

Estates Travel Plan

The Open University
TRAVEL PLAN
2014 Revision

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Looking Back

The University Travel Plan was first published in 1999 refreshed periodically thereafter with the last revision being published in 2011. This current plan reviews progress to date and updates the plan with new targets. It considers progress against previous objectives and alignment with the University Carbon Management Plan and 'Go Green' promotions.

Much of the progress to date concentrated on Walton Hall as the site generating the largest single source of staff commuting but has included initiatives aimed specifically at improving travel to work options in the Regional and Nation offices.

Targets adopted in the 2006 version of the plan were:

1. To reduce single car occupancy commuting by 15% by 2013 (base year 2005 – 65%).

Result – single car occupancy has reduced by 15.4% (2012 Staff Travel Survey – 55%)

2. To reduce carbon emissions from staff commuting and business travel by 5% by 2013 (base year 2005).

Result – carbon emissions from staff commuting reduced by 9.8% (2012 Staff Travel Survey). Business Travel cannot be measured.

Looking Forward

The primary objective of the Travel Plan remains to improve the travel to work choices for staff and visitors to Walton Hall including colleagues from the Regions. It will also offer a wider selection of options for colleagues based at Regions/Nations/other off site locations.

This version of the plan adopts the following new targets:

1. To reduce single car occupancy commuting by a further 5% by 2020 (base year 2005 – 65%)

2. To reduce carbon emissions from staff commuting by a further 5% by 2020 (base year 2005).

This plan sets out specific implementation strategies designed to improve:-

1. The provision and promotion of car sharing in all locations.
2. The provision and dissemination of travel to work information.
3. The promotion of public transport.
4. Cycle parking and facilities (including cycle routes)

This plan is constrained at Walton Hall by the provision of public transport infrastructure within the wider city of Milton Keynes. This is particularly so in relation to buses. The success of this plan does rely upon the commitment of significant funds by Milton Keynes Council and the bus operating companies to improve and enhance the public bus services to and from Walton Hall. This very significant factor is external to the University and out of our hands but has a direct and fundamental impact upon the success of our plan.

THE TRAVEL PLAN 2014

This Travel Plan conforms with the Department for Transport guidelines that specify an organisation's Travel Plan should cover:

- Background
- Objectives
- Scope of the Plan
- Actions
- Marketing
- Targets
- Monitoring
- Dissemination

BACKGROUND

The need for a Travel Plan

This has moved on from earlier versions. Originally the development of the University's 1999 Travel Plan was associated with a Section 106 planning agreement set by Milton Keynes Council.

Since re-launch in 2006 and updates in 2008 and 2011 the Travel Plan has been driven firstly by the University's capital building programme and more latterly by the University's commitments in relation to carbon management.

The University Carbon Management Plan reinforces the University's commitment to reducing its carbon emissions particularly in the areas of energy use, water and staff commuting. This aspiration has been widened and promoted via the 'Go Green' sustainability publicity campaign designed to initiate and support behavioural change across all areas of sustainability but with carbon reduction as a key element.

The University Carbon Management Plan set ambitious targets in line with HEFCE requirements for absolute reduction in carbon against a 2005 baseline of 36% by 2020. Interim targets were set at 10% by 2012, 14% by 2013, 23% by 2017 and the full 36% by 2020. Whilst this Travel Plan is not required to mirror those targets it is required to set a 'realistic' target to contribute towards the overall carbon reduction requirements.

The guidance on the calculation of carbon emissions from staff commuting was published by HEFCE in January 2012. Unfortunately this methodology relied entirely on knowledge of distance travelled, fuel type and engine size. This data was first captured in the 2012 staff travel to work survey. Therefore a reasonable estimate of staff commuting emissions was calculated as at 2012 however earlier versions of the staff travel survey concentrated upon travel to work behaviours rather than carbon management calculation so lack the data needed to calculate accurately the 2005 baseline.

This plan also has to reflect the Estates Strategy. The current Estates Strategy was published in 2006 and is due for review and updating in 2015. For the time being the 2006 review remains operative.

