new car parking will realise it faces major construction costs. Construction of surface-level parking costs some £1000–£3000 per space, multistorey parking costs some £5000–£10,000 per space and underground parking can be even more expensive. It is also relevant to ask whether the land already under parked cars could be put to more profitable use. Knowledge of expenditure on parking can help show that a travel plan would make good financial sense.

Capital items for surface-level parking include:

- land purchase
- ground works, including site levelling, installation of drainage and landscaping
- surfacing with asphalt plus kerbs and pavements
- mitigating design measures such as planters or build-outs for plants and trees
- street furniture such as signs, seats and litter bins
- security measures, including fencing, lighting, CCTV and access barriers.

Revenue costs include:

- cleaning, winter salting and upkeep
- security staffing of gates, CCTV and patrols
- lighting bills
- insurance and business rates
- maintenance of electrical equipment such as barriers, lights or security cameras.



Spot-counts to monitor progress

The best way to monitor progress is via an annual spot-count in the same season as your initial staff survey. You don't need to repeat the full-blown staff survey. The key question is: 'How did you travel the main part of your journey to work today?' ensuring that answers give options of:

- bus
- bicycle
- car, as driver, on your own
- car, as driver, with other(s)
- car, as passenger
- foot
- motorbike
- train
- other (please specify).

The different car travel options will enable you to ascertain numbers of car sharers and also to calculate how many cars are driven to your site per 100 employees – sometimes called the 'car-people ratio'. Changes over time in this last figure will be the crucial measure of the effectiveness of your travel plan. For sites where off-site parking is an issue, you will want to ask drivers an additional question to ascertain where they parked.

Staff can be questioned at their desks or, alternatively, at site or office entrances. Some firms email staff to ask how they came to work that day. This can be a quick and easy way of collecting information and can also be repeated on an ongoing basis. Whatever method you choose, be aware of the potential for sampling bias and do what you can to avoid this. For example, staff without access to a computer will often be those on lower incomes who are more likely to travel without a car, so it is important to find a way of including them. Staff who have driven to work may feel less inclined to respond. Going desk to desk overcomes this problem, but may mean you miss out on those who are out of the office for business. You could ask line managers to collect this information. For robust results, it is important to stick to the same method for your before and after spot-counts.

Large companies may find that it is more practical to survey a representative cross-section rather than all staff. The sample size at each site must be sufficient to ensure statistical reliability.

Other sources of information – such as counts of the numbers of cycles and cars parked, and bus passenger information – will help check the accuracy of your results. Entrance vehicle and people counts are also useful, but it is important to establish whether staff that walk on to the site have driven and parked elsewhere.

Many companies prefer to contract out surveys and the monitoring of the travel plan. Where a travel plan is secured as part of a planning agreement, independent monitoring is a common requirement.

If your car parking and security systems work on a card basis, then you may be able to automatically monitor the car-people ratio on a daily basis. This can provide a travel plan manager with a very good measure of overall progress.

Setting targets 05



Experience from existing travel plans shows that, for a well designed plan, a 15% reduction in car driver trips to site over about three years is a typical result.⁹ There is a wide variation in achievement, which partly reflects variations in local circumstances, although it is fair to say that the top performers are those with a high-level corporate commitment to travel planning and its benefits.

Whether your targets are entirely internal or required as part of a planning agreement, they should be both achievable and stretching. The information that you have collected through surveys and other means will enable you to make a judgement about the opportunities for change. To arrive at targets, you need to assess these opportunities against the effort and money that your company can commit to them.

The overall target should be expressed in terms of reducing car driver trips to site, which can usefully be expressed as the number of commuter cars arriving per 100 employees. This measurement allows you to judge your progress over time, even if staff numbers on site go up or down, and enables direct comparison with the performance of other organisations, whatever their size. You may also find it helpful to set sub-targets to show the increases you aim to achieve in other ways of travelling to your site, such as walking or public transport, and a target for reducing the proportion of business travel made by car.

case study

Tracking long term progress

Wellcome Trust Genome Campus agreed targets for its travel plan under a planning agreement with Cambridgeshire County Council.

2002 start of travel plan trips (initial level)	70% single occupancy vehicle
2005	60% (achieved)
2007 schedule)	56% (already achieved ahead of
2010	50%
2015 and thereafter maintained	40%

The biggest contribution to meeting the targets so far has come from laying on free buses to Cambridge and several rail stations. These now carry 18% of staff to work. Car sharing is the next biggest contributor at 17%. Wellcome Trust has also invested in a new cycle path and has seen a steady rise in cycling to work as a result of promoting new facilities to staff.

'To meet our future targets we need to keep on communicating and promoting what we have got,' says Dawn Wise. 'If some initiative is not working, it must be re-tuned, or something different needs to be tried instead.'



Reductions in car driver trips to work achieved by different organisations¹⁰

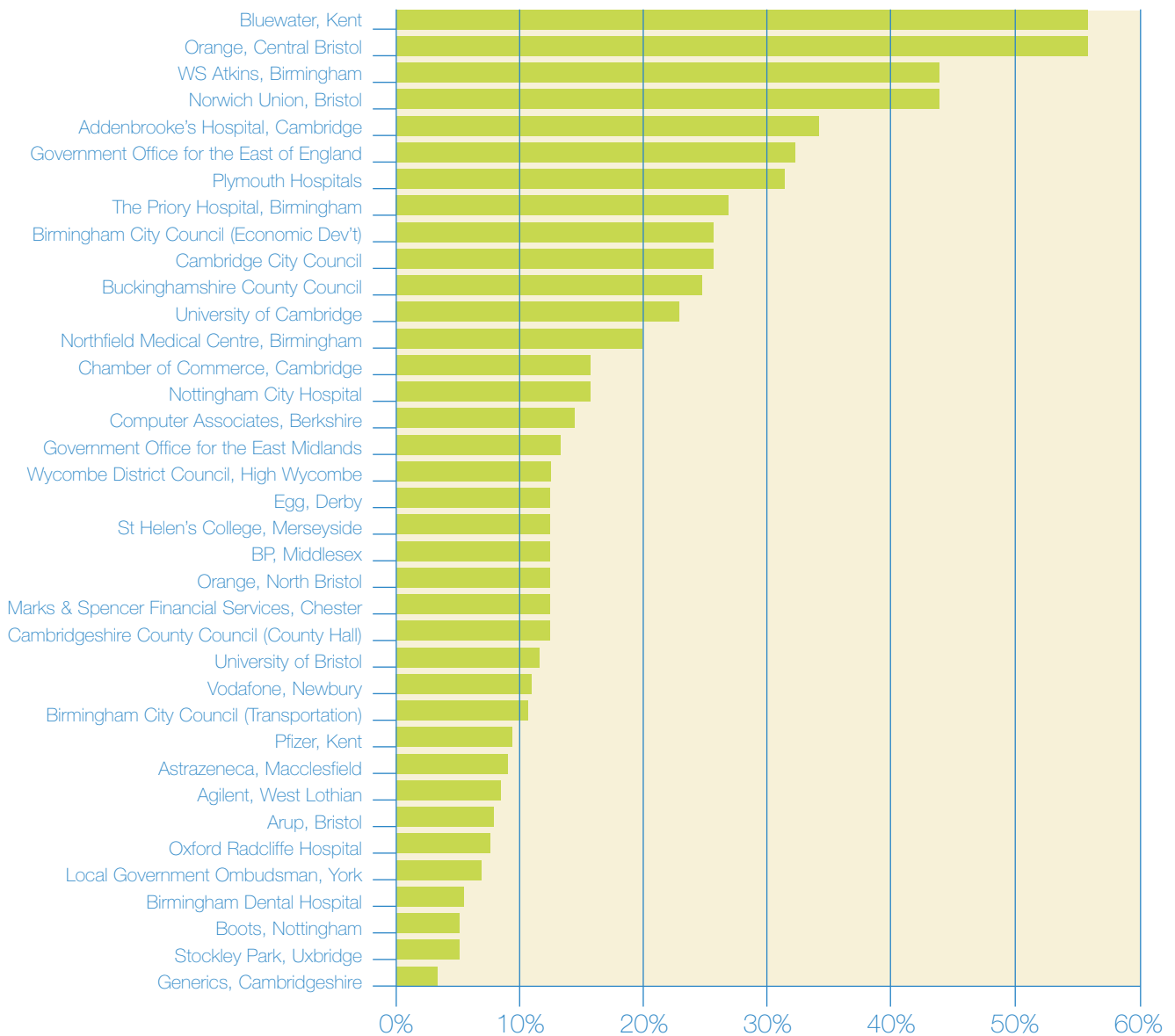


Chart shows percentage reductions in commuter cars arriving per 100 staff achieved by different organisations.

'We need to keep on communicating and promoting what we have got. If some initiative is not working, it must be re-tuned, or something different needs to be tried instead.'

Dawn Wise, Wellcome Trust

It might be useful to consider what other organisations with a similar profile to yours have achieved, so that you can benchmark your company against others that have faced directly comparable challenges. Production facilities working 24-hour shifts or hospitals at the hub of myriad transport movements clearly have different constraints from an office-based firm with an entrenched 9–5 style of work, even if they are in comparable geographical situations. If your travel plan covers several locations, then it may be appropriate to set a different target for each site.

06 Marketing your travel plan

Communication about your travel plan starts the moment you send out your staff travel survey or set up initial discussion groups. Travel plans are intended to bring about change, calling for skilful communication to ensure that this prospect is received in a positive spirit and that no one feels under threat.

Finding the right language

Language to market the plan should take account of the strong feelings some people have for their cars and the freedoms they associate with them. Communications require a constant sub-text that the travel plan is not out to ban cars but is about encouraging people to use them more wisely and offering better alternative travel choices. A number of travel plans have successfully highlighted that just leaving the car at home once a week adds up to a considerable reduction in overall traffic. The focus of communications with staff should be on the benefits to them – the ‘What’s in it for me?’ factor – although it is important to recognise that people also respond to an appeal to their better nature.

But this should not mean avoiding the contentious issue of parking restriction or parking fees altogether – indeed, without some form of parking limitation, a travel plan will face an uphill struggle. The key is to put this in the context of an explanation of the parking, congestion and wider environmental problems and to lead with high-profile positive measures that widen travel choices and offer benefits to staff. And bear in mind that research generally shows 50% of us would prefer to use our cars less, so with many of your staff you will be going with the flow.¹¹

Using a range of marketing tools

Travel plan coordinators who have run vigorous marketing campaigns have shown that strong promotion translates into greater uptake of sustainable travel. The hallmarks of successful travel plan marketing are lively presentation, persistence and a readiness to use a variety of marketing tools and techniques. These include branding the travel plan and building brand recognition, promotional events, incentives, special offers and prizes. Maximum visibility can be achieved through electronic media, leaflets, posters, displays, give-away freebies or messages on pay slips.

Plenty of strong facts and figures are readily available to support your case. For example:

- More than eight out of 10 cars used for commuting or for business have just one person in them¹²
- One-quarter of all car journeys are less than 2 miles and over half are less than 5 miles¹³
- Half an hour of daily exercise, such as a walk or cycle ride to work, can halve your risk of heart disease.¹⁴

Special promotions will be needed for individual initiatives – for example, to launch the car share scheme or a new bus service. Commitment to a long term communication effort is necessary to bring about the cultural change and behaviour shift that your travel plan aims for. New campaigns will be needed every so often to refresh and revitalise your plan.

case study

Revitalising the message

In 1998 AstraZeneca started a major travel plan initiative entailing a state-of-the-art car sharing scheme and a considerable investment in public transport. The organisation decided to invest in an energetic re-launch of the travel plan aimed at 'recapturing the imagination' of staff, in total about 10,000 employees at several sites across Cheshire. The campaign emphasis was on health benefits, cost savings, reduced stress and reduced environmental impact. Eight weeks before the re-launch the plasma screens around the sites featured a slick campaign of 'teaser' adverts. During the re-launch itself the travel plan was headlined for three weeks on the front page of the intranet, which staff log on to most days. Meanwhile, Abi Cummings, the travel plan coordinator, toured the sites with a large road-show offering staff who registered on a 'green commuting' database entry to a prize draw for a £25 choice of goodies in a 'green commuter rucksack'. Abi continues to visit the sites on a monthly basis to randomly stop a 'green commuter' who wins a choice of prizes. Over the year since the re-launch the number of staff registered as green commuters has risen from some 1300 to nearly 2200. Abi estimates that on any given day some three quarters of those registered as green commuters travel to site by 'green' modes.

Half an hour of daily exercise, such as a walk or cycle ride to work, can halve your risk of heart disease.



Adverts on plasma screens helped re-launch AstraZeneca's travel plan.

Engaging with sustainable travellers

A number of larger companies encourage all commuters who are travelling to work by sustainable means to register on a database. This extends the long-standing idea of a database for car sharers (designed to match drivers with others doing similar trips) into a broader marketing resource. It enables the travel plan coordinator to target appropriate recipients with promotions and reward schemes to encourage them to carry on their green commuting, or to do it more often. Some companies have run 'walking buddy schemes', matching people who want to walk to work with others on the same route.

50% of us would prefer to use our cars less, so with many staff you will be going with the flow.



case study

Branding the travel plan

Next has taken advantage of its strong brand identity for its travel plan communications. John Hacker of Travel Plan Services, who takes on much of Next's travel plan work, explains, 'The travel plan communications are fully branded so that the staff can see that all the initiatives, information and messages are linked to the travel plan, which has its own style but is also recognisably part of Next's corporate image. We use a lot of e-shots, which we design to look just like the firm's travel plan website, to keep staff informed of news, timetable changes, or new items on the travel plan notice boards.' Although the design and branding is sharp, communications use an informal voice. **Further information about Next's travel plan work is available from: info@travelplanservices.co.uk.**





Even for isolated sites, or sites drawing employees from a rural hinterland, there are generally clusters of staff living in the same towns and villages, so many journeys to work are concentrated along the same corridors. Postcode maps can reveal this pattern and show that car sharing is a viable option. In areas of dispersed settlement where public transport may be poor and journeys tend to be extended, car sharing is likely to be the way to achieve the biggest reduction in car mileage.

