

Business Travel Emissions

Improving data reporting and engagement

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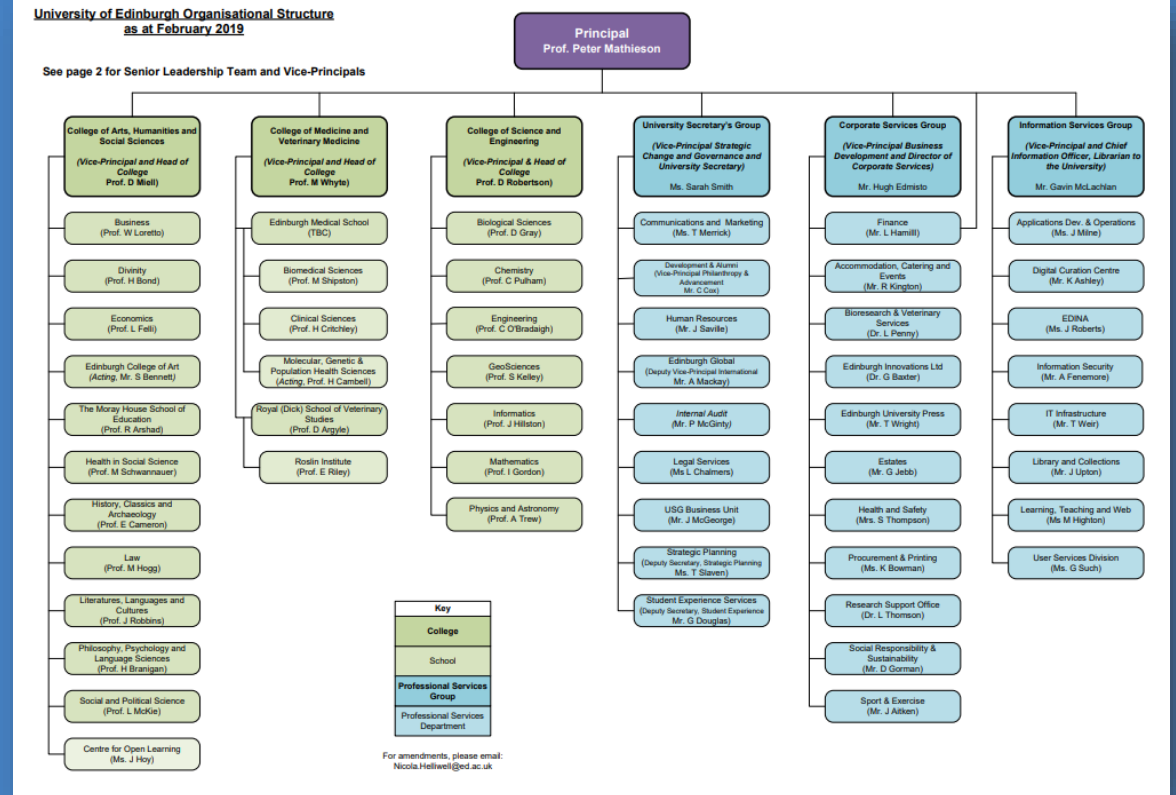
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Context

We're a big, complicated, and international University...