The Estate Strategy includes several key objectives with a direct impact on the Travel Plan:

- Sustainability, limiting carbon emissions and reduced overall energy consumption runs through the Estates Strategy and highlights the Travel Plan as a key activity in setting targets for reduced single occupancy of cars, better use of public transport and promotion of cycling and walking.
- Consolidation of space across the University estate and the generation of income from diversified sources including the letting of surplus space. This generates vision/tenant traffic.
- The Estates Strategy contained the then known refurbishment and new building programme up to 2011. The document recognised the increased difficulty encountered in simply providing more parking for new developments, although no major new building projects are anticipated in the foreseeable future.

The stringent targets set in the University Carbon Management Plan and the direction from the Estates Strategy means transport management is increasingly important. However, as well as the Estate Strategy the Travel Plan relates to a number of other strategic planning issues for the University. These include

- 1) Staff access, recruitment and retention – this was retained from earlier versions of the plan. It remains relevant as the policies of MK Council combined with car dependent access could inhibit recruitment and increase costs to the University. Even for higher income staff, the Travel Plan can offer attractive staff benefits that would aid recruitment and retention.

- 2) Car Parking Management Review – The University recognises that parking and the ability to park is business critical as well as recognising its impact on employment highlighted above. Car parking management will be kept under review. The wider impact of planning policies will also be kept under review.
- 3) Research Student recruitment - The Research School already notes that poor public transport access to Walton Hall is a serious problem for our research student population.
- 4) Teaching credibility - Environmental issues and environmental management have become key areas for the development of the Open University's teaching, including materials and courses on travel planning. It is a matter of teaching credibility that the University demonstrates its ability to practice what it teaches in terms of environmental management and standards.

The Walton Hall Site

The University has 5398 staff, of which 4269 (this figure includes 331 temp staff and 301 post graduate students) are at Walton Hall¹. To this number need to be added about 150 other contract staff on the campus². As of January 2013 there are 2389 car parking spaces for the 4269 people working at Walton Hall (a ratio of 0.55 car parking spaces to each person). For the purposes of the Travel Plan, it is assumed that the number of people on the site will remain broadly stable in the next 5 years.

The site has good road access although the entrances can be congested at peak hours. The campus is also well linked to Milton Keynes' Redway network of foot/cycle paths.

Bus services are poor. The geographical position of the campus away from the City Centre and off the core bus routes does mean that, whilst the University is committed to widening the travel to work choices available for staff and visitors, our contribution to improved provision of choice across MK as a whole will be limited. To some degree the success of our travel plan is reliant on the provision of better public transport provision in the wider city of MK.

Objectives

The Travel Plan objectives are to:

- Improve travel choices for those based at the Walton Hall site;
- Improve travel choices for visitors and regional staff travelling to the site;
- Reduce the adverse environmental impacts of business travel generated by the University;
- Reduce dependency on single-occupancy car travel;
- Contribute to the University's Carbon Management including its promotion campaigns such as 'Go Green';

¹ As at July 2014

² There are also around 50 building contractor staff on campus at any one time

- Provide improved access that will support the development of Walton Hall as a venue for income generating events and letting of space to commercial tenants;
- Provide better access for travel within the Walton Hall site;
- Enhance the perception of the environmental performance of the University;

REVIEW OF PROGRESS ACHIEVED UNDER 2011 REVISION

Key Target/Objective	Achieved	Comments
To reduce single car occupancy commuting by 15% by 2013 (base year 2005)	✓	Shows a 15.4% reduction in single car occupancy. Much progress also achieved prior to 2005 (2002 figure 80%).
To reduce carbon emissions from staff commuting and business travel by 5% by 2013 (base year 2005)	Partially Commuting ✓ Business Travel X	Shows a 9.8% reduction in emissions from staff commuting. Exceeds target. Unable to measure business travel baseline hence little progress made.
Assess baseline and target year data	✓	Baseline estimated using HEFCE guidance on calculating carbon emissions. 2013 figure taken from 2012 staff travel survey
Provision and promotion of car sharing	✓	Continued good progress. Membership currently 749 (750 in 2011). Ongoing regular promotions.
Provision of Travel Information	✓	'Travel Advice' webpage updated regularly, site re-branded into OU branding. Links added as part of Estates intranet project. Staff awareness of Travel Advice website increased from 67% to 85%.
Provision of Public Transport	Partially ✓ X ✓	'Real time' introduced on bus stops to display service information. Employer Travel Club not renewed. Scheme undermined by Arriva losing routes through OU campus. Joined 'Smart Go' as Steering Group and founder member, a city wide transport initiative group.
Enhancing bus service to Central Milton Keynes	Partially OU Shuttle ✓ Public Buses X	Additional evening service added, to make 3 morning and 3 evening Mon-Fri No progress, public bus operators