Matching up journeys

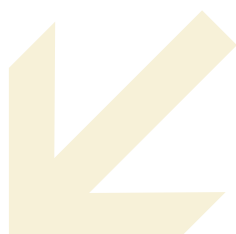
For all but very small companies, an online car sharing database will prove helpful. This allows people to enter their journeys so that the database can automatically search out colleagues whose journeys match. Many local authorities now operate a car sharing database and will welcome you making use of it. Generally, companies choose to have a dedicated segment of the database that only their own staff can access, although, if employees wish, they can search the entire database for journey matches with people outside the company. Many of these databases link into the national Liftshare network, giving the chance to match up those whose journeys start outside the immediate area or to find matches for occasional longer journeys. It's also possible to create a 'closed group' within such databases for joint access by several companies in the same town or business park. Databases can be set up so that individuals can enter matching criteria such as male or female matches only and preferences for smoking or non-smoking.

In general, car sharing databases allow the travel plan coordinator to monitor how many people are registered to share and how many have found a successful match. In addition, it is possible to map out the location of sharers. Increasingly, software is also being used to register people travelling by other sustainable means in order to create a green commuting database. This then becomes a tool for the coordinator to identify suitable groups to receive special promotions.

Cost sharing

It is up to the car sharers themselves how to split the cost. Staff should be advised to come to an arrangement before a journey begins. There should, in general, be some sort of cost sharing even where salary levels differ or where one party feels inclined to offer the lift as a favour. The reason is that both parties should approach the lift share as equals. Situations where the driver refuses to accept payment can make passengers uncomfortable and prevent them feeling able to ask for occasional slight changes to the schedule or route. The driver may also feel that the arrangement is somehow optional and can be changed at whim. Cost sharing is liable to be a more sustainable arrangement. Costs can be shared by:

- employees taking turns to drive their own cars
- payment to the driver for a share of the cost of the petrol
- payment to the driver of a mileage rate calculated to cover petrol, depreciation and wear and tear. However, in this case, it is important that the rate does not create a profit, because a driver carrying passengers for profit may require a special licence and different insurance, as well as encountering potential tax issues.



case study



'No-parking days' boost car sharing

Legal and General's travel plan was initially precipitated by parking issues arising from the relocation of staff from Croydon to its Kingswood HQ. Reducing car use has since become embedded in the corporate environmental policy. The company occupies an edge-of-town site, and promoting car sharing has been a key strategy. Around 500 staff now car share each day, 25% of the 2000 employees.

Legal and General kicked off its travel plan with a wide-ranging set of initiatives, covering not just car sharing but also cycling, walking and dedicated shuttle buses. However, after six months managers realised they needed to take more radical steps if they were to solve their problems.

'It was clear that an element of compulsion was going to be required and the best idea was to assign everyone one 'no-parking day' each week,' says Gren Gale, who was given responsibility for making the travel plan work. 'Senior management backed the concept and we consulted closely with the staff union Amicus. It was implemented through the line management structure with a cascade of communication from human resources, so that staff could raise questions about the rules with their managers.' Gren was amazed how well the scheme went. 'Of course some people were unhappy, but I think it was accepted so easily because everyone had suffered so much from the inconvenience of congestion and not being able to park. It was also important that the new rule was applied equally to absolutely everyone, right up to the managing director.'

The scheme makes parking so much easier that people now complain when it is suspended during holidays. Every car displays a sticker which shows which day it is not allowed to park. The rule is enforced by a security firm that patrols the car parks and can issue fines (£20 rising to £40 if not promptly paid). Persistent offenders may be clamped. Legal and General chose its security company with care and pays for it on a fixed fee basis, so that there is no financial incentive to catch people out.

Car sharers can park any day and have their own car park, avoiding congestion. Matches are made through Surreycarshare.com, an online database set up by the council as part of the Liftshare network, within which Legal and General staff have their own closed group. The firm offers a guaranteed lift home to cover emergencies, but according to Gren it is hardly used.

The scheme makes parking so much easier that people now complain when it is suspended during holidays.

It may be helpful to suggest a table of passenger rates. Some schemes suggest 10p a mile, whereas some car share databases offer an online cost calculator which not only shows costs, but the saving that will be made by sharing. This can help to market the idea. As a rough guide, someone driving a 10 mile journey each way in a car doing 40 miles to the gallon will spend £500 per year just for petrol.¹⁵ So sharing the cost gives a saving of £250 between two travellers – more for three.

Legal and tax questions

The law allows car sharing, according to the Road Traffic Act 1988, but the driver must not make a profit and the vehicle shouldn't be able to carry more than eight passengers. The Association of British Insurers says that car sharing won't affect the insurance taken out from their members so long as a profit isn't made. If the company pays for a taxi home in exceptional circumstances, then that is not liable for tax. (A regular arrangement for the same traveller could become liable.)

Car sharing databases must store and use information in accordance with the Data Protection Act. Quite apart from the legal implications, potential users will be more likely to register if they can be confident that their personal information will not be passed on.

Overcoming obstacles to sharing

Even where routes are shared, there are a number of personal obstacles to car sharing, including:

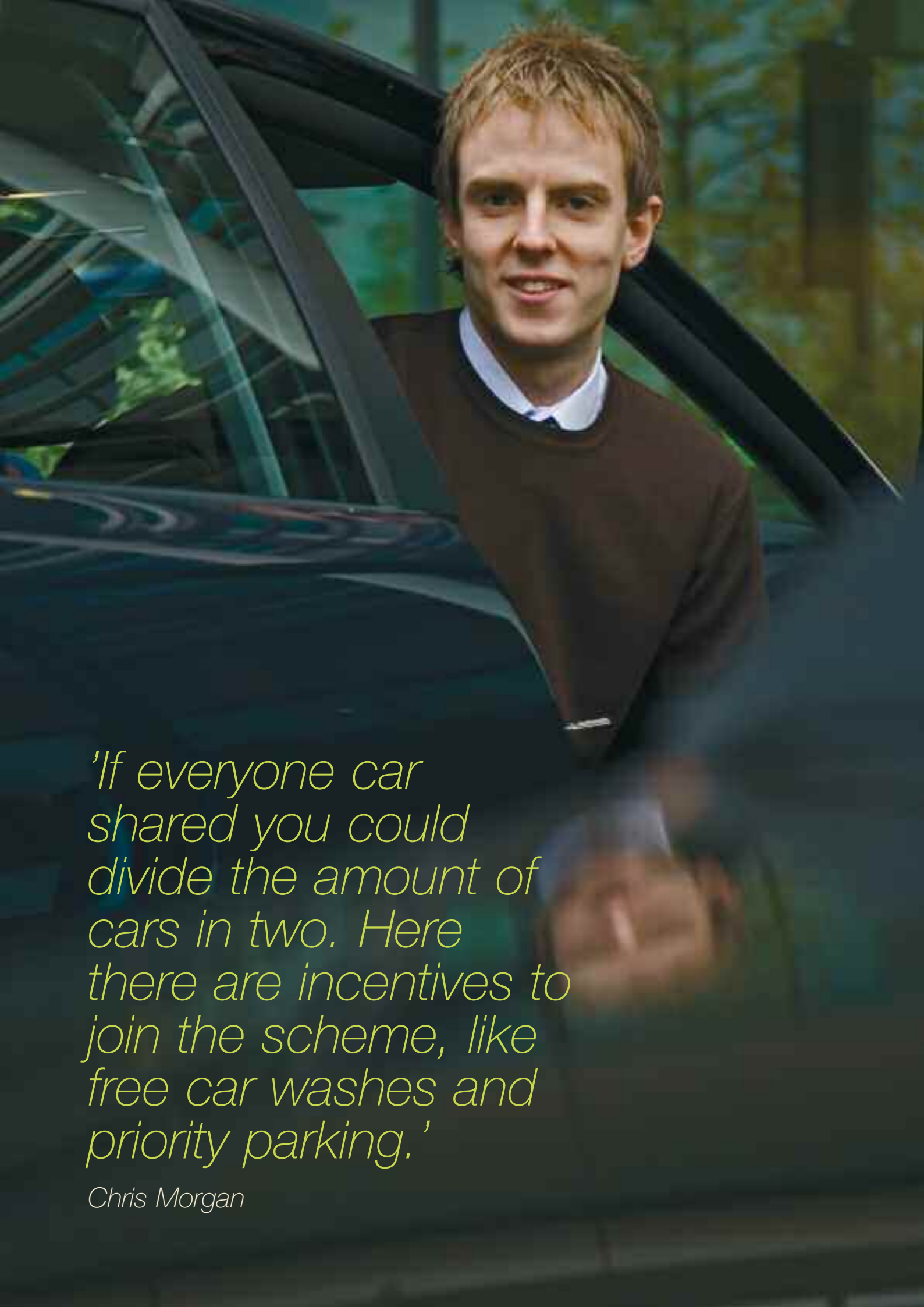
- doing other tasks on the way to or from work
- worries about being marooned at work if the driver has to leave early or stay late, or if there is a need to get home in an emergency
- incompatible personal or work scheduling
- safety concerns
- feelings that a car is your own or someone else's personal space.

A guaranteed ride home is the tried-and-tested way of overcoming concerns that a car sharer may be stuck at work.

The school run is a common task that gets in the way of car sharing. At least one employer has brought together staff who have children at the same or nearby schools. Parents then meet near one of the schools, then share the rest of the journey. Alternatively, if space in the car is sufficient, they can choose to take turns to do the school run in conjunction with the work run.

A guaranteed ride home by taxi is the tried-and-tested way of overcoming concerns that a car sharer may be stuck at work, for example if an urgent task requires staying late or if the driver is obliged to leave early. This system needs to be backed up with a reliable contact number that is always available, whether it be the travel plan coordinator or a taxi firm with a call-off contract. It needs a suitable system of management regulation, but experience shows that take-up is low. The cost will be more if your firm draws on a wide rural catchment area where sharers have few back-up public transport options, but even in these circumstances the outlay has not proved excessive.

Some firms have introduced flexitime to facilitate car sharing between staff previously contracted to different hours. Conversely, companies with fixed shift patterns offer more opportunity for car sharing than companies on a wide-ranging flexitime system. Some firms have succeeded in arranging for people from the same postcode areas to share shifts. Just as important is a company culture where supervisors recognise the importance of staff leaving on time to honour car sharing arrangements.



'If everyone car shared you could divide the amount of cars in two. Here there are incentives to join the scheme, like free car washes and priority parking.'

Chris Morgan

Safety concerns are most likely to arise if you are joining up with other firms or if you are a very big employer, so that staff are not known to each other. At the other end of the spectrum, it may be an issue in very small firms that need to link up to public car sharing schemes in order to find journey matches. Some inter-company schemes have succeeded in allaying fears by a route of inquiry where personnel departments liaise with each other in confidence to allow potential sharers to find out a little about the person that has popped up on their database. Arranging 'postcode coffee clubs' can give a chance for people to check out potential matches, as can a launch event. Car sharing databases can be set up so that potential users can contact each other but do not see each other's email addresses.

The issue of 'my car is my personal space' is lessened if car sharing is promoted within the company as socially normal and responsible. Its attraction will be further enhanced by incentives (see below). A somewhat different issue is that of personality mismatches, for example where one person's style of driving doesn't feel good to another, or where sharers dislike each other's choice of music. You need to recognise that this can happen, and set up the scheme so that it is easy for people to change sharers with no questions asked.

Promotion of car sharing and incentives

Companies offer all sorts of incentives for car sharing. These include:

- preferential parking (in the most convenient spaces) or no parking except for sharers
- 'cash-out' schemes that give a daily payment to car sharers
- eligibility for prize draws
- accrual of extra time off.

Any parking scheme giving sharers special access must be enforced. Perhaps the simplest way to do this is for each traveller to be issued a permit, with a requirement that two or more must be displayed to occupy a space allocated to car sharers.

Cash-out and prize schemes should extend beyond car sharing to include those who travel by other sustainable modes of transport. There are instances where promotion of car sharing in isolation has been at the expense of more sustainable choices like public transport.

Any incentive scheme requires a strong promotional campaign behind it. As well as marketing incentives from the company, you should remember to highlight the significant savings from sharing the cost of petrol. Most firms like to start with a splash, like a launch event. An occasional free breakfast – for all people commuting sustainably – can help to keep up the profile of car sharing. And even in the age of such useful tools as the intranet and e-shots, there is still a place for windscreen fliers, notices in the car park, or fliers on tables in the staff canteen.

It should not need saying, but senior staff must accept that they have a responsibility not to undermine car sharing by insisting that they can roll up unaccompanied into a personal space outside the front door.

Any incentive scheme requires a strong promotional campaign behind it.



Sharing larger vehicles

So long as the driver is not gaining profit, a normal driver's car licence and insurance cover a vehicle that can carry up to eight passengers, which allows the possibility of taking up to eight cars off the road if the sharing arrangement is sufficiently well organised. Several makes of vehicle now fit this specification. There are in fact conditions under which a car licence will extend to a minibus carrying 9–16 passengers, but the rules are more exacting, even if no profit is made by the driver.

Arrangements for sharing larger vehicles are still in their infancy in the UK, but commercial firms are now offering packages that will arrange the vehicle and guide you through the legalities. These are sometimes confusingly called 'van pools', following the terminology from the USA, where such arrangements are long-established and receive attractive tax rebates plus state and municipal subsidies. These schemes also get called commute pools and company minibus schemes. One potential attraction is to negotiate with local authorities to allow commute pool vehicles to access bus lanes through congested areas, a privilege presently allowed to community transport minibuses in some areas.

