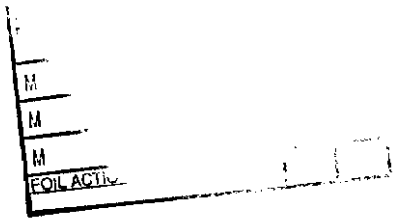
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Green Travel Plan

Foreword

WE PROMOTE ACCESS TO EXCELLENCE ENABLING YOU TO DEVELOP YOUR POTENTIAL

- We value and practise equality of opportunity, transparency and tolerance
- We strive for excellence in all we do: locally regionally, nationally and internationally
- We encourage and promote research innovation and creativity
- We work in partnership with business, the community and other educators

Mission Statement 2000

Transport is one of the most intractable and emotive issues facing society today. The transportation impacts of the Further and Higher Education sector are undoubtedly significant.

The aim of the Green Travel Plan is to help mitigate these impacts by encouraging staff and students to use alternative modes of transport than single occupancy car use. The Plan sets out the reasons behind the need for a Plan, the results of travel surveys already conducted, and an action plan of initiatives intended to achieve the Plan's aims and objectives. We believe the successful implementation of the plan will have significant benefits for the building and all it's users.

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Introduction

Air pollution from traffic in Britain has risen by 35% in five years. A third of the UK population lives in areas where European Community air quality guidelines are not achieved, this results in an estimated 24,000 people dying prematurely each year through exposure to particulate air pollution, much of it due to road traffic.

Perhaps, unexpectedly, the motorists themselves and their passengers are at most risk from exhaust fumes. Recent studies have shown that car drivers face pollution levels inside a car 2 to 3 times higher than those experienced by pedestrians. Car commuters may receive more than a fifth of their total exposure to some pollutants from their daily journey to and from work. Advances in vehicle design will help to reduce emissions but these gains could be at risk if traffic growth continues unchecked (DETR 1998).

It is predicted that, over the next 20 years on our busiest roads, journey times in the peak rush hour could lengthen by as much as 70%. The CBI has already estimated that factors associated with congestion (delays to deliveries, time lost in traffic jams, ill health etc.) cost the UK economy 3% in GDP every year, equivalent to some £15 billion. Already in outer London one-fifth of the time taken to make a journey in rush hour is spent stationary.

Even though most people are aware of the resultant problems caused by car use; accident rates, noise and air pollution with their resultant health implications, the controversy surrounding road building and associated habitat loss, it still does not diminish our over dependence upon the car.

The reasons are innumerable; increasing affluence, shifts in retail patterns and the growth of out-of-town retailing and leisure facilities, the switch from local to nationwide distribution and marketing, the move towards green-field business parks, bus and rail de-regulation, reductions in subsidies for public transport, the steady reduction in the percentage of children making unaccompanied journeys to school and other complex social and economic factors.

All of this has resulted in a society that no longer lives close to work, shopping or recreational activities. Instead we have a society that discriminates against the non-car owner and actively promotes an unsustainable transportation ethic. As our transportation systems deteriorate it is the less mobile who have to bear the brunt of steeply rising costs, compounded by reduced and unreliable services.

Solving transport problems is not merely about reducing car use. Poor transport planning makes daily life even more arduous for community members with mobility problems. For many people in society the car is their only viable source or transport, commuting without the use of a car being impossible. Yet providing equity of access to transport is not either just about providing limited specially adapted services. It is about possessing an integrated and flexible mainstream service which community members with mobility difficulties can access and use the same way as everyone else. Many of the methods to accomplish this are actually about making transport better for everyone.

In its White Paper 'A New Deal for Transport' (1998), the Government made it clear that the construction of more and more roads to accommodate traffic growth is no longer a viable option. Instead it has recently placed significant emphasis in its framework, for a more integrated approach to the problems of congestion and poor air quality, on the development and implementation of Green Travel Plans as the expected method by which businesses should address the issue of reducing their own travel impacts.

Formulating A Green Travel Plan

If every staff member who commutes by car could be persuaded, through the adoption of a Green Travel Plan, to use an alternative mode of transport just one day per week, it would result in a 20% reduction in car use.

The Green Travel Plan is a set of mechanisms, initiatives and targets by which an organisation aims to encourage employees and others visiting their sites, to use alternatives to single-occupancy car-use. A plan is designed to encourage each individual to make the most appropriate choice for their journey, to make travelling easier and allow new travel modes and strategies to be formally adopted, while allowing the individual to retain the freedom of choice in the way they travel. A successful plan should eventually allow any business at the bottom of the transport hierarchy league to move towards achieving some level of transportation sustainability.

