

The University of Gloucestershire

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL ACTION PLAN

2015-2018

1. Introduction

The University of Gloucestershire (UoG) is committed to embedding sustainability across institutional frameworks and processes as well as into the staff and student experience.

Sustainability has been voted one of 6 core values by staff and the University has adopted a vision statement that sets out how it will 'strive to be a sustainable and responsible organization which contributes to positive environmental, social and economic futures across the communities its serve.'

In line with this ambition, the University's Strategic Plan articulates measures and actions to be implemented between 2012 and 2017.

The Strategic Plan is supported by a series of policies and action plans, including the Sustainable Travel Action Plan, that ensure the university delivers on this commitment in its operational and academic practice.

The Sustainable Travel Action Plan will build upon the achievements and lessons learnt from the previous plan which was developed, implemented and reviewed using a participatory and consultative process.

2. Sustainable Transport

Sustainable transport issues cut across the whole spectrum of sustainability considerations including health and well-being, financial security, resource efficiency, community cohesion, global responsibility and social relations.

These issues have the potential to engage individuals and groups from all areas of the university, regardless of background and interests, and help translate the often ambiguous term 'sustainability' into a meaningful and practical concept that is relevant to everyday activity.

Sustainable travel is fundamental to many aspects of daily life at the University and the following areas have been identified as the focus of this plan:

- commuting to work and study by staff and students
- intercampus travel by staff and students
- travel to site by visitors and external partners
- travel on university business
- travel to and from university at start and end of term by students

3. *Key Drivers for Change*

3.1 Local Impact – Good Neighbour

The University of Gloucestershire is a major local employer with over 1,000 staff and currently provides higher education services to over 10,000 students. The University is situated on three primary sites in Gloucester and Cheltenham and the movement of staff, students, visitors and partners to and from the university, and when on university business has a significant impact on the quality of life, well-being and character of these areas.

Results from the 2013 Sustainable Travel Surveys indicate that, in addition to commuting journeys of over 11,000 staff and student, business travel trips and visitor movements, UoG staff are making over 26,000 intercampus trips per year with over half of all these journeys made by car.

This travel activity has significant impacts including traffic congestion, pressure for parking spaces, noise levels, air quality and road safety for the surrounding areas and it is the responsibility of the institution to be a good neighbour by minimising these impacts and mitigating their effects.

3.2 Global Impact – Low Carbon and Fossil Free

Transport is also a significant contributor to the University's global impacts with over 40% of the university's total CO₂ emissions generated from travel activities – this is over twice the emissions from on-site energy and fuel consumption. Our continuing reliance on single occupancy fossil fuel vehicle travel is also increasing the risk of social and economic upheaval associated with 'peak oil' and conflicts over remaining petroleum resources.

3.3 Sector Expectations

All higher education institutions are being encouraged to monitor and report on transport emissions through criteria introduced to national benchmarking and award schemes such as the People and Planet Green League and the LiFE Index. In addition the revised HEFCE Framework for Sustainable Development in Higher Education that is due for publication this year is expected to introduce a sector wide transport and travel emissions reduction target and standardised scope 3 transport emissions calculation methodology.

The University of Gloucestershire is in a strong position to respond to these sector wide signals with over 10 years of travel survey data available, a transport CO₂ baseline established and provisional emissions reduction targets to 2020 set out within its Carbon Management Plan

4. Policy Statement

The University of Gloucestershire is committed to encouraging and helping staff and students to walk, cycle or use public transport and thereby reduce the use of private vehicles by those travelling to, from and between the University and when conducting university business.

The University of Gloucestershire recognises that travel is a critical component of University business, whether commuting to University campuses for study or work, and travelling for business, placements and fieldtrips. This travel has impacts for those that are travelling to, from or between University campuses, or further afield on behalf of the University, as well as the wider community and environment.