UK tax, licensing and insurance rules were not designed with commute pools in mind and can militate against them. They may be changed to make commute pooling more financially attractive, so check for an update if you decide to pursue the idea. Present barriers include the treatment of a vehicle provided by the firm for a commute pool as a 'benefit in kind' and therefore taxable (which is not the case if a company lays on a bus service requiring much higher expenditure). In the USA it is common for the driver to travel free in exchange for the extra responsibility of driving, but in the UK this could call into question whether the driver is receiving 'profit or reward' and might require a special licence.

For a commute pool to work the fundamental requirement is for a sufficient number of people travelling to work along a single corridor at about the same time. Some commute pool routes only pick up at one assembly point, others have several. Beyond this, the requirements are access to a vehicle and someone prepared to take the responsibility to drive. This kind of sharing arrangement may offer a cost effective alternative to a dedicated company bus service.





The refrain 'I would use public transport if it were better' pops up whenever drivers are surveyed, but what does 'better' actually mean? In practice, for an individual on a specific journey it means removing one or more obstacles that make that trip difficult or impossible. Quite minor changes can make a significant difference for some travellers. Even problems that look insurmountable to the individual can be amenable to change at the corporate level.

Making public transport a realistic choice for your staff

There are several common barriers to using bus and rail:

- High fares
- Lack of a service on the required route
- Absence of bus-bus or bus-rail connections
- Infrequent, unreliable or slow services – or the perception that this is the case
- Lack of readily available information for passengers
- Safety fears for late evening or nighttime journeys
- Overcrowding, plus the dirt and maintenance issues that it can cause
- A perception that buses are only for those that can't afford better
- Long, indirect or unpleasant walking access to services at either end.

All of these obstacles can be reduced to some degree or totally removed, depending on local circumstances. The potential to negotiate service improvements is best where:

- sufficiently large numbers of staff are involved to be an attractive source of business for local transport operators
- staff are concentrated in particular areas or corridors
- local public transport operators understand the potential mutual benefits of collaboration.

In some circumstances, forming a travel plan network with other local companies can achieve a critical mass. But even where these conditions do not apply, it is often still possible to make a considerable difference by tackling other key obstacles.

In the end, 'better public transport' boils down to being better than the car for the journey in question. So removing obstacles to public transport ought to run in tandem with actions to ensure that your company does not encourage driving to work with cheap company cars, unlimited free parking or by requiring employees to drive to site just in case they have to use their car for work purposes. In fact, a number of employers have been able to make a merit of explicitly cross-subsidising staff bus services from parking levies (see page 45).





case study

Discount brings rise in bus and rail

HBOS has a deal with Metro, the passenger transport body responsible for buses and trains across West Yorkshire, which gives its staff a 15% reduction on Metrocard season tickets. The HBOS side of the bargain is to market the scheme to the 10,000 staff in the eight Halifax offices across the Metro area and to back it up with interest-free loans to staff repaid through adjustments to the payroll. Promotions are held three times a year at different sites within West Yorkshire. The events are advertised in advance via the HBOS intranet, and usually take place from 11:30am to 2:00pm. Promotions are attended by the travel coordinator, two representatives from Metro who advise on bus and rail timetables, and a member of the sports and social department who administers the scheme. Staff sign up on the day or respond by email during the following three week sign-up period.

Each year, staff applications for Metrocards have risen substantially, from 136 in 2003 to 489 in 2006. Monitoring staff travel patterns is also part of the Metro deal, and surveys show that bus and train journeys to work have shown a similar trend.

Richard Lodge, the travel coordinator, says, **'Staff tell the promotions team how much they appreciate the 15% reduction. It makes a real difference.'**

Season tickets bring with them the big advantage that staff can use them for weekend or evening trips at no extra cost.

Bringing the cost down

If your company has a large number of low waged staff, then the cost of tickets is likely to be a significant barrier to use of public transport, and may influence staff recruitment and retention. Even if your workforce earn comparatively high salaries, the cost of public transport can look expensive relative to the cost of driving, so schemes to tip the balance can yield good results.

Public transport operators are increasingly aware that workplace travel plans offer a valuable means to market their services to people they could not otherwise contact, and are likely to be amenable to reaching a discount ticket deal for your staff. Your company may wish to consider putting in its own money to make the deal even more attractive.

Discounted ticket deals can operate at every level from annual season tickets to daily single fares. Reductions on a buy-as-you-go basis require a system whereby bus drivers or other staff recognise a company ID card as proof of right to a discount.

Season tickets bring with them the big advantage that staff can use them for weekend or evening trips at no extra cost, and in many localities allow for much wider travel than just the journey to work. The other big bonus of a season ticket is that it changes its owner's outlook – for those with one in their pocket, bus or train is a financially attractive option compared to the car. But the cost of an annual ticket can be enough to put people off – or simply too

'The new buses are heated and air conditioned so it's nice and warm. They are biodiesel and I care about that. It's really convenient and there's a nice social aspect.' Karin Stark



much to be affordable in one go. The answer is a loan from the company at zero interest, repayable over the whole year through a payroll deduction.

Companies may also wish to obtain a discount on a bulk purchase of day tickets for selling on to staff. These can be useful for people whose personal schedules prevent them using public transport every day, for example those sharing childcare responsibilities or part time workers. Some employers have successfully run campaigns emphasising the benefits of leaving the car at home once a week. Low cost day tickets can make this option more attractive.

Improving services

Data from your site audit and staff survey will highlight the service improvements likely to make most difference. This is a good basis for dialogue with public transport operators, who will want to do their best to make their schedules fit your staff journeys and shift patterns, particularly if you represent a large number of potential passengers. As well as rescheduling, such negotiations have led to relocating bus stops, extending bus routes, routing buses onto site, and laying on new connections.

You will need to involve your local authority in the discussion if it subsidises the services under consideration or if improvements to reliability or journey-times require bus priority measures on congested roads and junctions. It is also the local authority that can help tackle issues such as dirty waiting areas, if these arise as concerns in your staff survey.

Where a totally new bus service is required, the options range from a fully commercial solution through to a fully subsidised company bus. The commercial option depends on persuading an operator that your workforce offers enough trade if you market the new service to them. Variants on company-run services include free staff-only company buses, staff-only buses where staff pay a proportion of the cost, and company-run buses open to paying members of the public (which may sometimes receive a local authority subsidy). Companies working together, in the same town or business park, have achieved impressive levels of service.

Service improvement extends to obtaining better vehicles if the present stock is inadequate to the task. Modern brands of bus can have spacious layouts and comfy seating which dispel any lingering preconceptions that buses are boneshakers. 'Low-floor' designs are fully accessible to travellers with disabilities and can 'kneel' hydraulically to lessen the step up and automatically lower a ramp for wheelchair access.

Information and marketing

Many people fail to make sense of the pageful of numbers in a conventional timetable.

Travel by public transport requires more thought and planning than stepping into the car. People can easily be put off by failing to find up-to-date information about services, or worrying whether an obscure symbol on a timetable means the train is not in fact running that day.

Marketing goes hand-in-hand with service improvement. There's no point in laying on wonderful services if no one knows about them, and conversely there's no point in marketing a service that is, in fact, wholly inadequate.

Company intranet sites are good places to put travel information, as long as the site is in regular use by staff as part of their work routine. Even so, printed information is necessary for staff who are not office-based and to give to visitors. Leaflets and posters are also required to raise awareness of public transport services through special promotional stands or as an ongoing feature in communal areas. Many people fail to make sense of the pageful of numbers



'We don't even think of these as buses: we market them as a courtesy service for our staff.'

Kathy Matthews, Oracle

case study

When is a bus not a bus?

The idea of a limousine is redolent with status, comfort and fine service. Not so buses, which many adults last experienced as school children when the bus in question was a clapped-out double decker. So Oracle Corporation has climbed a mountain to reach the point where buses are the natural choice for their corporate executives, especially considering that their business reputation is built on constant technological innovation. The company operates a continuously running shuttle loop into the centre of Reading which is free to their staff and business visitors travelling from the station, as well as employees of the other companies on the Thames Valley business park, all of whom have bought in to the service. It is so popular that they have just renewed and enlarged the fleet to five full-size buses. But the new vehicles are a far cry from the popular preconception of a bus. They have leather seats, tinted windows, full air-conditioning and even Wi-Fi so passengers can access the web on their laptops. Furthermore, these are some of the first buses in the UK to reach the Euro4 cleaner emissions standards for diesels and run on a fuel mix that includes biodiesel. Kathy Matthews, contracted-in from specialist company Vipre to work as full time travel plan manager for Oracle, has gone to great lengths to ensure that the quality of service is also five star. She runs special training sessions for the drivers, to which she inputs personally to emphasise that they will be dealing with people who may not have been on a bus for years. Kathy says, 'We don't even think of these as buses: we market them as a courtesy service for our staff.' The buses and other travel plan actions have reduced the number of cars coming to Thames Valley business park by 13%.

in a conventional timetable layout. You should produce timetables specific to your site, uncluttered by times for all the places that buses or trains call at before they arrive there. Simplified credit-card size versions of timetables, showing just times between your site and one other main destination, are good for people to keep in their wallets.

New information materials should be actively distributed and advertised to staff. Even where services are well used, active promotion can increase uptake. If you organise special promotions and campaigns to promote public transport, you can reasonably expect local public transport operators to back them up with special offers and maybe come onto site themselves to help you promote them. E-shots and pay slips are ideal for short messages saying what's on offer.

Real-time information for public transport is increasingly available. It may be possible for you to assist staff by showing real-time bus and train information on site. Live departure boards are available online for some rail stations so staff can see if the train is on time before they leave their desks.

Even where services are well used, active promotion can increase uptake.

Free shuttle buses link Thames Valley business park with the centre of Reading



Access, safety, getting stranded

Even if public transport runs well, there are other issues that can render it unusable to some potential passengers.

Actually reaching trains and buses can itself be the highest hurdle, sometimes literally. Negotiation with rail authorities can provide back entrances to stations that cut out long diversions for walkers. The local authority can assist in securing road design improvements and highways safety measures for the benefit of those on foot – see page 37.

Personal safety, particularly out of hours, can be a concern in waiting areas or along walking routes to reach public transport. The solution may be as simple as repairing site lighting or installing better lights, or cutting back vegetation to give clear sightlines. It may be fruitful to extend security patrols to access routes or to install CCTV. If more users start to use the service, then security issues diminish, establishing a virtuous circle.

Staff reliant on services that stop after peak hours may fear getting stranded at work if they have to stay late unexpectedly. The solution is to offer a guaranteed ride home, which is now a commonly used safety net for car sharing schemes. Those operating this system have found that it does not entail excessive expenditure.

Fitting work to public transport

Unless you are based at the hub of a superb public transport system, some of your staff will need to schedule their working day to catch buses or trains. Flexitime can be a help, but just as important is to establish a company culture where it is recognised that public transport should be taken into consideration, for example by ensuring that a meeting late in the day finishes in time for the bus home. This consideration will also ensure that visitors will be able to use public transport services to come to meetings.

Tax

Exemptions from tax or National Insurance contributions are given for:

- works buses provided by the employer which have more than nine seats
- public bus services subsidised by the employer, including free or discounted fares for staff, but only where the employer has a contract with the bus operator
- passing on discounts for bulk-purchased tickets to employees
- interest-free loans (up to £5000 per year) to buy season tickets.

Employer subsidies to fares on trains, trams, ferries, tubes, or metro are taxable, as are bus fare subsidies where the bus operator does not have a contract with the employer or where the discount applies to bus routes that are not part of staff commuter trips.

Walking



Walking can be a significant proportion of journeys to work, particularly for companies situated in town, close to residential areas. But even in these favourable circumstances walking is liable to require a boost through measures in your travel plan. There are examples where postcode maps show many staff live within one or two miles, yet a very low proportion walk to work.

Good health

Promoting walking to work meshes with heightened concern about obesity and awareness of the need to build physical activity into everyday life. The Government's Chief Medical Officer advises 30 minutes of moderate physical activity five times a week, and specifically highlights the value of walking instead of driving as part of an everyday routine. The advice states that this level of physical activity cuts the risk of a whole range of serious illnesses by up to half – not just heart disease, but also strokes, diabetes and even cancer.

Marketing walking

For those who have got out of the habit of walking, even half a mile can feel like a real effort to begin with, but once they are doing it regularly it becomes easier and quicker. Marketing walking can foster this virtuous circle by highlighting benefits to health and well-being. It's cheap to buy bulk orders of pedometers, which some people find an encouragement to aim for recommended levels of daily activity, or to measure how far they have covered in a day.

Some companies in pleasant surroundings have used lunchtime walks to re-establish a walking culture. In some firms enthusiasm for walking has grown to such a degree that teams participate in fund-raising events.

Make sure visitors are included in your strategy to encourage walking. Produce maps of walking routes to (and around) the site and publish them on the web. These can also assist staff, and should be included in induction packs for new employees.

Shower and changing facilities for walkers

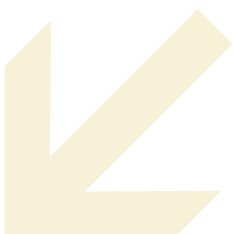
Many of the on-site facilities that are typically made available to support cycling – such as showers, changing rooms, drying areas for clothes and a seating area with a hot drinks machine – can also be helpful for those arriving on foot, especially if they are jogging. Consider both groups when developing provision.

Tackling obstacles

As one travel planner put it, 'There's no point in telling people to walk in dark unlit subways.' Safety, convenience and pleasantness of walking routes are all interrelated.

The easiest starting point is to ensure your own site and its immediate environs encourage people to walk. Your site audit should check for the following sorts of problem:

- Are pedestrians required to walk around outside the site perimeter in order to enter at the same entrance as vehicles? Install pedestrian short cuts and pedestrian gates. These can be card, code or key activated if security requires it.