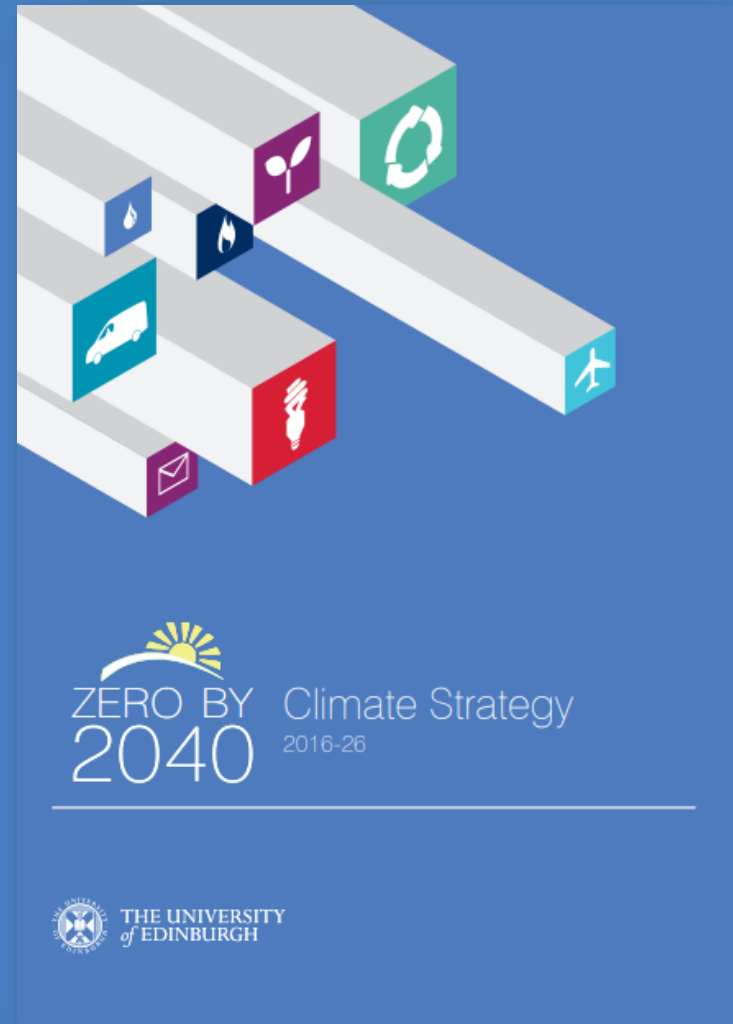


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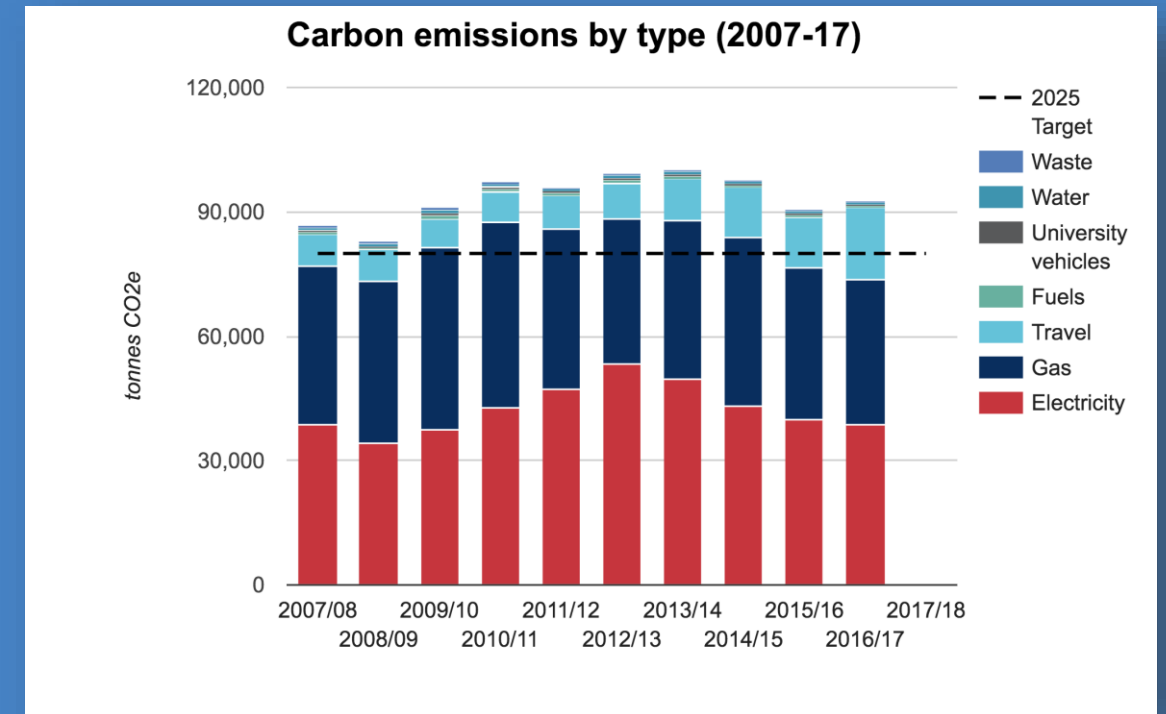


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Progress with a focus on energy



- **£4 million Sustainable Campus Fund**
- **More than £20 million invested in low-carbon energy on campus**
- **100% zero carbon electricity tariff (but that doesn't count)**
- **Divested from fossil fuel investments**