		disinterested.
Enhance cycle parking and facilities	✓	Cycle rack added Leeds. Consent sought to improve security at Cambridge cycle rack.
Provide direct pedestrian and cycle routes to East Campus	✓	MKC added new footpath, lighting and CCTV to link East Campus to existing footpath/redway network.
Assess need for further covered motorcycle parking	✓	Capacity reviewed periodically, no further spaces added but kept under review
Provision of priority spaces for car sharers	✓	Regular reviews and measurement of utilisation. No further spaces needed.
Provide electric vehicle charging point at Walton Hall Campus	✓	2 No twin outlet charging points installed. EV membership scheme introduced, including changes to car parking regs, signage and visitor procedure.
Information provision and dissemination	✓	Regular promotions via 2 No cycle to work events, catch the bus week, lift share day, evening and daytime walking events, inspirational speakers. Promotion at Regions via local schemes e.g. Yorkshire Travel for R07 and Cambridgeshire Travel for R06.
Diversity	✓	Periodic assessment completed of diversity of local population against bus routes to ensure equal access.

Baseline

In order to develop its Travel Plan, the University needs to have data on how travel to Walton Hall occurs and is changing. Four detailed travel surveys have been held since 1997. These have included information on commuting origins, transport mode, times of travel and travel options available to staff. From the 2012 survey onwards data on carbon emissions has been captured. The following is a summary table of travel by mode for the surveys between 1997 and 2012. A survey will be completed in 2014 and thereafter at intervals to match the HEFCE interim targets.

Percentage split of Travel to Walton Hall

	1997	2002	2006	2009	2012
Car driver	83	80	60	63	56
Car sharer	7	6	14	6	12
Train	1	2	4	7	7
Bus	2	3	8	8	7
Cycle	6	5	8	9	9
Motorcycle	-	-	-	-	-
Walk	1	2	4	7	7
Taxi	-	-	1	-	-
Other	-	1	-	-	2
Total	100	100	100	100	100
Sample	1364	2065 (58% response rate)	1334 (39% response rate)	1470 (36% response rate)	

A dash (-) indicates under 1%

A full report on the 2014 Travel Survey will be made on the Travel Advice Website: <http://www.open.ac.uk/travel-advice/>

TARGET

The key target remains measures to reduce car usage on Campus. Achieving this target would mean that dependency on single occupancy car commuting will have been reduced. However during implementation it may be appropriate to develop other targets, particularly those that measure improvements in the quality of alternatives to car commuting as well as targets relating to the provision of spaces to staff/visitor numbers.

The two primary targets are:-

(1) to reduce single car occupancy commuting by a further 5% in 2020 (base year 2005).

(2) to reduce carbon emissions from staff commuting a further 5% by 2020 (base year 2005)

ACTIONS: Specific Measures

Travel Co-ordinator and resources for the Travel Plan

The Travel Co-ordinator post is covered from within Estates. Resources for Travel Plan initiatives are mainly provided within the Estates Environmental Improvement Budget.

Assess interim and final target year data

The interim and final target year carbon emission data requires calculation in line with HEFCE guidelines. The interim target year is 2017 and the final year is

2020. Staff travel surveys will be conducted prior to these years to assist this process.

Timescale: Staff Travel Survey issued 2014.

Resources: Some IT resources required for survey data analysis.

Provision and promotion of Car sharing

Promote the Carshare database to include the University Nation/Regional network

Timescale: in progress.

Resources: Estates Environmental Improvement Budget

Provision of Travel Information

Maintain, review and develop the 'Travel Advice' intranet site for staff and a companion internet site for visitors. Maintain paper-based information for OU Reception and at bus stops.

Timescale: Continuous review and development of site at

<http://www.open.ac.uk/travel-advice/>

Resources: Estates budget (variable cost)

Review: Every 18 months



Promotion of Public Transport

Enhancing direct bus services to the campus plus promote the Real time information via App for buses and trains on web site.