Do pedestrians have to cross across of tarmac with cars speeding in all directions?

- Do pedestrians have to cross across of tarmac car park with cars speeding across it in all directions so that people on foot feel out of place and vulnerable? Design direct pedestrian routes across your car park that are clearly marked, well segregated from traffic and nicely landscaped with pedestrian-priority crossings. If necessary install traffic calming on site.
- Do some pedestrian routes across the site feel unsafe? Install good lighting, cut back vegetation or re-align paths to ensure good visibility. If intruders are a problem, institute security patrols. If need be, these might be extended slightly beyond the site if footpath links require it.
- Are pedestrian routes well signed? The easiest and fastest pedestrian route may be less obvious than the long way round by road.

Outside your site, you will need to work in conjunction with the local highway authority. Sometimes comparatively small changes can make a big difference. As a priority, check that main roads and junctions near your site have conveniently placed crossings for pedestrians – not subways! If pedestrian access to your site necessitates walking alongside a main road, it will feel more pleasant if the pavement is wider or, preferably, if it is stepped back from the road behind a verge or planters. Faster traffic is intimidating for pedestrians and makes road noise more unpleasant, so check whether local road layouts encourage traffic to slow down and obey speed limits.

case study

Guided walks

The travel for work coordinator at Cambourne Business Park, near Cambridge, has taken advantage of their situation in attractive countryside to establish a popular programme of ‘healthy lunchtime walks’, with support from the local medical practice and the district council. The walks aim to promote the benefits of walking and to encourage people to walk to work. Each walk lasts about 40 minutes. The coordinator leads the walks herself, but also plans to produce walking maps and put them onto the website so that staff can follow the routes on other days.

Incentives for walkers

Some companies offer payments for walking to work, or entry into a prize draw. Incentive schemes need to be designed to reward all green modes of travel, but, nevertheless, it is possible to give a walking incentive its own branding so that you can market it in a targeted way – for example with a walkers’ breakfast.



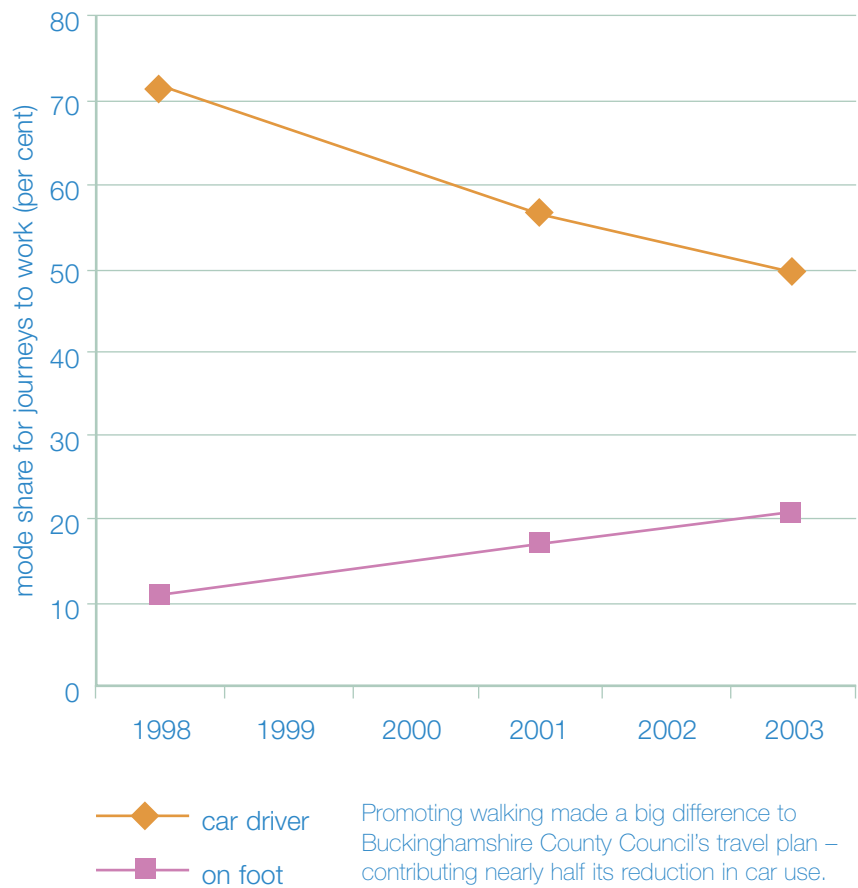
case study

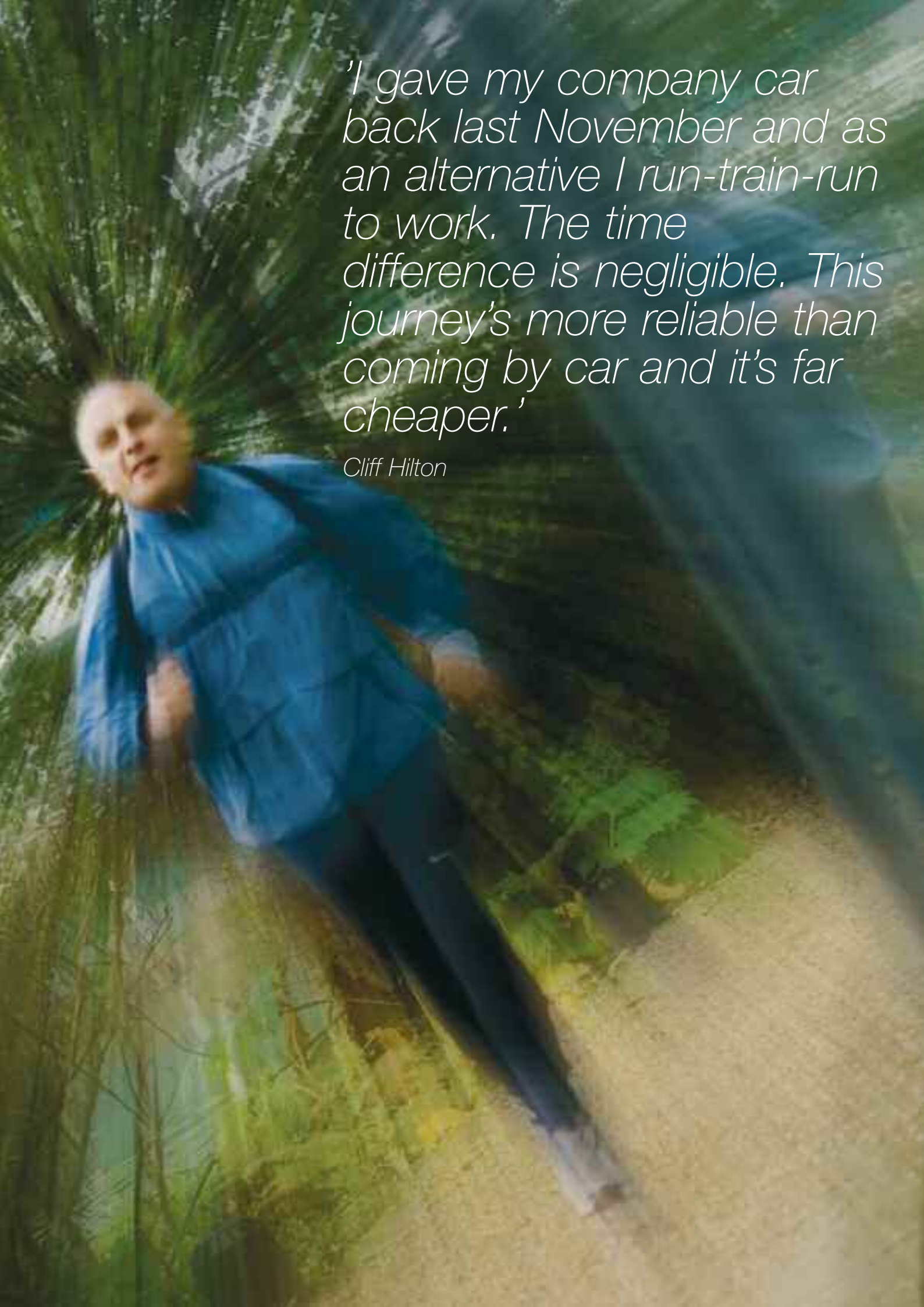
Active travellers gain extra time

Unum Provident rewards green commuting staff with time off.

Those walking or cycling to work are allowed to arrive 10 minutes late. A number of the staff have become involved with 'safe routes to school' schemes at local schools and lead 'walking buses' to take children to school on their way in to work.

Walking cuts car use

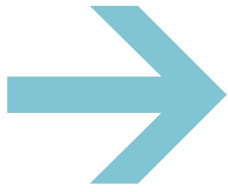


A man in a blue jacket is running on a dirt path next to a river. The background is a lush green forest. The image is slightly blurred, suggesting motion.

'I gave my company car back last November and as an alternative I run-train-run to work. The time difference is negligible. This journey's more reliable than coming by car and it's far cheaper.'

Cliff Hilton

Cycling 10



As late as 1950, Britons collectively cycled more miles than they drove. Then a whole generation lost the habit for their everyday journeys, and the activity came to be seen as a recreational pursuit for the Spandex-clad 'keen' cyclist. In parts of the UK this is now changing, with increasing numbers of commuters hopping on a bike. This is partly the result of investment in cycle-friendly routes and paths. It is also due to a realisation by commuters that they can actually get to work by bike more quickly and reliably in areas where cars are stuck in jams, with the added benefit of lower stress and the opportunity for healthy exercise that is otherwise hard to come by in modern life.

Nevertheless, cycling to work is still a minority activity. Encouraging people to come by bike involves bringing cycling back into the mainstream, by creating a cycling culture.

Being a cycle-friendly employer

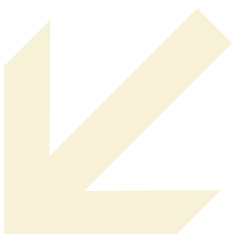
Here is a checklist of improvements to consider if you want to become a cycle-friendly employer:

- Secure and sheltered cycle parking
- Facilities for showers, changing and storage of personal gear
- Improved cycle routes to (and on) your site
- Maps and other information about local cycle routes
- Provision of, or payment for, bike maintenance
- Cut-price or free staff bikes
- Training for those who are not confident cyclists
- A staff bicycle user group – a BUG!
- Incentives to cycle
- Events to encourage cycling
- Pool bikes for business miles.

Which of these you give highest priority will depend on what respondents to your staff survey say would help them most. Your overall objective should be to position cycling as a means of transport for everyday journeys, not something that requires people to be 'keen'.

On-site cycle facilities

Cycle parking should be in a high-profile location alongside building entrances, well-lit, safe, secure, and if you can afford it, smartly designed to show that you value cyclists' efforts highly. Changing and storage should be close by. Some organisations combine changing facilities with relaxation areas offering comfy seating and drinks machines.





'Without cyclist commuters we could not use this building to capacity.'

Peter Handcock, GlaxoSmithKline

case study

Rewarding cyclists

GlaxoSmithKline's travel plan includes a campaign to make employees who choose to cycle to work feel particularly valued: **'We have created an environment where cyclists feel that they are special,' says GSK's Peter Handcock.** Car parking has been replaced by high quality cycle facilities, and more spaces will be converted if cycling continues to grow. GSK's facilities include everything you'd expect, but with a few special extras:

- Cycle parking in a prime location, sheltered, secure and light
- Lockers (hundreds of them)
- Drying room with vented hanging and heating
- Showers with shampoo, towels and hair dryers provided
- Irons, ironing boards and shoe racks.

Each car parking space at its HQ site in Brentford, Middlesex, costs GSK £2000 a year, so the company realised it was good value to reward cyclists financially. Cyclists are registered on a 'bike miles' scheme and collect a sticker from security staff each day they arrive by bike. These are worth £1 per day and are collected in a book which can be redeemed for vouchers to pay for equipment or new bikes from reputable dealers. After filling the first £260 book, equivalent to a year's cycling, cyclists progress to a gold and then platinum book which comes with a special card bringing added benefits.

The company pays the labour charge for a bike mechanic who visits the site once a week offering service and repair, so staff only pay the cost of any parts. Peter points out that cyclists are actually worth even more to the company: 'Without cyclist commuters we could not use this building to capacity, and each unfilled desk in the building is valued at £10,000.' GSK estimates its cyclists cost it £400 each per year.

GSK has 130 staff who cycle to work each day (5% of staff trips to work) and over 300 registered cyclists. Some 40% are women, proof of cycling's broad appeal when appropriate facilities are made available. The average mileage is remarkably high – 7 miles each way – of which most is through a suburban environment. Near the office itself, GSK contributed £200,000 to construction of a cycle path as part of the planning agreement.



Position cycling as a means of transport for everyday journeys, not something that requires people to be 'keen'.

Improved cycle routes

If a lack of safe cycle routes to your site is a barrier to cycling, then discuss with your local authority which of the key obstacles might be soluble, either within their budgets or with a contribution from your company. Many local authorities have a dedicated cycling officer.

Cycling information

The safest, easiest and most pleasant cycle routes to your site are probably different from the main road routes motorists use. Draw on the knowledge of existing cyclists on your staff and local cycling organisations to produce a route map, centred on your site, both in hard copy and publicly available on your website.

Bike maintenance

Most car owners do not undertake much work on their vehicles and rely on a comprehensive service and support system. Some people are prevented from cycling because they do not see the same support system for cycling. In fact, some cycle shops now make special efforts to offer a good value bike servicing facility. Labour rates are vastly lower than car dealerships. Some firms arrange for a regular visit to site by a bike mechanic and pay for labour, if not replacement parts as well.