Our reporting challenge

We knew emissions from travel were high, but couldn't easily analyse them

- System took **6 weeks** to **guess** our business travel emissions
- Staff often didn't enter easy to read origins and destination

“From Edinburgh to Conference”

“Taxi home”

- A lot of time was spent **finding and correcting mistakes**

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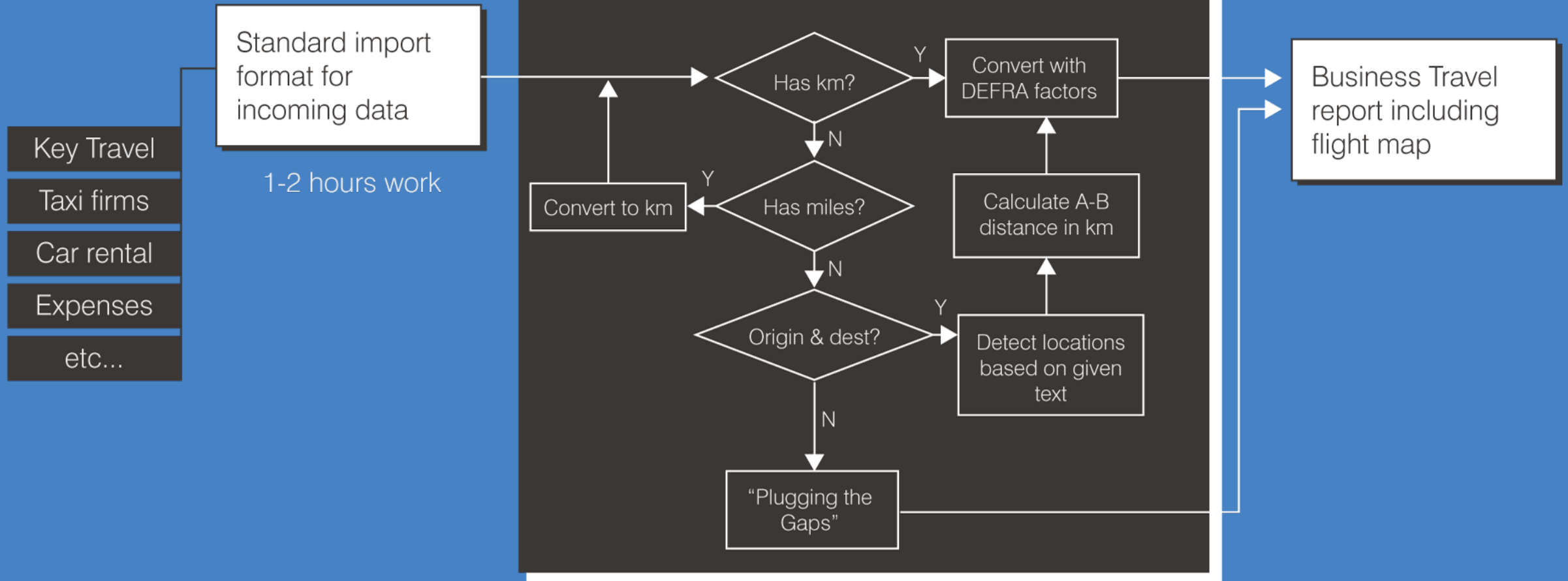
The solution

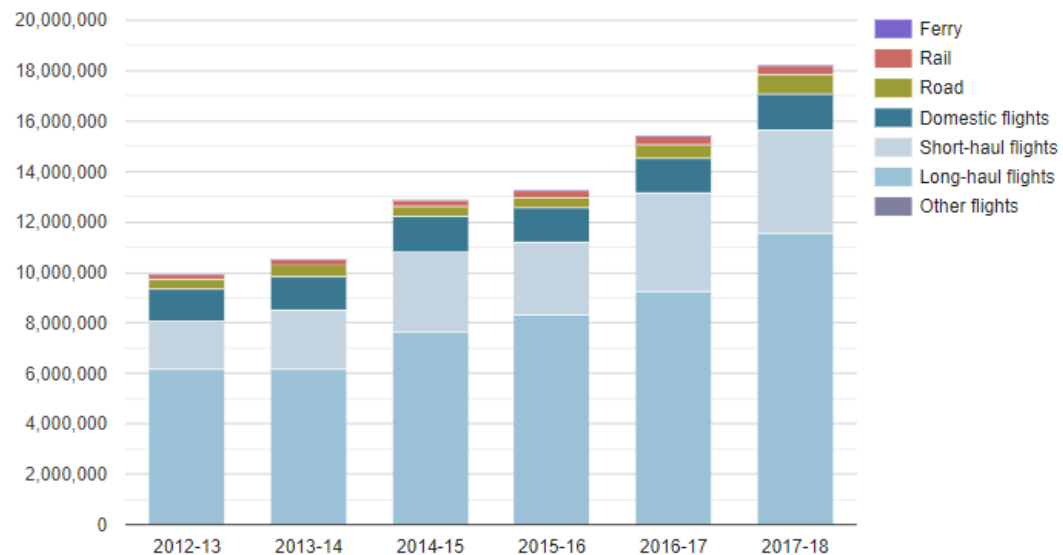
In 2017, we spent 8 weeks creating a new system to automate the analysis of our business travel data