5. Aims

The aim of the plan is to develop cost efficient, good practices on travel that provide improved access to and greater flexibility for students and staff. This will be achieved through consultation, information sharing and awareness raising amongst staff and students providing better opportunity to contribute to personal sustainability, whilst helping the University achieve its vision to be more sustainable.

The plan will establish a clear set of actions and measures through until 2017-18 to align with the University Strategic Plan.

6. Objectives

By adopting, supporting and encouraging sustainable travel practices as outlined in this plan the university will:

- minimise its impact on the environment through carbon emissions and local air pollution
- reduce its dependence on imported fossil fuels
- reduce congestion on local roads within Cheltenham and Gloucester and the surrounding area
- improve the health and well-being of employees and students
- save money by reducing fuel consumption and vehicle wear and tear
- maintain its national and international reputation as sector leader in sustainability
- set a best practice example that can help to inspire and inform other institutions
- help staff and students to create positive travel habits that can last a lifetime
- support the universities sustainability performance on indicators such as carbon emissions reduction and in national benchmarking schemes

Consultation with staff on the SDC sub-working group with responsibility for sustainable travel identified 4 additional objectives for the revised plan:

- Clarify and strengthen the incentives and internal regulatory drivers related to sustainable travel activity
- Improve the communication and marketing of existing and new sustainable transport initiatives in order to maximise impact and engagement with staff and students
- Ensure that sustainable transport initiatives are sufficiently resourced and that responsibility for individual actions is clearly assigned.
- Wherever possible establish the financial cost benefit for all proposed activities and sort them according to capital expenditure required (no cost, low cost, medium cost and high cost) and return on investment
- Make it simple for students and staff to adopt sustainable transport options

7. Building on the Achievements of Previous STAP

The previous STAP, published in 2011, was aligned to the University's Sustainability Strategy and Strategic Plan 2009-2012. The plan set out a clear ambition to encourage sustainable travel and delivered against three main objectives:

- Improve the governance, monitoring and reporting relating to sustainable transport
- Reducing need to travel and frequency of travel
- Encourage a modal shift from single-occupancy vehicle use to sustainable modes of transport including public transport, car-share, cycling and walking.

A summary of the main achievements during this period is as follows:

- Sustainable Travel Surveys were carried out in 2011, 2012 and 2013 with a clear and consistent methodology developed that allows for comparability of data. Widespread promotion of the surveys and incentives for participation helped to improve response rates over this period.
- The survey data allowed for quantifying of CO₂ emissions from travel including staff and student commuting, business travel, inter campus travel and home to uni travel. A travel emissions baseline has been included in the Carbon Management Plan and was submitted to HESA via the Estates Management Record for the first time in 2014.
- A staff and student Carshare forum has been established with an online portal hosted on the UoG website.
- Work with Stagecoach has helped to increase the discounts and subsidised offers available to students and staff and improve the service offered by the U94 bus route.
- The Students Union have been supported to secure funding for a free staff pool bike scheme and additional covered cycle storage

- The Cycle to Work scheme offers employees reduced tax bicycles for travelling to work. The scheme was introduced in 2007 and to date 95 new bikes have been issued to staff members.
- Important travel related issues have been raised at key university meetings including the Sustainable Development Committee, Operations Team meetings, University Management Group and Executive Council.
- Cycling, walking and public transport information and instructions have been added to the main university travel pages with a re-ordering to encourage sustainable transport modes.
- Cheltenham and Gloucester cycle route maps have been made available to staff and students and distributed at university events.
- An on-site electric vehicle is now in use by maintenance staff in the estates department.
- A number of sustainable transport events have been held offering free bike repair sessions, security advice from local police and personalised travel advice from sustainable transport consultants.

8. *Time for Review*

The majority of actions from the previous plan have been met or are no longer applicable and a new policy statement and plan, with targets set through to 2018, is required to bring the plan in line with Carbon Management Plan and the University Strategic Plan.