Cut-price bikes and equipment

Staff deals for cycling include free bikes, cut-price bikes, cheap bike rental and interest-free loans to purchase bikes, cycling clothing and equipment. If people do not possess a bike, they may be reluctant to buy one without being sure whether they really will find it usable in practice. Some specialist firms now offer a service where it is possible for staff to try out a bike of their choice for a few days. A wide range can be made available, even including folding bikes for those who need to travel partly by bus or train, and the service can include making sure the bike fits the rider and is comfortable. A degree of training and advice can be provided at the same time, as can trial use of potentially costly ancillary kit, including clothing, panniers, lights and helmets. Some companies have linked this service with a challenge to cycle 50% of the time.

Training and support

Training needs to be approached sensitively because learning to cycle is associated with childhood and adults can be reluctant to admit that they are not confident or to be seen wobbling around atop a bike. Conversely, adult learners who gain the freedom that a bike can offer sometimes find great satisfaction in the experience. So it can be worth getting specialist assistance, which will also take care of insurance and liability issues and may come complete with access to the necessary range of bikes and equipment. Only a small proportion of people are likely to accept the offer of cycle training, but it is well worth providing it for those that want it. Course attendees report that they cycle more than twice as often as before and also cycle further.¹⁶

A different sort of training is required to help new cyclists gain the sort of knowledge that existing cyclists will have about the most safe and comfortable route to work, which will often include back-roads and be more complex than the routes followed by car drivers. Drivers that attempt to cycle their main road car route to work may decide never to cycle to work again. This is one area where it can be useful to establish a BUG – a bicycle users' group – so that you can offer new cyclists a 'buddy' to show them the best back-road route and cycle lanes that may not be familiar to them. If your firm is very big, there is

'I live 12 miles from work and I tend to cycle from late spring until early autumn. I'd rather cycle in the fresh air than on an exercise bike in a gym!' Jilly Nissler



now software to match people for bike journeys in the same way as car share databases match up car journeys. Your BUG will also give cyclists a voice in the company, all the more effective if some of your senior managers cycle and join the group. A further demonstration that cycling is a priority is to allow the group to meet in work time.

Incentives and promotional events

Incentive schemes for cycling to work include 'cash-out' payments for each day cycled, entry to prize schemes, or accumulation of daily tokens that can be redeemed in local cycling shops. Such schemes are usually run in conjunction with incentives for all other sustainable modes of commuting. A variant is to offer sustainable commuters shorter hours – e.g. 10 minutes per day.

The most common promotional event is a cycle-to-work day, including a free breakfast laid on for cyclists. These have proved an enjoyable way to raise the profile of cycling and generate camaraderie.

Pool bikes

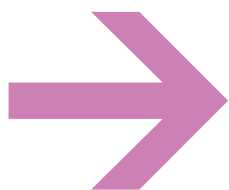
Pool bikes can prove handy if, for example, you have several fairly close sites, or if staff lunchtime trips to the shops are slightly further than convenient walking distance.

Tax breaks for cycling

A company can provide its staff with free loan of bicycles and related equipment tax-free. If an employer does not wish to provide free bikes, then the Cycle to Work scheme offers a way to substantially cut the cost of bikes to its employees. This scheme enables a firm to operate a 'salary sacrifice' arrangement to provide a bicycle and equipment free of VAT, tax and National Insurance contributions – amounting to savings of 40 to 50%, more if the firm negotiates a deal with a local cycle shop. The way it works is that the company purchases the bike and equipment and then recovers the purchase price by leasing it to the employee, reducing the recipient's gross salary by the necessary amount each month over a period of 12 or 18 months. By the time the scheme has expired, the 'fair market value' of the bike has generally depreciated to such an extent that it can be offered for sale to the employee at about the cost of one or two months' lease.

Provision of cycle parking is tax-exempt, as are cyclists' breakfasts. Cycle maintenance and rescue services are, however, liable to tax, but in practice your local tax inspector may agree that these can be disregarded for tax purposes on the grounds that they constitute only an 'insubstantial benefit'.

Car parking 11



11 Car parking

Management of car parking is a vital part of a travel plan. If you provide plentiful free car parking, there will be a built-in incentive to drive to work, and indeed each driver will be receiving a transport subsidy from the company running to hundreds or even thousands of pounds per year. Where firms have taken action to manage parking as part of their travel plan, there has been a greater reduction in car driving.¹⁷

In practice, parking stress and congestion are already acute issues for many sites and often help provide initial impetus for a travel plan. Nevertheless, constraining parking or introducing charges for parking will probably be the most contentious aspect of your travel plan, and it is worth learning from companies that have successfully shifted away from a culture of taking car parking for granted. Leadership from senior managers is a prerequisite for successful implementation of measures to tighten up your parking policies.

Companies are pursuing a variety of strategies to manage car parking. These are determined by a combination of site circumstances, transport options to site and company culture. The following strategies can be operated in combination.

Restricted parking

Zero parking is generally only an option for central locations where public transport is very good. Many city centre work locations have never had dedicated parking provision and staff who drive into the centre have to find their place in municipal car parks or on-street. If you do have only a very few parking bays, these should as a priority be available to staff or visitors with mobility difficulties rather than to senior staff.

Even firms with considerable parking provision have found that they still cannot cater for all the staff who wish to drive. Taking on further parking is, in many cases, precluded by lack of available land, planning rules or the expense of buying or renting more parking. In any event there are often problems of local congestion which would only be worsened by offering more parking. Whilst rising congestion does provide a disincentive to drive, it is not a sustainable parking management strategy. It can cause overspill parking which may raise hackles amongst nearby residents and can even lead to illegal or dangerous parking. Staff waste time driving around the car park or surrounding streets searching for a parking space, adding further to congestion. There is also potential for conflict between staff, and there have even been attacks on security staff responsible for preventing illegal parking. Perhaps the worst problem is that it is not a fair system for those who really need to drive to work. People with flexible schedules may arrive as early as 7am to nab the parking places, while those with demands such as caring for or delivering children to school have no chance of finding a space.





A needs-based permit system is a fair way to allocate parking. The criteria for permits should include the following:

- Personal mobility difficulties
- Car sharing
- Out-of-hours work responsibilities
- Caring responsibilities that necessitate a car on the journey to or from work
- Home address too far to walk to the office or too far from public transport routes to the site (although points should be quite limited for this criterion, otherwise you create an incentive for staff to live in remote locations, exacerbating a current social trend).

In order to gain acceptance the permit system must be seen to be fair. It should apply equally to all staff grades, and should allow protests to be heard by an appeal panel that includes a union representative. Although it is not so objectively fair, at least one firm has been successful allocating everyone a non-parking day each week, with the merit that the blow falls equally on everybody.

Any permit system must be enforced. The fundamental choice is between technological solutions, such as barriers operated by smart cards, and solutions using staff to control entrances or to undertake spot-check controls. Both have been shown to work.

Permit systems go hand-in-hand with limitation of the total number of parking spaces. If your office is moving or there is a site redevelopment, take this opportunity to restrict the number of parking spaces and put in place a fair system to control access to them.

Charging for parking

Charging for parking gives an incentive not to drive to work, though limiting spaces is a more certain way to put a cap on the number of people arriving by car. Lack of parking also helps justify implementation of permit and charging systems.

Marketing car park charges to your staff will take a delicate touch but can draw upon the considerable costs of providing parking spaces, which average about £400 per year but rise to £2000 or more per year in London. As the figures below show, companies that charge for parking have actually chosen to recoup less from each employee than this level of annual cost, so in fact they are only reducing the degree of subsidy to drivers.

Taking five examples of organisations that levy a parking fee, the average daily parking charge is 40p. This may sound quite small, but these examples show that £90,000 is the average annual sum raised by organisations with 2000 employees. This would, for example, be sufficient funds to run a good shuttle bus service.

It is important for acceptance of the parking system that monies raised are seen to be ring-fenced for other travel plan measures. It may help to sugar the pill if the parking charge is introduced in conjunction with an offer of assistance with travel costs. Another option is to implement a travel allowance equivalent to the parking charge for all staff so that they can choose to spend it on parking or on other ways of travelling to work. This will tend to reduce the initial behavioural change effected by the parking charge, but in the longer run its psychological effect will be to make driving to work less attractive. It may also assist acceptance of charging if the system is tiered to be related to earnings.

case study

A needs-based approach to parking

The RBS Group Transportation Manager believes staff bought into the travel plan because its needs-based parking permit allocation was seen to be fair.

In addition to its many sustainable transport initiatives, at sites with significant car parking facilities the company is gradually rolling out a scheme to assess an employee's need for a parking permit. The system was pioneered at the new HQ campus at Gogarburn which currently provides only one parking space for every 2.7 staff, despite being on the edge of Edinburgh. Permit applications are assessed annually against the following scoring criteria:

- Personal mobility difficulties
- Lack of convenient access to public transport
- Care commitments
- Early or late contracted working hours
- Business need for a vehicle
- Active participation in car sharing or space sharing.

Points are additive and the highest scoring personnel are allocated available permits. The RBS system allocates points for public transport access using intuitive mapping software. Those living within walking distance of direct public transport routes (800m for bus and 1km for train), of pre-determined frequency and journey-time, score no points. Some points are awarded to those who have a direct public transport route of longer journey-time or requiring an easy interchange en-route. More points go to those assessed as having no convenient public transport at all. In this system, space sharing is deemed acceptable –

two or more people who elect to share a space, each parking on different days, are treated in the same way as those who elect to share one vehicle every day – on the grounds that the effect on traffic and parking is the same.

To increase the public transport access zone for Gogarburn, RBS negotiated and where necessary subsidised public service improvements, thereby increasing the proportion of staff with a direct bus route from 12% to 31%. In addition, a free dedicated rail shuttle connects to the two nearby rail halts, increasing the attractiveness of rail commuting. Similar initiatives are in place at other sites.

'Click & Park', an innovative web-based booking tool, is the basis for managing the on-site parking including visitor space. No vehicle should be brought to site without a valid permit to park, thereby cutting down car use on the basis of 'chance' parking. Permit-holders, including share-groups, are allocated a numbered parking space to reduce car park 'cruising'. A parking policy, procedures and protocols underpin the system and a key condition of having an annual permit is a duty to release the space on any day that the permit-holder will not use it, thereby making it instantly available as a 'hotspot' for which day-permits are bookable online. These provide for occasional parking for all users, regardless of needs assessment, subject to availability and up to the site limit (currently 20 days per person per year at Gogarburn). This feature has made an important contribution to acceptance of the scheme because it means that anyone who really has to take a car to work on a particular day can generally get a parking space.

Permit applications are assessed against scoring criteria.

Car parking charges for employees should be pay-as-you-go, so that there is a continued evident cost for each journey driven to work. An annual parking token, once purchased, actually provides the user with an incentive to commute by car in order that they extract the maximum value from it. 'Proximity card' technology offers the chance to debit a user's smart card without the need for constantly staffed barriers.

Where charges are implemented, free permits should be allocated to disabled drivers and can be made available to other users where warranted, for example staff whose hours extend beyond public transport services.

'The parking charge helps to secure the travel plan and opens up many opportunities.'

Ian Foster, Egg



case study

Funding buses from parking revenue

Egg charges staff 75p per day to park at its site on the edge of Derby city centre. The income raised is used to subsidise and fund two bus services. A local bus service, which runs from 7am to 7pm, Mondays to Saturday, is available to the public at a fare of 70p, whereas Egg staff pay a nominal 10p fare. This is supplemented with a free out-of-hours shuttle bus, available to Egg staff only, until 11.15pm and on Sundays.

So what was the reaction to introducing the parking charge? The decision was made when the site was established in 1998 and was accompanied by a strong communications effort to help staff transferring from other sites come to terms with the idea of paying to park. According to Ian Foster, Egg's travel plan manager, charges have always been a contentious issue, but have proved a good idea. 'The parking charge helps to secure the travel plan and opens up many opportunities. It gives us a lever to achieve our ambitions for further modal shift in future.'

Cash-out incentives not to drive to work

Cash incentives not to drive can take several forms, including entry into prize draws, daily accumulation of vouchers redeemable at retail outlets and salary bonuses. Some organisations that once issued parking permits indiscriminately now have a scheme to buy them back from staff. Firms that used to offer company cars as perks now offer the chance for staff to switch to an alternative package of benefits.

At the top end there are firms that offer daily bonuses of £2 or more to every individual who does not drive to work. The payment in these schemes approximately reflects the cost of providing a car parking space. Car sharers are generally awarded half the bonus. Bonuses like this are taxable.

There are many sites where the dominance of car-based commuting means it would be possible to achieve a cost-neutral package of fairly generous cash-out payments to non-car travellers with only a moderate car parking charge.



case study

Cash-out for not parking

Pfizer has operated a daily 'cash-out' incentive scheme on both of its main UK sites since 2001. Staff receive £5 or £2, depending on the location, for every day that they work on site but do not bring a car. The scheme is integrated with existing ID card systems to achieve full automation. Scaled benefits to car sharers are also automatically built in.

At Pfizer's Sandwich site, the travel plan – which includes a £2 per day 'cash-out' scheme and investment in bus services – achieved a 20% reduction in the proportion of cars coming to the site.

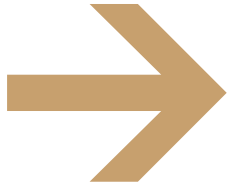
The scheme was developed and implemented by John Elliott, who is now taking it a step further with another major employer. A new points-based system will automatically combine incentives for sustainable travel with charges for car park use.

'This combination will allow us to significantly increase the overall 'gap' between incentive payment and parking charge without increasing the overall cost of the scheme to the organisation,' says John. 'A bigger gap will encourage greater behaviour change and will enable us to achieve larger reductions in traffic and parking demand.'

Dealing with overspill parking

The effect of worksite parking restrictions in discouraging commuter car use can be undermined by the availability of on-street parking in the area, which may also cause problems for your neighbours. One way to tackle this is through the introduction of street parking controls. This will require early liaison with your local authority to initiate the process, which includes consulting local residents.