- **Completely new approach** – understands the text staff enter
- Takes **hours not weeks** to process data
- **Automatically created report** so staff can see their department's emissions



How it works





Kilograms CO₂e / Academic year

To see the report for a particular year, [click on the column](#).

CARBON EMISSIONS

COST

DISTANCE

COUNT

Carbon

18,208,793 kg CO₂e

Equivalent to...

717 Space Shuttle launches

Distance

98,992,928 km

Equivalent to...

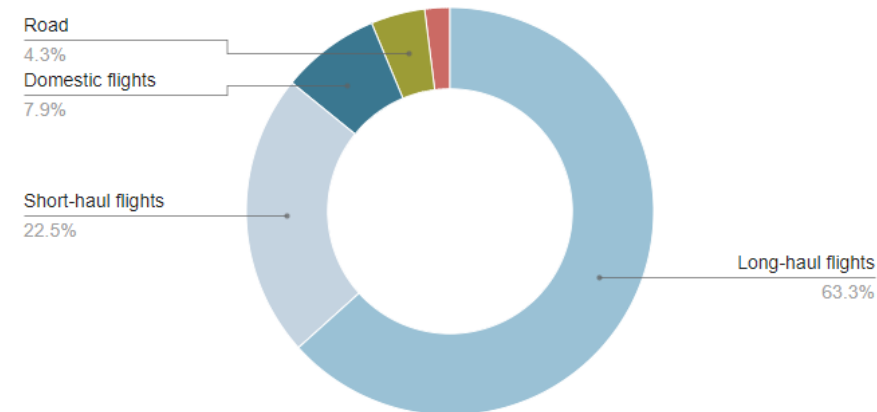
129 journeys to the Moon and back

Cost

£8,711,530.32

Equivalent to...

249 academic staff salaries



www.edin.ac/business-travel-report



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What the data means

Headline: Managing business travel carbon will be a challenge

- Bad news
 - We are seeing **huge growth in business travel:** costs, emissions, number of journeys...
- Better news
 - Flights are in **decline as a percentage of domestic travel**
 - **Domestic rail has doubled in 4 years**, domestic flights are almost static
- Most growth comes from European and long haul travel



Does this tell the whole story?



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Finding out “the why”

We interviewed 5 senior managers, conducted focus groups with around 40 academic and professional staff...



Academia necessitates travel

- Networking opportunities
- Collaboration on research projects
- Attendance at conferences
-

....If academics don't travel, they risk damaging their research, slowing their career progression or worse, losing their jobs!



Business travel isn't just bad for the environment

- Overall spend on travel is increasing
- Staff feel their productivity decreases before, during, and after a journey
- Staff health and well-being is affected
- Work-life balance is altered



What can we do about it?