The Transport Hierarchy League:

↑ Highest	**Walk - Bicycle**
↑	
↑	**Public Transport**
↑	
↑	**Car Share - Motorcycle**
↑	
↑ **Lowest**	**Single occupancy car**

The purpose of the Green Transport Plan will be to develop a strategy and implement a set of measures to reduce reliance on the car for commuting and work travel by staff, particularly single occupancy car use. Its goal will be to develop a dynamic integrated travel management system, which would evolve with the changing circumstances of the building, and ultimately help to reduce pollution, congestion and the risks of accidents in and around the area.

Important benefits of a Green Travel Plan:

- ***Reductions or exemptions in possible car parking levies*** under the forthcoming Traffic Reduction Bill for employers who fund Green Travel Plans.
- ***Reduces the amount of space required for car parking*** leading to cost savings and/or releasing space for more productive uses.
- ***Provides a greater choice and equity in how people travel to work,*** which can help reduce stress caused by commuter driving and thus ***improve/enhance staff health, motivation and morale.***
- ***Possible significant individual cost savings*** for staff.

- ***Increase staff productivity*** when travelling to/from meetings/work through less problematic journeys to work, less time spent in traffic jams etc.

- ***Improve the quality of the local environment*** through ***reductions in traffic congestion, improved air quality*** (with less noise dirt and fumes), as well ***as reducing the impact of other national and global environmental problems*** (i.e. photochemical smog, climate change etc.).

- ***Institutional financial savings through more effective management of business travel*** and review of existing levels of subsidy to car users.

- ***Enhance the environmental sustainability performance and image of the building*** and can prove a positive benefit for staff recruitment.

For the Green Travel Plan to be successful it will be crucial, at both the individual and the institutional level, to change the underlying preconceptions of staff towards travel and the environment. This will have to be accomplished through It will need a careful combination of 'carrots' (encouragement to use alternative modes) and 'sticks' (disincentives to car use) to be formulated. This will include a mix of key elements such as car sharing, public transport promotion, encouragement to walk and cycle, support for work practices which reduce the need to travel in the first place and possibly even increased car parking charges.

A further critical aspect of any culture change will be for the University's management to lead by example. To help create 'ownership and involvement' in the Plan, staff will need to be informed regularly about what the Green Travel Plan is trying to achieve, how it is doing this and, most importantly, what benefits will be gained by individuals as well as the building as a whole.

STRATEGIES & INITIATIVES FOR THE GREEN TRAVEL PLAN

The following travel strategies and initiatives are based upon practical and realistic best practice in a number of business sectors, which have already developed and successfully begun to implement their own Green Travel Plans. The proposed initiatives are aimed at raising awareness and providing, the greatest diversity of possible alternatives to single-occupancy car commuting for users of the building.

The development of these proposals has taken into account a number of important issues for example, current & future European, Central Government, Local Authority and Borough transportation initiatives and legislation and the potential barriers presented by modes such as cycling, car-sharing, public transport etc.

OBJECTIVES OF THE GREEN TRAVEL PLAN

1. To develop an integrated approach to transport management, which would help to reduce pollution, congestion and the risks of accidents around the building.

2. To do whatever possible, within the constraints of local circumstances, to encourage every member of the building to routinely consider alternative travel methods to single-occupancy car use.

3. To significantly reduce the use of single-occupancy car use as a commuter option and develop healthier and sustainable forms of transport to and from the building.

Green Transport Plan Initiatives

The following specific travel proposals have been identified as the most practical and relevant initiatives that can be used to achieve the Green Travel Plan's objectives and targets. They are arranged in order of their level in the transport hierarchy league. They begin with the most sustainable walking.

WALKING

'Cycling or walking briskly for half an hour a day can halve the risk of heart disease'.
(Health Education Authority)

Nationally just one in ten commuter journeys are made on foot. Walking has been neglected in policy and planning and therefore has become marginalised in importance.

Walking now as a mode of transport has a definite negative image. Whilst it is difficult to include positive measures to promote walking in a Green Travel Plan, it does have significant value as a healthy form of transport.

CYCLING

'A 35 year old man cycling 12 miles a day extends his life expectancy by two and a half years compared with someone who takes no exercise'.
(Push Bikes Campaign)

Cycling is sustainable, fast, efficient and can lead to a healthier and more productive workforce. Although it is a particularly effective mode of transport for short trips of up to 3 to 5 miles (5-8km), Nationally bicycles are currently used for less than 3% of these journeys while the car accounts for 45%.

The setting up of a bicycle user group ("BUG") can be extremely useful in helping to provide a means of generating and sustaining interest in commuter cycling as well as allaying the fears of potential cycle commuters. It may also provide the basis for a 'Bike Buddy' scheme where a new rider is accompanied on the journey to work by a more experienced cyclist until sufficiently confident about travelling alone.

Benefits to Encouraging Staff to Switch from Car Commuting to Cycling Include:

- A healthier workforce: cycling four miles a day halves the risk of coronary heart disease, it is an excellent stress reliever. Regular cyclists enjoy a fitness level equivalent to being ten years younger, taking fewer sick days than non-cyclists, which results in less absenteeism from work (British Medical Association).