Business travel 12



Business travel should be an integral part of a travel plan. Arrangements for business travel can fundamentally affect how people choose to travel to work. Furthermore, you may find that current policies are encouraging expenditure to support unnecessary car use, money that could be saved for other purposes, including sustainable travel measures.

A business case for a travel plan funded from business travel savings can be found on page 70.

Removing perverse incentives

It is still all too common to come across corporate policies that set mileage reimbursement rates at such a high level that staff make a profit by driving their own cars on business trips. Sometimes this is part of an entrenched culture that views these rates not as reimbursement but as a 'perk'. In other cases the car may be a 'company car' provided as part of an employment package. It takes time to move away from this kind of culture, which may be embedded in union agreements as well as personal contracts. A first step is to ensure that new staff are not offered company cars as perks. Some companies have received a good take-up from existing staff in response to 'cash for cars' schemes where a cash benefit is given in exchange for handing back a company car. Alternative benefits packages can include travel allowances or season tickets.

Pool cars

There are several advantages to running a pool car system over paying individuals to use their own cars. A pool system can:

- save money
- remove an incentive for individuals to travel by car to profit from mileage reimbursement
- overcome a common obstacle to non-car commuting – that staff feel obliged to bring a car to work on the off-chance that it will be needed for a business trip
- provide an opportunity to rent or buy low-emissions vehicles, an area where fleet operators have been quite innovative.

Car clubs and car hire

The downside of a car pool is the sunk cost of buying pool vehicles or committing to contract hire agreements, plus the administrative burden of a pool booking system and vehicle maintenance for companies that do not already operate vehicles. These issues are liable to be more awkward for smaller companies, although teaming up with other local firms may create a viable pool option. The recent success of commercial car clubs and their continuing spread into urban centres around the UK offers an innovative solution for an increasing number of locations. Corporate membership of a car club can give inexpensive access to vehicles when your staff need it on a pay-as-you-go basis. If you potentially offer sufficient custom, a car club company may offer to set up a special parking bay with vehicles close to your offices. As well as local journeys, your staff could travel to other cities by train and pick up a car club vehicle there, if they should need one to accomplish their work. Many car clubs successfully provide a service to both businesses and individuals. In general there is little conflict, since individual use peaks at evenings and





Train journeys allow staff to accomplish useful work en route.

weekends. If you need to absolutely guarantee vehicle availability, you could pay for a block booking. Modern car clubs specialise in providing attractive vehicles, including low-emissions cars that are exempt from the London congestion charge. Bookings can be made online or over the phone. Once a car is booked out, it is remotely programmed to be accessible only to that user by matching the vehicle's magnetic card-reader to the user's smart card.

An alternative to using a car club is a contract with a conventional car hire facility. This can also be more attractive than acquiring pool vehicles, especially if you lack parking space to keep them. The arrangement must be set up so that it is convenient for staff. This means a company account at the hire firm, which can be set up to give access to discounted rates, and prior provision of potential drivers' documentation. This way users have to do little more than sign off for the keys when they turn up to collect a car. Internally you should ensure easy line-management sign-off to agree car hire or, easier still, an administrator who is always available to make the booking for other staff. Part of your deal with the hire firm should be that they refill the car without extra charges above the petrol cost – you don't want your staff wasting their time driving around to find garages.

Taxis

Taxis are perceived as expensive, and many accounts departments set a high threshold to reimburse staff for using them. Whilst taxi use can be abused, it actually requires very high levels of usage to attain the levels of expenditure involved in company purchase of cars or contract hire. Company policy should recognise the potential for taxis to facilitate use of public transport by covering awkward gaps in occasional journeys.

Encouraging staff to use public transport for business trips

The best policy is to state that staff are expected to use public transport where this is a realistic option. To back this up you can require line-management sign-off for personal car use. If you can, assign a member of staff responsibility to provide information and preferably to provide a booking service so that public transport bookings are easy to make.

Because it can take time and effort to find out about public transport options, individuals may be inclined just to hop in their cars. Ensure that it is easy for staff to find the best sources of information. There are information services to help negotiate the complexities of public transport and make journey planning easier, such as Transport Direct.

Transport Direct (www.transportdirect.info) offers the option to compare the same door-to-door journey by public transport and car, with details on times, routes, costs, as well as car park information and relative carbon emissions, depending on the time of day and mode of transport. Transport Direct has live travel information for both the road and rail networks and provides accessible information for disabled people. Transport Direct can also provide useful journey planning tools for your website which enable both staff and customers to easily plan their journeys to you.

A proper calculation of your business travel costs should include staff downtime whilst travelling and should recognise that train journeys allow staff to accomplish useful work en route (see the business case on page 70).

Cutting travel to meetings

Your travel plan should aim to establish a culture of phone and video conferencing in preference to face-to-face meetings. Preconditions for phone and video conferencing to become accepted and widely used are as follows:

- ➔ Conference phones with good loudspeakers in all meeting rooms – which should be bookable.
- ➔ An easy process for all staff to set up a telephone conference. Your office phone system may have a built-in system which can switch both internal and external calls into a conference. Alternatively, all callers can dial a conference call number from a specialist provider and access the same conference by means of a PIN or personal identification number circulated beforehand. Rates are competitive and arrangements for a conference call can be set up at no notice by reference to a website.
- ➔ Reliable and easy-to-use video conference suites readily available in meeting rooms. In practice you need a member of staff who is fully confident with the technology and can set it up and trouble shoot for irregular or first-time users.

For staff without experience of phone or video conferencing it may be helpful to point out factors that can make sessions work. For example, video conferencing can become awkward with too many locations. Depending on the set-up, the screens will split to show all locations at once, or switch sequentially between them to show the person speaking. Either way, above about three locations, it can start to feel clunky and mutual visibility becomes less satisfactory. Conferences where a couple of smaller groups are connected to a main meeting can work well. Technology is, however, steadily improving. Appropriate chairing is also important. All meetings require chairing skills, but even experienced chairs need to learn a few new skills for video and telephone conferencing. Most important is the need to specifically go around participants to check their agreement or ensure their input in circumstances where face-to-face meetings might accomplish the same function with just a nod or a smile. Because body language and feedback are limited in phone and even video conferences, it can make discussions easier if participants have previously met face to face, although this is by no means essential.

'Video conferencing has proved particularly popular and has helped to significantly reduce the regular trips between the corporate centers.'

Arthur Champion, Zurich



case study

Savings from audio and video conferencing

Reducing the impact of business travel was one of the overall goals when Zurich established a travel plan covering its four UK centres at Swindon, Portsmouth, Cheltenham and Fareham.

Arthur Champion, Zurich's travel plan coordinator says, 'Video conferencing has proved particularly popular and has helped to significantly reduce the regular trips between the corporate centres.' He estimates that the use of audio and video conferencing has reduced annual business mileage by over one million miles, with fuel cost savings of £122,000 and an extra 17,000 working hours being created.



It is increasingly easy for individuals to access video conferencing facilities close to where they live, so remotely located staff may be able to input to meetings without undertaking a special journey to work.

Car sharing business trips

Your travel survey will show you if many staff are making the same journeys. Businesses with several sites often generate many trips between those sites. If staff can be encouraged to log these journeys in advance, others can link up to share journeys or may even be able to plan their own business and meetings to a compatible timetable. A car share database can be used for this function, but if there are only a few sites the ideal format may be different from that for matching commuters. The simplest is an online calendar where everyone can see at a glance who is travelling when, between different sites. Staff travelling to jobs or meetings at external locations should also be encouraged to make arrangements to car share.

For staff claiming mileage reimbursement for use of a personal car, consider a higher rate for those who carry a passenger (e.g. 5p/mile extra) and consider also 5p/mile for the passenger. This is justified because both parties have to make the effort to link up and may have to make some adjustments to their schedules to facilitate the car share. It will still result in a significant saving over paying the full mileage if the passenger were also to drive. Up to 5p/mile no tax is due on an additional payment to a driver to carry a passenger, but as yet tax law does not exempt payments to the passenger themselves.

Shuttle buses

Multiple sites close together entailing large staff movements may merit a shuttle bus. If this situation has led to high levels of taxi transfers, then a bus may be a substantial saving.

Cycling on business

Pool bikes are another way to facilitate staff movements between different sites. They can save large amounts of time if local roads are congested. For town and city locations, many destinations may be within cycling distance. Some high quality folding bikes in the pool can facilitate longer business trips by bridging the link to train or bus. Pool bikes can also help cut lunchtime traffic by providing the option of cycling to the shops. This may be attractive even to staff who drive to work if the route into town is congested.

If staff are able to use their own bikes for some business trips, encourage them by offering a mileage rate. Rates up to 20p per mile are tax-exempt.

Aviation

Flying for business may sometimes be unavoidable, but your travel plan should recognise the increased environmental impact of aviation compared to other forms of transport and introduce policies to avoid unnecessary flights. For example, phone or video conferencing and alternative means of transport such as trains should be explored first. Where flying is essential, the carbon emissions can be 'offset', and travel by public transport to and from the airport should be encouraged.

Reducing the need to travel

13



Influencing how staff travel is only part of a travel plan. Some of the biggest gains can come from reducing the need to travel at all. Your travel plan should look at the big picture and establish the underlying factors that are generating travel. The analysis should seek to understand why journeys are undertaken and question whether travelling is the best way to achieve the business in hand.

Choose a sustainable location!

A situation close to a good public transport hub will achieve a much more sustainable travel pattern than even the most ambitious travel plan on a site in the middle of nowhere. If you choose a site at a motorway junction far from public transport then, at the very least, your company's commitment to its environmental policies could legitimately be called into question.

Local recruitment

Your company should develop a local recruitment strategy for jobs where the skills required are likely to be available locally. Local recruitment has enabled some employers to achieve higher levels of commuting by public transport, walking and cycling. Such policies have a strategically important role to play in improving the sustainability of our national travel patterns, which show a significant trend towards longer journeys to work.

Conversely, some companies have found that their travel plan measures have made them an attractive employer in the local area.

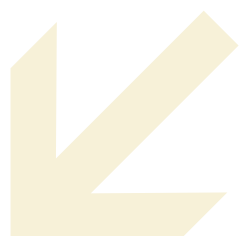
Relocation packages

You will necessarily need to trawl a larger catchment in order to obtain more specialist or more experienced staff. In these circumstances your company may be able to design your relocation package to tip the balance towards a new recruit moving into a location that enables them to travel sustainably. Even small companies have managed to offer some impressive incentives in this regard. Such policies can offer a high rate of return environmentally for the expenditure incurred because they will be a factor in decisions that determine travel patterns for years to come – both for work purposes and for life outside work.

Homeworking

More companies are now seeking to help their employees achieve a better life-work balance. These initiatives may be linked to a travel plan, but often they are driven by an endeavour to attract good staff and to improve productivity. Organisations that have successfully increased their levels of homeworking, support staff with facilities, equipment and practical assistance. You should also recognise that an individual's home circumstances may mean that they do not have an option of working at home.

Working at home does not mean isolation from office-based staff. It can, for example, be very efficient for remotely situated staff to access telephone conferences from home, or to participate in an office-based meeting via a table-top conference phone that is designed to be positioned in the middle of a meeting room table.



case study

Culture of 'mobile working' cuts carbon

Over recent years IBM has moved to a culture of flexible working, including homeworking and 'mobile working' from other office locations.

'Our first survey in 2000 didn't even contain a question on homeworking or mobile working,' says Environmental Affairs Specialist, Carole Redman, 'but this was by far the dominant suggestion arising.' At that time, IBM's head office at North Harbour near Portsmouth had a parking problem with knock-on congestion in the mornings and evenings in the surrounding area. The company had applied for planning permission for extra car parking, but before a planning application could be accepted was told by the local authority that it would require a travel plan to reduce dependency on the car. With advice from the authority a plan was developed to provide choices to employees on travel to and from work and on business.

'As a result of the findings of the first survey,' Carole recalls, 'we established our 'mobility' programme, and in subsequent surveys we have tailored specific questions to find out more about our employees' travel preferences. Our intranet mobility site is packed with useful information for the mobile worker and homeworker, and has specifics like how to get broadband set up at home on the IBM account with minimum hassle. For phone calls we each have a 'homeconnect' number which we dial before making a business call from home which separates business calls from personal calls. Everyone works on laptops anyway, but anyone working from home regularly can log on to the IBM ergonomic website and follow the guidance on good working practices. The advice is intended to optimise their comfort and productivity, whether in a traditional office environment, at home or on the road.' Using the laptop in an un-ergonomic situation could cause problems, so IBM ensures that the workforce is properly informed.

Some 80% of IBM UK staff now sometimes work at home, 13% for a significant proportion of time. Surveys still show 65% who wish to work from home to a greater extent. For many staff it has proved equally important to be able to work flexibly



across different office locations. IBM realised that this flexibility could offer a choice of the most appropriate workplace and could go hand in hand with better utilisation of its real estate. Some IBM staff hardly ever go into their designated base location, as they work from the customer premises where they are providing expertise.

Carole explains how IBM has made it possible for many staff to work from other offices. 'All our offices have drop-in centres with desks and facilities available to whoever needs them. Our phone service is personalised so I can pick up messages remotely from anywhere. It's all about staying connected, faster communications, more interaction and knowledge sharing. Wherever we are, we can work as a team.'

According to Carole it takes both an organisational and a personal culture shift to change working patterns to this degree. 'In the early days it was very much a question of trust,' she says, but this has paid off. 'We're reaping the rewards of letting people work the way that suits them and suits the employer – a highly motivated workforce who are contributing to a reduction in CO₂ emissions and fewer cars on the road and in car parks.'