9. *Developing a new Sustainable Transport Action Plan*

This Sustainable Transport Action plan has been developed as part of a consultative process that has sought to engage and seek input from a wide variety of stakeholders:

- The development of the STAP has been overseen by the Sustainable Development Committee which is a cross institutional committee with a key remit to advise on the implementation of the Sustainability Sub-Strategy of the University's Strategic Plan and make specific and informed recommendations on the ways in which the University commits to, and demonstrates sustainability.
- The SDC operates several sub-working groups that allow for SDC members with specific interests and expertise to focus on individual projects and initiatives. Members of both the Low Carbon and the Staff and Student Engagement sub-working groups have made contributions and had input into the development of this plan.
- The results of the 2013 Sustainable Travel Surveys and previous years travel surveys have been instrumental in informing the drafting of this Sustainable Travel Action Plan. This includes trends and patterns apparent in the data but also the individual responses and suggestions made by staff and students.

- The previous STAP has been reviewed and audited as part of the university's ISO14001 Environmental Management System to assess areas where delivery was strong and on time and areas that have lagged behind or need more attention.
- Support and advice has also been provided by Atkins, a sustainable transport consultancy, operating on behalf of, and funded by, the Gloucestershire County Council Local Sustainable Transport Fund.
- Best practice examples from a wide variety of other institutions including over 25 other universities and HE institutions, as well as wider public sector bodies including the NHS, local authorities and government departments.
- The STAP has been drafted in reference to current legislation and relevant policy frameworks including the 'HEFCE Framework on Sustainable Development in HE' and the 'DEFRA Measuring and reporting environmental impacts: guidance for businesses'.
- The draft document will also be circulated widely before a final version is agreed - this will include posting on staff and student news, presentation at the Sustainability Team road shows in June 2014 and at Operations Team meetings.

10. Responsibility

The development and implementation of the Sustainable Transport Action Plan will be overseen by the Sustainable Development Committee with the Low Carbon sub working group taking responsibility for the implementation of the actions, monitoring and reporting to the SDC on progress.

Responsibility for individual actions is assigned within the plan.

11. Reporting and Monitoring

A written progress report will be presented to the SDC annually in June with representatives from the Low Carbon Sub-group present at all SDC meetings to address any in-year issues or questions.

The highlights, key issues and recommendations from these reports will be included in the bi-annual reports made from the SDC to the Executive Committee.

12. Timeframe

To bring the Sustainable Transport Action Plan in line with the University Strategic Plan and Carbon Management Plan the actions and targets in the policy will be established through to 2018. The individual actions and targets will be updated annually and the whole policy will be subject to review at the end of 2018.

The Sustainable Development Committee reserves the right to review and amend the plan and/or targets at any time during this period if more information or additional options become available.

Sustainable Transport Action Plan

Area	Target	Date	Current Status	Responsibility
Governance, monitoring and reporting	Reconvene the sub-group to the SDC with remit to oversee the implementation of the plan and monitor progress against deliverables	August 2014	Established	SDC
	Report annually to SDC on progress against action plan and provide information for report to Executive	June 2015	Ongoing	SDC sub-group
	Continue to carry out the Sustainable Travel Survey with staff and students annually	Annually to 2018	Last survey completed in Oct 2013	SDC sub-group, Sustainability Team (ST), Marketing Dept.
	Maintain annual CO ₂ emissions from travel calculations for updating the CMP and reporting to HESA. Adopt approved HEFCE methodology when available.	Annually to 2018	Carried out in Feb 2014	Sustainability Team, Estates, Finance & Planning (F&P)
	Implement a full electronic travel expenses claim system to record and report on all travel paid for by the university	Jan 2015	Delayed – expected Spring 2015	F&P, Sustainability Team
Reducing the need to travel	Advertise the whereabouts of the teleconferencing and video conferencing technology currently available(including Adobe Connect)	Ongoing to July 2018	Advertised on staff/student news March 2014	SDC sub-group, ICT, Marketing
	Provide training for staff and students on the use of this	August	Training available on	SDC sub-group, ICT, HR