- Cyclists are more likely to arrive at work on time: cycle journey times can be quicker and more predictable than other commuting modes. A 5 mile journey can be comfortably cycled by an adult in 30 minutes.

- Savings on car parking spaces: 12 - 16 bikes can be fitted in the space taken by one car.

- Cycle friendly policies can raise the profile of the University through good PR.

- Employees who use their own cycles for business travel can claim capital allowances on a proportion of the cost of the bicycle.

- Employers can pay their employees up to 12p per mile tax free for using their own cycles on business travel. Employees will be able to claim tax relief of 12p per business mile if their employer provides no payment.

- There is no tax payable on workplace parking for bicycles or bicycles and cycling safety equipment made available for employees to get between home and work.

REMOVING THE NEED FOR MAKING JOURNEYS

Working from home for just one day a fortnight will reduce an employee's commuting trips by 10%.

Due to the rapid development of information technology, opportunities now exist, such as email, the Internet, video and audio conferencing etc., to reduce, or even remove, the need for some journeys altogether.

Home working has a number of benefits, which increase significantly if the usual commuting method is medium to long distance solo car use. For the employee these include more leisure time, less stress and reduced commuting costs. For the employer, managers operating such practices have reported employees can become more productive, more reliable, likely to improve quality of their work (because of fewer distractions), take less time off (minor ailments are better endured at home) and stay longer with the organisation.

However, a number of barriers to home/teleworking have been identified. These include maintenance of communication, loss of social interaction between employers, difficulty in working as a team and choosing the right people to work from home. They must be able to work at distance from colleagues and they must have self motivation, the ability to work without close supervision, good time-management skills, flexibility, resilience and ability to cope with conflicting demands of home and work life.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

'Travelling by bus is twice as safe as driving a car, and rail five times safer than driving'.
(Energy Efficiency Best Practice Programme)

Nationally less than one in ten commuters use the bus. In the 1998 Travel Survey 40% of those asked said they would be willing to consider using public transport as an alternative to car commuting, especially if reliability, regularity, cost and comfort of service was improved.

There are several links to the public transport network from this site with buses running on the nearby Cheetham Hill Road and the train station at the nearby Victoria Station in Manchester city centre.

CAR-SHARING

Car-sharing should not be regarded as an alternative mode to single-occupancy car use but as a more responsible way of using the car; it is aimed at getting vehicles off the road by increasing vehicle occupancy.

Nationally, over 80% of all car journeys are made by lone drivers. Nearer to home 54% of commuting journeys to the University are by solo car drivers, while 13% of staff car-share.

A number of potential barriers are often cited in opposition to car-sharing, these include the problems of fitting in around others' flexible working times, the fear of being let down/unable to get home in an emergency, personal security/privacy issues, their car needed for business use during the day and the perceived administrative burden of running a car-sharing scheme.

However, these perceived barriers can be overcome. While car-sharing may be less flexible than driving alone, users trade off inconvenience against cost savings. Someone car-sharing for only one day a week for a five mile journey could save up to £150 a year and it may be pleasant to relax and socialise. Car-sharing databases can be run so that personal details are not released until all members of a potential car have met one another via, for instance, 'post code' coffee clubs.

The 1999 Budget allowed employers to pay, tax free, for alternative transport to help employees get home when normal car-sharing arrangements break down. Administration does not have to be a burden, Hewlett Packard spend only an average of two hours per week administering their car- sharing scheme.

CAR PARKING

The availability of workplace car parking spaces has been shown to be one of the most important factors influencing whether or not staff commute by car.
(Energy Efficiency Best Practice Programme)

Overgenerous, or parking which favours commuting, will make it difficult for alternative forms of transport to compete.

The car parking to this site is minimal (4 spaces for over 20 building users) therefore encouraging the use of other, greener forms of transport.

BUSINESS TRAVEL

Staff are often required to travel as part of their work. Travel on official business is usually viewed as essential and therefore not so regularly reviewed. Staff who have always travelled by car often assume they can continue to do so without having checked to see if public transport is available.

Objections are often raised to the proposal of using public transport for business travel, such as inflexibility and unreliability. No one doubts that part of the appeal of cars is their alleged flexibility, but trains for instance are ideal for journeys between cities and larger towns. Increasingly, many train operators offer inclusive business packages, including car hire and/or taxi/limousine pick-up/drop off services. As far as reliability is concerned, all forms of transport have the potential to be unreliable. Despite some heavily publicised problems, the vast majority of trains and buses run on time. It is congestion and delays that are currently making road travel more and more unreliable. Staff therefore, need to be encouraged to consider the full environmental impact of how they travel on business, in conjunction with other issues such as cost, time and convenience.