We researched and proposed a series of potential options



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Proposed interventions

Low Impact

Advice to staff

Video conference training

Support for planning trips

Voluntary face-to-face seminars

Voluntary training for staff who book travel

A voluntary carbon offsetting scheme

Private 'league table' or benchmark

Moderate Impact

Mandatory training for staff who book travel

Public 'league table' or benchmark

A policy recommending train to London

High Impact

A mandatory carbon offsetting scheme

A policy requiring train to London



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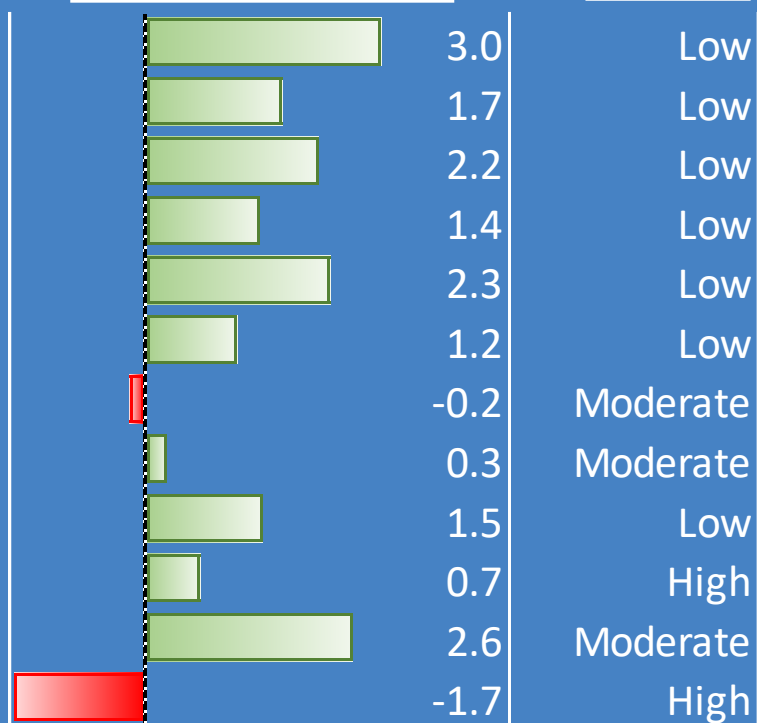
Proposed interventions

Intervention

Score

Impact

- a) Advice to staff
- b) Video conference training
- c) Support for planning trips
- d) Voluntary face-to-face seminars
- e) Voluntary training for staff who book travel
- f) Private 'league table' or benchmark
- g) Mandatory training for staff who book travel
- h) Public 'league table' or benchmark
- i) A voluntary carbon offsetting scheme
- j) A mandatory carbon offsetting scheme
- k) A policy recommending train to London
- l) A policy requiring train to London



- Advice, voluntary training and recommending the train to London are non-controversial
- Academics are strongly opposed to a policy limiting flights to London
- Academics appear supportive of a mandatory carbon offset.

Our proposed pilots

(for specific schools / departments)

- **Mandatory online training**
- **Mandatory train to London**
(unless the staff member has specific reason to fly)
- **Automatic carbon compensation on flights**
(£25 to London, £35 in Europe, £50 rest of the world)

*** Unfortunately these did not go ahead ***



Where next?



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New Pilots

- At a college wide level
 - Mandatory use of Travel Management Company
 - Cap on number of domestic flights
 - ...
- Across the campus
 - Introduction of smaller Video Conference Suites
 - Adaptation of Be Sustainable training



But this isn't just an Edinburgh problem

We have found many other institutes are looking to address the same issue.

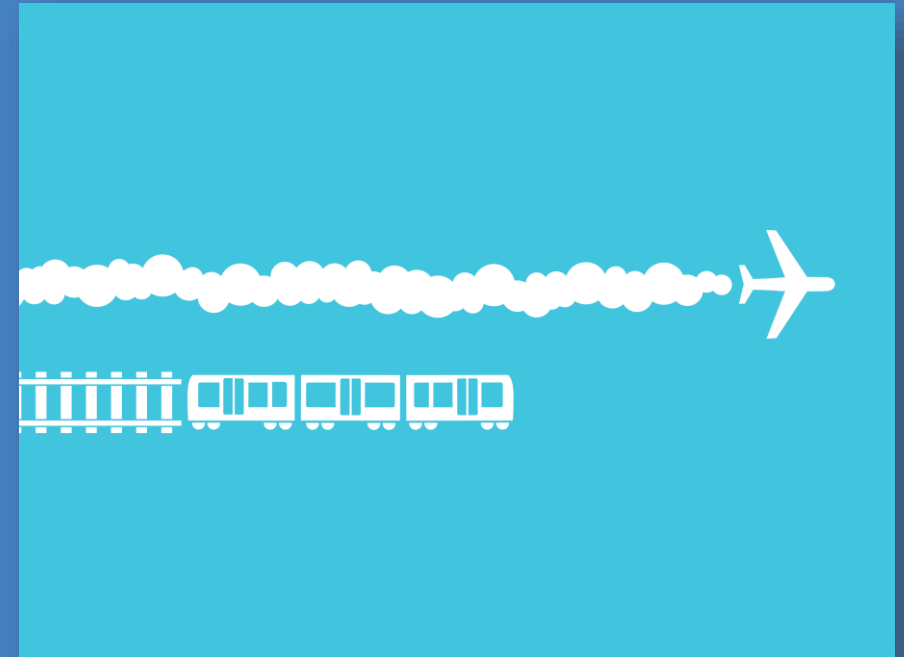
... Some have recognised that business travel is an issue that needs addressing.