*'If a company our size
can provide this level of
assistance to relocate
to within a sustainable
commuting distance,
then virtually anyone
can.'*

*Cécile Galoselva, The Ethical Property
Company*

Satellite office working

For staff living a long way from their work site, but whose home environment is not a suitable workplace, a better option may be to use an office closer to home.

The business of some large companies requires operation from many local branches. Facilitating use of such offices by staff living locally can be cost effective as well as assisting staff, since it may avoid the need to rent extra space or reorganise buildings that are under pressure.

For smaller companies that don't have these options, there may still be practical opportunities to access suitable working space. A number of 'telecentres' now exist around the country offering inexpensive or free access to online facilities. However, some of these have a community focus with an informal style that does not meet businesses' need for a secure and uninterrupted working environment. Many business centres are able to assist with provision of this kind of facility. Otherwise, renting space from other firms with spare capacity may be an attractive option.

On-site services for employees

Some sites generate large amounts of lunchtime traffic. This has been successfully tackled by a number of companies that have analysed why staff were making lunchtime trips, in order to meet those needs on site. Cash-points, staff restaurants, dry cleaning, crèche, and on-site shops feature amongst the facilities that can help cut lunchtime car use. An alternative approach is to lay on a bus into town at lunchtime.



case study

Incentives for moving closer

The Ethical Property Company only employs 18 staff, but manages to offer a financial relocation package that encourages employees to move into sustainable commuting range. The organisation developed its formal travel plan two years ago but has had some sustainable transport measures in place since 1997.

Operations director, Cécile Galoselva, says sustainable transport features from the very first contact with a potential member of staff: 'Our recruitment adverts feature our policy of offering to buy new staff a free company bike. And we offer a relocation package of £500 per person in the household if they move within cycling distance of the office. Two people have relocated who otherwise would not have moved.' It is up to the individual to decide for themselves which possible places to live offer journeys that they feel are comfortably cycleable. 'If a company our size can provide this level of assistance to relocate to within a sustainable commuting distance, then virtually anyone can,' says Cécile.

The company bike package doesn't stop at purchase – Ethical Property picks up the annual maintenance bill. The company's business travel policy is that staff should try to use public transport or cycle or walk. Anyone wishing to use their own vehicle must seek prior permission from their line manager and the mileage reimbursement is set at a level which Cécile describes as 'the minimum.'

Flexible working is encouraged. The company has a system in place to pay for an individual to get internet access at home and for phone bills to be charged directly by insertion of an introductory number before business calls.

The company runs an annual staff travel survey, both to find out about staff travel habits and to glean suggestions on how to improve the travel plan. Cécile follows up the survey with a personal approach to those coming in by car to offer information on the public transport options available. 'They can be a bit annoyed at first,' she admits, 'but then they engage, and one person did change how she travelled as a result.' In fact, across all their staffed offices in Oxford, London, Sheffield and Bristol, none of



the staff

now drive to work.

The company may have to relocate its Oxford HQ before long, but Cécile is emphatic that they will seek premises with no parking except for a space for disabled drivers and bike parking.

Ethical Property provides office premises for companies and not-for-profit organisations that have a socially or environmentally beneficial purpose, and the travel plan extends to the company's responsibilities as a landlord. It accommodates between 40 and 200 people at each of 13 locations. Tenants are offered a travel survey and sustainable travel information. Tenants in the Bristol and Brighton buildings include a commercial car club which has enabled negotiation of a deal whereby all occupants can access a club car for business or personal mileage – an offer that may help some companies or individuals to avoid purchasing their own vehicles. Bi-monthly meetings with tenant organisations provide an opportunity to raise travel issues. Results from the tenant travel surveys are assessed against national travel statistics and reported in the company's annual report.

14 Broader strategies



A number of broad strategies can be used to encourage more sustainable travel across the board.

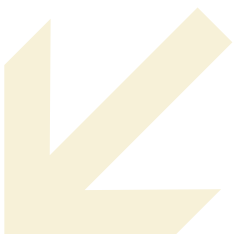
Incentives

Some firms have introduced incentive schemes to achieve large reductions in car use. Whatever incentives you decide to offer staff, they should be appropriately applied across the whole spectrum of sustainable travel. When you offer 'cash-out' payments, the founding principle should be reduction of vehicles to site. So the reward should be offered to travellers arriving on foot, from the station, by bus or cycling, and should be proportionately allocated to car sharers in accordance with the number of parking spaces saved. So, for example, if your cash-out is £1/day based on the release of a single car parking space, then solo drivers get nothing, two in a car receive 50p each, four in a car get 75p each from sharing £3 from the three freed spaces, and those walking in through the gate get the full £1.

Personalised travel advice

Staff travel surveys tend to reveal some mismatches between what transport options people think are available and the actual situation on the ground. This is largely explained by the fact that staff who habitually drive to work are not well informed about public transport. They may also perceive that cycling is impossible because they think the only cycling route is along the busy main road. The public transport marketplace can be complicated to negotiate, and for buses in particular up-to-date information can be hard to obtain. This information deficit will be helped by the information and marketing campaigns that form a key part of travel plans. However, the problem runs deeper, because a significant proportion of people struggle to understand timetables and some do not find maps naturally helpful. And even the rest may not be inclined to go to the effort of deciphering the variations of times and connections that could serve their needs.

A highly personalised approach can overcome these issues. The idea is to give staff the option of a detailed assessment of the travel options available to fulfil their everyday journeys. This service often entails face-to-face advice and generally calls upon expertise from the authorities and companies providing public transport and other travel facilities in the area. A typical outcome would be for an individual to receive a simple clear listing showing just the bus times at the stop nearest home plus those for the return journey from the office. Details about fares and weekly or monthly discounts would also be provided. Very often personalised travel initiatives are backed up by special or introductory free travel offers. Information and recommendations about walking or cycling links can also be included.



Staff who habitually drive to work are not well informed about public transport.

New staff should receive comprehensive information about the options for buses, trains, walking, cycling or car sharing.



Induction packages

Changing jobs requires individuals to reassess their travel patterns. This moment is an opportunity to tip the balance towards sustainable travel. At the least, new staff should receive comprehensive information about the options for buses, trains, walking, cycling or car sharing, and, if you really want to show it's a priority, send it to them even before they embark on their first journey to work, then go over the material again at induction meetings. If possible, offer a package of introductory incentives for sustainable travel. This might, for example, include any of the following:

- Introductory free weekly season ticket for public transport
- Discounts and/or interest-free loan for an annual season ticket
- Free or discounted company bike
- Cash to forgo the entitlement to a car park permit.

Visitors

If you are a retail business site drawing thousands of customers, then you will need to survey and assess their travel needs and design part of your travel plan specifically to address visitor travel. But sites without a public interface can still generate significant numbers of car trips by visitors. To reduce visitor car trips, ensure that:

- directions to the site by public transport, walking and cycling – including maps, timetables and travel advice – are available on a public website with a back-up phone number to cater for any questions. If the easiest and quickest way to reach your site is by public transport or park and ride, then say so explicitly
- all staff are equipped with a standard email to send to visitors including the weblink – most visitors will be coming as a result of an invitation from a member of staff
- if you charge staff for parking, charge visitors too and let them know this in advance.

Tax

Cash incentives are subject to tax. Payments to give up parking rights are also taxable, but tax can be minimised by operating a points system whereby points accrued by not parking can be used to buy tax-exempt travel. In general, any package of points or vouchers which includes incentives needs careful design to ensure that it includes only tax-exempt measures, otherwise the whole package will attract tax. Tax-liable incentives should be offered separately.

Area networks of 15 travel plans

Now that travel plans are becoming widespread, you may have opportunities to link up with other companies in your area to jointly develop travel initiatives of benefit to all these organisations and their staff.

Car sharing schemes stand more chance of matching drivers if they draw on a greater pool of people. Shuttle bus services that are not viable for one company on its own can become good value when firms pool their resources and their demand. Smaller companies that may not have much money to invest in travel plan measures can nevertheless be valuable contributors of users who help make services viable or who will enable more people to share their car journeys.

Companies sharing the same business park are often close enough to produce shared travel information and travel plan marketing materials. Some business parks employ a travel plan coordinator to work on a shared travel plan covering all the firms on site, including joint promotional activities.

case study

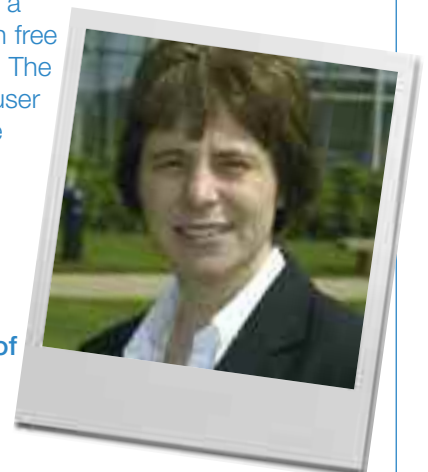
Leading a business park travel plan

Lesley Scobell is the travel plan coordinator for Cambourne Business Park near Cambridge. She is employed by the company that owns the park, Development Securities plc. A travel plan coordinator for the park was a condition of the section 106 planning permission agreement which commits the developers to 'use reasonable endeavours' to reduce sole occupancy car trips by 10% by 2011.

Lesley outlines the approach that they have adopted: 'We feel it is very important to foster good habits from the beginning. So last year, before IP Access moved into the park, we provided that company with all of the information we have about bus services, cycle routes and car sharing. We also made sure that the firm was registered with Camshare, the car sharing scheme, in advance of their move.'

For the last two years Lesley has run a well-attended bike to work event with free breakfast during National Bike Week. The business park has an active bicycle user group which provides a popular 'bike buddy' service.

The business park's latest travel survey showed a continued reduction in single occupancy car trips and a steady increase in car sharing, walking, cycling and use of the public bus service.



case study

Companies chip in for a wider choice of travel

'Data showed 300 people were living within a mile of each other and yet were travelling separately.'

Mel Mehmet, travel plan forum coordinator



Companies in Dorking have teamed up to create better sustainable travel opportunities for their staff.

The initial group was made up of the major offices of Friends Provident, Kuoni Travel and Unum Provident, plus a large Waitrose store. Together they employ nearly 70% of Dorking's working population. Subsequently Sabre Insurance and Pfizer have become involved. The motivation for the scheme was recognition that most of Dorking's

congestion was generated by solo car journeys to work, coupled with staff parking problems on sites where expansion of parking was not an option.

Mel Mehmet, employed by the county and the district councils to get the network up and running, explains how the companies have achieved more car sharing by working together. 'You need a critical mass for a car share database to find people with similar journeys,' he says. Surrey Carshare now has 750 people registered and a 50% match rate, with about 250 sharers on an average day. People travel together who would otherwise never have met.

Jointly, the companies have found that it is affordable to run company buses that would have been prohibitively expensive for an individual organisation. Mel describes how it works: 'We had 2600 responses from the survey and were also able to share postcode maps of staff addresses. This data showed 300 people were living within a mile of each other and yet were travelling separately the 8 miles to Dorking from Reigate-Redhill.' While the bus would be far too costly for Kuoni on its own – about £350 a day – the joint service carries about 14 staff at a cost of about £50 per day to the company. Different companies offer their staff different subsidies on the bus fare, ranging from 50 to 100%, depending how desperate the parking situation is at their sites.

At lunchtime the buses do free shopper runs from the edge-of-town sites to the town centre, where Mel has negotiated a 10–15% discount with 30 of the shops for company staff who show their ID cards.



Sample staff travel survey

The survey shown here will provide a sound basis to collect the information that you need from staff in order to design a travel plan. However, please take care to adapt the questions to suit your own circumstances. For example, although this survey asks about the possibility of working from home, it does not raise the question of working from offices closer to home, which might be a practical option for organisations that own or rent a number of premises. Your local authority may ask that all organisations in the area use the same standard survey as a starting point, so it is worth checking on this first.

This survey excludes personal information questions on gender, age and job title. Though these are not strictly necessary, you might prefer to include them. One advantage of such information is that it can be used to check whether responses are representative of the whole workforce and to help target your marketing by identifying groups showing interest in particular measures. The job title question does raise anonymity issues.

Cover letter

A short cover letter will be needed, either attached to the questionnaire or incorporated at the top of it, to introduce the survey and the travel plan. This should be signed by someone senior. You will also need to highlight any incentives for filling in the survey, and provide a contact for queries.

For example:

Xcorp is committed to developing a Travel Plan by the end of this year, to improve and promote sustainable travel choices to our site. As part of this, we are inviting all staff to complete a travel survey. We would be grateful if you would take a few minutes to complete the survey, so that your suggestions for ways to improve travel choices to our site can be investigated, and so we can make plans for travel improvements.

(signed by Chief Executive)

Please return the survey by (date). All completed surveys received by this date will be entered into a free prize draw, with the chance to win £XXX.

If you have any queries, please feel free to contact (name of travel plan contact + phone & email).

Travel Survey Your individual information will be confidential.

1. What is your home postcode?

.....

2. What town or village do you live in?

.....

3. What is your usual place of work?

.....

4. How far do you travel to work?

☐ Up to 1 mile

☐ Over 1 mile and up to 2 miles

☐ Over 2 miles and up to 5 miles

☐ Over 5 miles and up to 10 miles

☐ Over 10 miles and up to 20 miles

☐ Over 20 miles

5. When do you normally arrive at work?

☐ 8.00 – 8.29am

☐ 8.30 – 8.59am

☐ 9.00 – 9.29am

☐ 9.30 – 10.00am

☐ Other – please specify

6. When do you normally leave work?

☐ 4.00 – 4.29pm

☐ 4.30 – 4.59pm

☐ 5.00 – 5.29pm

☐ 5.30 – 6.00pm

☐ Other – please specify

7. Is your work

☐ part time

☐ full time?

☐ If part time, please specify how many days per week you work

8. Do you have any mobility difficulty which affects your transport choice?

☐ Yes

☐ No

9. How did you travel to work in the last 7 days? If your journey used more than one mode of transport, please show just the main part of the journey.