	technology and other systems. Explore the possibility of making training compulsory for all staff as part of induction schedule	2015	request via ICT	
	Ensuring equipment (including webcams and microphones) and software used by staff is available as standard, up to date and configured to optimise connection quality	Ongoing to July 2018	Partially complete	ICT
	Standardisation and uniform adoption of flexible working policy to reduce need for staff commuting, intercampus and business travel - the policy should give clear consistent guidelines for managers on working at home, hot-desking, flexible hours to suit car-sharing, allowing time for walking/cycling/public transport and scheduling of meetings to avoid excessive journeys	March 2015	No policy in place	HR, SDC sub-group, Sustainability Team
	Develop a business travel expenses policy that promotes the sustainable travel hierarchy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid travelling by virtual meeting or e-mail correspondence • Discouraging domestic air travel • Use public transport whenever possible • Cycle or walk if viable • Carshare • Combine journeys 	March 2015	No policy in place	SDC sub-group, F&P
	Link extended year programme to activities that encourage international (and other) students to stay in Gloucestershire	Ongoing to July	Extended year preparations	ADU, SDC sub-group

	between terms.	2018	underway	
Car-share	Designate several parking bays, close to campus, that are reserved for registered car-sharers.	July 2015	Not available	Estates, F&P, SDC sub-group
	Investigate reduced rate parking permits for car-sharers	July 2015	Not available	Estates, F&P, SDC sub-group
	Increase the visibility and use of the UoG Carshare forum https://infonet.glos.ac.uk/projects/car_share/Pages/default.aspx	Jan 2015	Limited promotion undertaken	Marketing
	Improve links with the Countywide liftshare database - https://gloucestershire.liftshare.com/	Jan 2015	Link on UoG website	ICT, SDC sub-group
	Investigate and promote the benefits of car sharing using real examples from UoG employees	March 2015	One example on forum website	Marketing, SDC sub-group
	Set up an emergency ride home scheme to support users when a lift home fails	Feb 2015	Not available	Sustainability Team, Estates
	Encourage the use of the 'lift share to meetings' section of the UoG Carshare forum to facilitate more joint travel	Jan 2015	Not publicised	Marketing
	Develop a car share app to increase use of the forum	Jan 2016	Not available	Student Union (SU), ICT, Marketing
	Revisit the proposal for a staff 'pool' car to determine if a cost	Jan 2015	Co-wheels proposal put	SDC sub group

	effective and user friendly solution can be found.		forward but not cost effective	
Public transport	Improve the promotion of the extensive discounts that are already available to staff and students	Jan 2015	Details available on website	Marketing, Estates
	Research options for extending these discounts to rail travel and other bus companies	Jan 2015	Not available	Estates
	Develop plans to introduce interest free loans for purchasing annual passes	Jan 2015	Not available	F&P
	Introduce new buses and bus stop signage with matching University branding to increase presence and ease of identification	Sept 2014	Underway	Estates
	Share the results of the travel surveys, and employee commute route mapping work, with key partners including Stagecoach, Gloucestershire County Council, Glos Coll and RAU to develop integrated county-wide solutions	Jan 2015	Schedule of meetings underway	SDC sub-group
	Use postcode data analysis of commuting journeys to identify key routes that need public transport improvements and make business case to bus providers for improved service	Mar 2015	Survey respondents postcode data available	ST, (Atkins)
	Investigate a discounted courier service for students to send belongings home at end of term so they are able to travel home	July 2015	Not available	SDC sub-group