... Others have started to analyse the data, initiate pilots, persuade senior staff...



The network

By bringing interested parties together,
we can address business travel
emissions



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Interest in Network

Total sign-ups: 67+

Total number of institutions registered: 55+

- UK
- Europe
- USA
- Rest of the World...



Themes from first workshop

- Research on why people fly
- Resources
- Initiatives to Reduce Carbon Emissions
- Setting Emission Reduction Goals
- Carbon Calculations
- Data Collection

Link to workshop recording (requires adobe connect add-in):
<https://collab.switch.ch/p5thqlxn332/>



Getting Involved

Online workshops:

- Today (14:00 – 16:00)
Luca Fontana (EPFL, Switzerland) presenting on “researching why people fly in higher education”.
- 27th March (14:00 – 16:00)
Serge Biollaz (PSI, Switzerland) Presenting on “establishing the most useful online collaboration tools”.

Opportunity to collaborate online (website in development)



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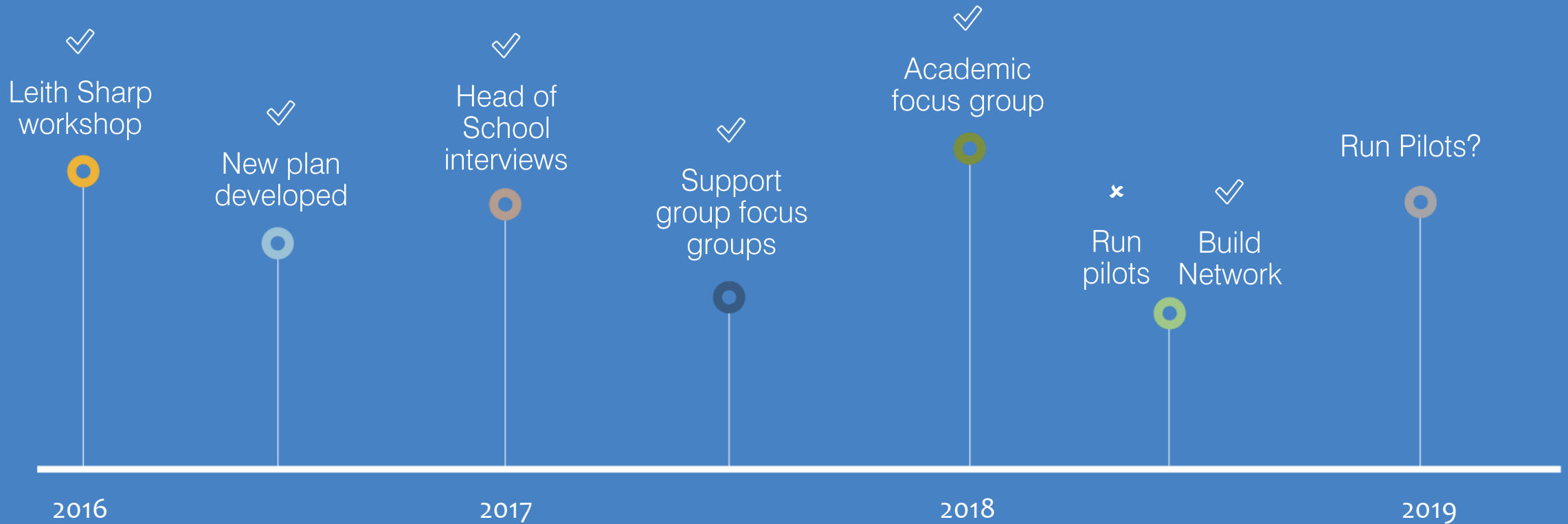


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Process



Lessons learnt

- The importance of accurate data
- Addressing business travel is not just about carbon
- Engagement with all stakeholders is key
- This is not just a concern for the University of Edinburgh



Questions?

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