	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Bus							
Bicycle							
Car, as driver, on your own							
Car, as driver, with other(s)							
Car, as passenger							
Foot							
Motorbike							
Train							
Other, please specify							

10. How do you travel to work if your normal form of transport is not available?

- ☐ Bus
 ☐ Bicycle
 ☐ Car, as driver, on your own
 ☐ Car, as driver, with other(s)
 ☐ Car, as passenger
 ☐ Foot
 ☐ Motorbike
 ☐ Train
 ☐ Other – please specify

11. If you drive to work on your own, would you be willing to try more environmentally-friendly options such as walking, cycling, public transport or car sharing some of the time?

- ☐ Yes
 ☐ No

12. Are there any particular barriers which make it difficult for you to use these more environmentally-friendly options? If so, what are they?

.....

.....

.....

13. If you are travelling directly between your home and work, how easy or difficult do you think it is to travel by the following means?

	Very easy	Quite easy	Quite difficult	Very difficult	Not possible
Walking					
Bike					
Bus					
Train					
Car share					

14. Which of the following changes would most encourage you to walk or cycle to work?
Please tick no more than three.

- ☐ A small incentive each day you do not drive
- ☐ Drying rooms and lockers at work
- ☐ Showers and changing rooms
- ☐ Secure bike parking
- ☐ A course to practise cycling and gain confidence in a safe environment
- ☐ Another cyclist to show you a good cycling route to work
- ☐ Construction of dedicated cycle tracks – if so, please specify location
- ☐ Creation of new site entrance to make your route more convenient – if so, please specify location
- ☐ Other – please specify

15. Which of the following changes would most encourage you to use public transport to or from work? Please tick no more than three.

- ☐ A small incentive each day you do not drive
- ☐ Better quality bus waiting facilities
- ☐ Readily available up-to-date easy-to-use bus and train timetables
- ☐ Reduced-cost staff pass on public transport
- ☐ Existing public transport services re-timed to better fit your work hours – if so, please specify bus or train service
- ☐ Additional bus route – if so, please specify location
- ☐ Other – please specify

16. Which of the following changes would most encourage you to car share to and from work? *Please tick no more than three.*

- ☐ A small incentive every day you share a car
- ☐ A car share database to help you find a partner with similar work patterns
- ☐ Free taxi home if let down by the car driver
- ☐ Reserved car parking in a prime spot for car sharers
- ☐ Other – please specify

17. Do you sometimes spend a normal work day working from home instead of in the office?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how often?

18. Would you be interested in exploring the option of working from home or of working from home more often?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

19. If you drive to work, where do you usually park?

- ☐ At worksite ☐ Free parking in nearby street
- ☐ Paid parking in nearby street ☐ Paid parking in commercial car park

20. How many trips have you made for business purposes during the last month?

.....

21. What were the last three destinations that you travelled to for business purposes?

1.

2.

3.

22. How did you travel on these business trips?

	Destination 1	Destination 2	Destination 3
Car, as driver, on your own			
Car, as driver, with others			
Car, as passenger			
Train			
Bike			
Walk			
Bus			
Motorbike			
Air			

23. If you drove or flew to any of your destinations, would any of the following options have been feasible?

	Destination 1	Destination 2	Destination 3
Car share			
Telephone or video conference, if facilities had been available			
Train			
Bike			
Walk			
Bus			
Motorbike			

24. Is there anything that would make it easier for you to use these options for business travel?

.....

25. If you drive a car for business trips, is it

- ☐ Car from the company pool fleet
 ☐ Your own car
 ☐ Company car allocated to you personally?

26. Do you have any other comments?

.....



Constructing the business case for a travel plan

Here is a simple checklist to help you to calculate a financial case for your travel plan. Some indicative expenditure figures are provided, drawn from existing travel plans. Note that most travel plans contain only some of the elements listed here.

In addition to the income and expenditure lines identified below, the business case can be amplified with qualitative and semi-quantitative information about other types of benefits your travel plan could bring (see page 8). For example, your human resources department can estimate how much staff turnover and sickness costs your company. This will give useful financial context to benefits such as greater staff retention, a more attractive recruitment package or reduction in staff sick days through better staff health. Positive impacts on staff morale and motivation through reduced travel stress and flexible working are harder to translate into increased productivity, but may still be important information for some companies. It is also relevant to describe the potential benefits to the corporate image and community relations that could stem from the environmental achievements of a travel plan, although the valuation applied to these will vary widely from firm to firm.

The checklist below is followed by a real example of a business case for a travel plan that aims to be self-financing through savings to business travel.

Savings and income

Ongoing annual savings

Business trips

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Potential sources of savings: | → Saved private car mileage reimbursement (allow for any increased mileage rates to encourage car sharers) |
| | → Reduced fleet car mileage |
| | → Staff time saved (this may require separate presentation to management as a 'below-the-line' saving, because it is invisible on the company accounts but is a real gain through productivity improvements). |
| Relevant targets: | → Proportion of business trips in private cars replaced by phone conferencing or video conferencing |
| | → Proportion of fleet car trips replaced by phone conferencing or video conferencing |
| | → Proportion of business trips replaced by public transport or other modes (allow for reimbursement costs of bus, rail or taxi fares and mileage rate for use of personal bikes) |
| | → Proportion of business trips shifted from private cars to pool cars that are cheaper to run. |

Car parking

- Potential sources of savings:
- Reduced car park rental charges
 - Reduced car park maintenance
- Provision of car parking spaces costs companies about £400 on average nationwide, £2000 in outer London, rising to £6000 in central London.*
- These savings may both have an additional 'below-the-line' component, which is the avoided cost of ongoing rent or maintenance in cases where further car parking would be needed without a travel plan.*
- Relevant targets:
- Reduction in car journeys to site, which in turn may reflect sub-targets for each travel plan measure.

Accommodation costs

- Potential sources of savings:
- Increased utilisation of existing sites and buildings
- Relevant targets:
- Homeworking and satellite office working
 - Reduction in car journeys to site (where site utilisation is limited by access and parking rather than capacity of the buildings).

Perk cars

- Potential sources of savings:
- Savings from not offering company cars and associated packages (allow for cost of replacement packages and possibility of phasing in change over time with staff turnover).
- Relevant targets:
- Proportion of staff switched from car-based perks packages, which will hold implications for establishing other benefits packages, such as season ticket allowances, and may imply establishing pool vehicles for business use.

Unproductive travel time

- As well as staff time savings from cutting business trips (mentioned above), homeworking or satellite office working can save substantial amounts of staff time. Clearly, this is harder to quantify, but companies with strong flexible working cultures claim that they have achieved better productivity.

Ongoing income

Car parking

- Potential sources of income:
- Car parking fees (range from 10p/day to 75p/day, taking five current examples)

Bus fares

- Supporting buses will be a net cost for your travel plan, but in constructing your business case you should remember that many firms recoup a proportion of the cost from staff.

One-off savings

Car parking

- Potential sources of savings:
- Avoided land purchase and construction costs of building a new car park (£1000 – £3000 per space construction cost, even for surface-level car parks)
 - Proceeds from selling off portion of car park or developing it for own use or for sale.

NB Possible grants are not shown here, but funding may be available for some travel plan facilities, for example from local authorities, and may make a significant difference to your business case.

Expenditure

Ongoing annual expenditure

Travel plan coordinator

Salary plus overheads £40,000

Car share database

Annual software licence £500–1,000

Marketing

Publicity, information, promotional events £5,000–20,000

Guaranteed ride home

Emergency taxis for staff who car share or use public transport £100–2,000

Shuttle bus service

Funding for one shuttle bus route £50,000–100,000

Incentive schemes

£1/day for 500 staff who travel to work sustainably £130,000

One-off expenditure

Initial survey

Survey and analysis, if not done in-house £10,000

Car share database

Set up £500–3,000

Cycling facilities

10 lockers £500–1,000

Shower and changing facilities £5,000–10,000

Secure cycle parking area £5,000

1 kilometre of new tarmac topped cycle route £70,000

Walking facilities

Significant infrastructure (e.g. new crossings, traffic calming) £30,000–100,000

Real-life business case

The following business case is for a travel plan funded through savings in business travel.

Background

1000 staff spread across four offices in a rural region with limited public transport.

Data from staff survey

85% of business trips are staff driving their own cars, for which they receive 42p/mile.

Presently very few business trips are car shared. However, the survey revealed that up to a quarter of the business journeys could have been made by car sharing or public transport – by employees' own assessment. There is presently little or no telephone conferencing or video conferencing even though a significant proportion of journeys are between offices.

Targets set

Senior managers decided to set a target for 10% reduction in business mileage over three years. To achieve this, 8% of business trips need to be car shared and 33% of the inter-office trips need to be replaced by telephone conference. The car share target was set at the proportion of business journeys that the survey respondents said they could share. The inter-office trip target drew on reductions achieved through telephone conferencing by organisations that had started from broadly similar circumstances. Although the adopted travel plan included measures to promote all sustainable modes, including public transport, managers decided not to include potential savings from these other measures in the core business case.

Projected savings

- £106,000 per year (during year 4) from saved mileage claims (270,000 miles per year). See first table below.
- An additional £54,000 per year (at year 4) if staff time saved by teleconferencing instead of travelling between offices is factored in. See second table below.
- An additional £100,000 per year (by year 6) if a pool car scheme is implemented to begin to replace use of personal cars. This saving would be additional to the tables below.

6-year projections

Costs and benefits *not* taking account of savings in staff travel time

	Salary costs	Capital budget	Revenue budget	Forecast gross savings	Annual net savings	Cumulative savings
Year 1	£30,533	£9,000	£26,000	£19,957	-£45,576	-£45,576
Year 2	£31,449		£36,050	£57,768	-£9,731	-£55,307
Year 3	£32,393		£37,132	£97,127	£27,602	-£27,705
Year 4	£33,365		£38,245	£106,458	£34,848	£7,143
Year 5	£34,366		£39,393	£115,878	£42,120	£49,263
Year 6	£35,396		£40,575	£125,349	£49,378	£98,640

Costs and benefits *with* account taken of savings in staff travel time

	Salary costs	Capital budget	Revenue budget	Forecast gross savings	Annual net savings	Cumulative savings
Year 1	£30,533	£9,000	£26,000	£30,352	-£35,181	-£35,181
Year 2	£31,449		£36,050	£88,368	£20,869	-£14,312
Year 3	£32,393		£37,132	£149,627	£80,102	£65,790
Year 4	£33,365		£38,245	£160,533	£88,923	£154,713
Year 5	£34,366		£39,393	£171,576	£97,817	£252,530
Year 6	£35,396		£40,575	£182,717	£106,746	£359,276

The capital budget allocation is mainly for telephone conferencing facilities and set-up of a car sharing database. The revenue budget is for promotional activities, information and incentives for sustainable travel. A small grant for on-site cycling facilities is not included. The travel plan does not anticipate any civil engineering infrastructural work or funding of dedicated bus services. First year figures make allowance for a period to get the travel plan coordinator post up and running.

Basis for projections

- Telephone conferencing will cut car mileage between offices by 9% after one year; 20% after two years; and 33% after three years. Further small increases in telephone conferencing will be achieved in years 4–6, replacing an additional 1% of ‘between-office’ mileage per year.
- Car sharing will cut business car mileage by 1.6% after one year; 4.8% after two years; and 8% after three years. This is based on employees’ own assessment that 8% of their current car trips could potentially be made as a car share. Further cuts of 1% of business mileage are achieved in subsequent years.
- A car sharing allowance of 5p per mile, payable to drivers, is introduced.
- In the first year, passengers are also paid 5p per mile to car share.
- The mileage rate at which savings are calculated will be 42p per mile in year 1 and rise by 1p in each subsequent year.
- All costs are inflated by 3% per annum.



Contacts and further information

National Business Travel Network

The National Business Travel Network (NBTN) is a business-to-business network which enables companies to share best practice and promote the business case for travel plans and Smarter Choices. Through regular meetings and a range of resources, NBTN members can engage with other businesses, develop partnerships, access free information and tools and provide advice and feedback to Government on related policy issues. A Department for Transport initiative, NBTN promotes and demonstrates the benefits to business of sustainable travel measures, working in partnership with and supporting existing organisations and networks. For further information, please contact info@nbtn.org.uk

Department for Transport

Information and resources on travel planning can be found on the 'Sustainable travel' section of the Department for Transport website www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/sustainable/. The DfT THINK campaign has a number of resources available on its website. www.thinkroadsafety.gov.uk/campaigns/drivingforwork/employers.htm

ACT TravelWise

ACT TravelWise is the leading network for travel planning expertise in the UK. A membership association of large public and private sector employers, it provides support and information to organisations on implementing effective travel plans, as well as news, contacts and services. For more information, please contact ACT TravelWise on 020 7348 1970 or see www.acttravelwise.org

Transport Direct

www.transportdirect.info is a free to use website that provides travel information and enables journey planning by car and public transport to any destination in Great Britain.

RoadSafe

RoadSafe is acknowledged as a leading forum for promoting and devising solutions to road safety problems. www.roadsafe.com

Bike for All

www.bikeforall.net is a gateway to find cycling promotion schemes, contacts and sources of information.

Carplus

Carplus offers information, advice and support to communities, local authorities and partner associations developing car share clubs across the UK. www.carplus.org.uk/

Telework Association

The Telework Association provides information, advice and support to enable individuals and managers to make a success of mobile, home-based and flexible ways of working. For more information please contact enquiries@telework.org.uk or 0800 616008 or see www.tca.org.uk



Trains

Customer Help

Alumina

Champion



References

- ¹ *Making travel plans work: lessons from UK case studies*, Department for Transport, 2002.
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- ³ *Making travel plans work: lessons from UK case studies* (see reference 1), median of 21 case studies.
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