Timescale: 6 monthly review meetings with bus operator

Review options via 'Smart Go' or other forums

Exploring if the campus can be included in proposed public transport developments. Review service regularly with Arriva, MK Council and 'Smart Go'.

Timescale: continuous

Review: Every 18 months

Enhancing bus services to Central Milton Keynes Station.

Review campus to Milton Keynes Central Station shuttle service to ensure offers value for money and identify any scope for improvement.

Review: Annually

Resources: Estates Budget

Bicycle Parking and facilities

Ensuring that all buildings, wherever possible, have cycle parking close to the main entrance



and assess if the provision of further secure cycle parking compound(s) is required.

Timescale: Ongoing
Resources: Estate Minor Works Budget
and Environmental Improvement Budget

To include cycle parking in new building and major refurbishment projects, wherever possible, and also showers where possible (particularly when toilets are refurbished).

Timescale: incorporate in all newbuild and refurbish specifications although no major new building or major refurbishments are planned.

Motorcycle Parking

To assess the need for further covered motorcycle parking. Liaise with motorcycle users.

Timescale: Ongoing
Resources: Within refurbishment budget

Car Parking Management

Car parking management will be reviewed periodically including a consideration of the role of car parking provision in income generation for events and commercial letting of campus space. Car parking management actions include:

Provision of priority spaces for carsharers.

Timescale: Ongoing review of utilisation and add/remove spaces as required
Resources: Estates budget

To provide, for a fee per space, dedicated car parking for any commercial users of University premises.

Timescale: Part of any commercial letting contract

Review Electric Vehicle Charging Point Provision at Walton Hall Campus

Review periodically the provision of electric vehicle charging points at the Walton Hall Campus to ensure membership scheme and facilities offer good charging options for staff and visitors.

Timescale: Review annually
Resources: To be assessed

Dissemination and Information Provision

Intranet and Internet 'Travel Advice'

Other publicity (including at Receptions, Library and bus stops)
Staff Induction
Postgraduate Student Induction
Submission to appropriate University Committees
Travel Fairs and Travel Plan Briefings
'Go Green' opportunities
'Smart Go' opportunities

Timescale: Continuous.
Materials prepared for postgraduate induction in October each year;
Cycle to Work Day annually
Sarah Storey Cycle Challenge events and networking opportunities
Dr Bike Event
'Smart Go' Promotional Events
Bike Security Marking Events
Car Share Week
Catch the Bus Week
Walking promotion events
Inspirational speaker events
Contribute towards Learn at Work Day
Go Green Promotions
Carbon Management Events

Reporting structure and management of the Travel Plan

The Open University Travel Plan is the managerial responsibility of the University's Head of Property & Regions (currently Dorian Holloway). The Travel Plan Co-ordinator and others working on the University Travel Plan report to the Head of Property & Regions. He then reports to Director of Estates, overseen by the University's Estates Committee.

Working Groups may be formed to consult with other interested parties in the University e.g. Bike Users Group, Electric Vehicle Users

The Travel Plan will be implemented through an *Action Plan* for each of the areas listed above. These action plans will identify responsibilities, timescale, resources and costs for specific measures in each area.

Constraints

Dramatic improvement in the city wide public transport infrastructure particularly the bus services is the major constraint external to the University. The commitment of significant resources by both the Council and bus operating company is seen as fundamental to delivery of our Travel Plan.

Failure to do so may also have a prejudicial effect on the University business and our long term commitment to Milton Keynes as the chosen location for our current and future activities.

Monitoring and Evaluation

A staff Travel Survey will be conducted to assist the assessment of carbon reporting in years in the Carbon Management Plan. The next survey will be in 2014.

Data will also be gathered on specific factors, including:

- Carbon generated by staff commuting
- Car park usage
- Cycle parking usage
- Electric vehicle bay usage
- Number of people using car share database
- Public transport use
- OU shuttle bus use
- Staff awareness of 'Travel Advice' (via Customer Service Survey)

The University will prepare a review of the Travel Plan to assist with the interim target years. Once approved, the Travel Plan will be available on the University's intranet and internet sites.