	by public transport			
Cycling and walking	Work with the SU on applications to the County Council Local Sustainable Transport Fund for further covered cycle storage free staff 'pool' bikes pilot scheme	Oct 2014	Funds secured	SU, SDC sub-group
	Provide discounted D-locks and other safety equipment for purchase, hire or loan by staff and students	August 2014	Available from caretakers	Estates
	Include new/upgraded shower and changing facilities in future building developments and refurbishments	Jan 2015	Responses sent to design team on all new build projects	Estates, ST
	Provide better information, including guided rides, for linking to local cycle paths and intercampus routes	March 2015	Requested via Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF)	SDC sub-group
	Work with local partners to progress city wide cycle hubs and bike hire schemes	March 2015	Requested via LSTF	SU, SDC sub-group
	Improve the promotion of Cycle to Work and low emission vehicle schemes that offer reduced tax bikes and eco-cars for university staff	Dec 2016	Cycles now available	F&P, HR
	Develop a pilot for an electric bike scheme that enables quicker local travel, the ability to carry more equipment and arrive ready	Aug 2015	Not available	SDC sub-group

	for your appointment			
	Work with the council on specific improvements to cycle lanes, pedestrian crossings and signage on the main routes to campuses.	April 2015	Requested via LSTF	SDC sub-group, Estates
	Develop a student led social enterprise to establish a bike recovery and refurbishment scheme and support student cycling activities	July 2015	Initial discussions underway via Greener Gloucestershire	SU
Parking	Develop exclusion zones where staff and students living within a certain distance of the university campuses are not permitted to apply for a parking permit.	April 2016	Not available	Estates, SDC sub-group
	Install electric vehicle charging points in parking bays to encourage staff and students to invest in electric vehicles and electric bikes	Sept 2015	Not available	Estates, SDC sub-group
	Raise overall parking prices for day parking and permits	Sept 2015	Not available	Estates, SDC sub-group
	Explore additional parking options such as rental of driveways in nearby homes to ease pressure on current facilities	Dec 2015	Not available	SDC sub-group
Communications and promotion	Improve the promotion and communication of existing sustainable travel schemes and new initiatives	Jan 2015	Some comms completed	Marketing, SDC sub-group
	Develop a 10,000 miles sustainable transport shift pledge campaign with prizes for outstanding achievements	Sept 2015	Not available	Marketing, SDC sub-group

	Distribute healthy travel information including free pedometers and calorie reduction guides	April 2015	Not available	SU, SDC sub-group
	Research successful examples of sustainable travel schemes from other institutions	Jan 2015	ST have visited other institutions – case studies available	SDC sub-group, ST
	Include sustainable travel as a key theme in the 'Greener Gloucestershire' festival at UoG	Sept 2014	On-going	SU, SDC sub-group, ST
	Participate in national sustainable travel events and campaigns such as National Bike Week and Walk to Work Week	July 2015	Not available	SDC sub-group, ST
	Run a further Sustainable Transport event at Oxstalls campus	Jan 2015	Events held at Park &FCH Oct 2013	SDC sub-group, ST

Annex 1: Summary of 2013 Sustainable Transport Survey Results

Key Results:

Commuting

- 52% of staff who responded are driving to work in single occupancy vehicles, although this has dropped from 62% in 2003
- 30% of staff who responded drive are travelling less than 5 miles
- Car sharing is still very limited amongst staff who responded at approx. 6%
- Steadily increasing number of staff walking and cycling especially when taking into account multi-leg journeys where staff park and cycle or take the train and walk.
- 50% of students who responded are arriving at campus on foot, but only 4% are cycling.
- 67% of students who responded live within 5 miles of campus but the number of staff within this zone has decreased by 9%

Intercampus Travel

- Staff who responded are still predominantly driving between campuses, even those within Cheltenham
- Students who responded are far more likely to walk or take the bus (66%) but very few are cycling (4%).

Travel Choices

- Convenience, time saving and cost remain by far the most important factors when making travel choices in both sample groups.
- Environmental and health factors remain very low, especially in the student population.

These results show a slow but steady improvement in sustainable travel over the previous 10 years but also indicate that there is much work still to be done.

Response Rate to Survey

- Staff – 450 (approx. 40%)
- Students – 439 (approx. 5%)