



University of
Sheffield

Estates &
Facilities
Management

Commuter Travel Plan Strategy

August 2025 to July 2030

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Approved August 2025 to July 2030

1.0 Introduction and Context

- 1.1 This document forms the basis of a Travel Plan Strategy (TPS). A Travel Plan is a strategy through which an organisation is able to manage its journeys related to the operation of its business in a sustainable manner that reduces the social and environmental impact and can help reduce their economic cost.
- 1.2 This document will focus on how the University will manage commuting from 2025 to 2030. It includes a number of policies to manage commuter travel to and from the University, between the central campus and outlying sites, and give oversight of how the strategy will be implemented, communicated and monitored. This includes the scope 3 emissions resulting from these activities. This will be in conjunction with similar strategies being developed for Business Travel, University Fleet Vehicles and International Student Commuting.
- 1.3 This document supports and helped shape the University's broader Sustainability Strategy 2025-2030 and is consistent with its vision, aims and targets.
- 1.4 As of 2023 staff commuting contributes an estimated 2,531 tonnes of scope 3 CO₂e.
- 1.5 This version of the Travel Plan follows on from a number of previous strategies, dating back to the first integrated Transport Policy introduced in 1997. It is based on the following principles:
 - To encourage and promote alternatives to one-person, one-car commuter travel;
 - To actively reduce the need to travel.
 - To encourage low carbon travel;
 - To address the access needs of all user groups recognising many staff and students have caring/parental or work responsibilities that may impact on their commuting behaviours.
 - To work in partnership with neighbouring organisations, the Local Authority, the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority and public transport operators to enhance and promote the provision of public transport services, walking and cycling and develop schemes that are sensitive to the local neighbourhood.
 - To provide car parking facilities that meet only the essential needs of the University and which curtails residential street-parking;
 - To promote efficient management and effective use of the University's own transport fleet;
 - To actively encourage our suppliers and contractors to use sustainable methods of transport and distribution where possible;
 - To provide solutions that improve inclusive access and prioritise disabled staff, students and visitors;
 - To be consistent with the University Campus Masterplan and Local Authorities Local Development Frameworks
 - To ensure that all car parking income generated through the Policy is protected and used only to implement the Policy and relevant environmental improvements and developments.
- 1.6 The Governance of this strategy is primarily via the Travel Advisory Group which is a subgroup of the UEB Sustainability Sub-Group.
- 1.7 To support future developments and the planning process individual site assessments and action plans may be required. These should be based on the strategies set out within this document.
- 1.7 The document is structured as follows:
 - Section 2-8 Present the initiatives; and
 - Section 9-10 summarise how the TPS will be implemented

2. Inclusive Access

- 2.1 The University is a diverse community of staff and students with different abilities, backgrounds, beliefs and ways of living. The strategy aims to manage resources and facilities that prioritise those for whom commuting may be more difficult be that because of health, parental and caring responsibilities or requirements of job roles.
- 2.2 Many staff, students and visitors have conditions that affect their mobility and ability to travel in different ways. For these people the range of travel options may be more limited and encounter more barriers to access facilities.
- 2.3 Inclusive access should be considered for all activities and developments. This strategy aims to improve the overall experience for those with disabilities where journeys and travelling may be more difficult.
- 2.4 Activities to promote active travel will be planned and delivered to maximise participation opportunities for those with all abilities. This may include working with local providers of especially adapted equipment (e.g. Sheffield Cycling 4 All) which may need to take place off campus.
- 2.5 Representatives from the Disabled Staff Network will be included in strategy and decisions taken as part of this policy.

Inclusive Access Actions

IA1:	Provide accessible parking within car parks and at key locations and review and monitor supply and demand to ensure sufficient levels are provided.
IA2:	Consider schemes that can make campus more accessible such as mobility scooter loan schemes.
IA3:	Ensure parking permit criteria recognise a range of health conditions that can impact on a journey to work and offer solutions where possible.
IA4:	Consider a bus service to provide journeys around central campus.
IA5:	Work with EFM to improve the complete journey from accessible parking spaces to inside buildings.
IA6:	Ensure information is available to identify any inaccessible routes and suggest suitable alternatives.
IA7:	Provide free parking for staff and student Blue Badge Holders.
IA8:	Ensure incentives and initiatives to promote active travel are designed to promote wide participation by those with all abilities.

3. Community and Civic Responsibility

- 3.1

Although this Travel Plan focuses primarily on staff and student commuting, we recognise that travel choices and behaviours are influenced not only by individual preferences, but also by physical infrastructure and local policy decisions. The University of Sheffield is located within a diverse and dynamic urban area, and travel to, from and around our campuses has a direct impact on neighbouring communities.
- 3.2

We acknowledge our civic responsibility to ensure that the travel strategies we implement support not only the safety and wellbeing of our staff and students, but also contribute positively to our local neighbourhoods.
- 3.3

We are committed to actively engaging with local residents, community groups, Sheffield City Council, the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority, and other stakeholders on travel-related projects and infrastructure changes that may impact the surrounding area. This includes - but is not limited to - proposed changes to road layouts, parking permit schemes, traffic management, and cycle or pedestrian route development.
- 3.4

Our aim is to maintain a harmonious relationship with local communities, while safeguarding the needs of those who work and study at the University.

Community and Civic Responsibility Actions	
CCR1:	Through the life of the Plan we will map out and formalise our arrangements with local authorities, SYMCA, politicians and local transport operators to maximise our influence to work towards our shared goals of improving accessibility, increasing active travel, reducing car dependency and supporting the local economy.



4. Active Travel: Walking

- 4.1

The central campus is in an urban location with a high proportion of staff and the majority of students walking onto campus. Over the past 10 years the University has overseen a number of improvements to walking and cycling routes crossing campus.
- 4.2

Walking has the lowest environmental impact and the health benefits associated with regular walking are well documented as well as benefits to the local economy. It is reasonable to suggest that the majority of commuting journeys under 2 miles could be made by walking, notwithstanding medical issues.
- 4.3

The University is working on a wayfinding strategy to make it easier for visitors and new students to navigate the campus, including information to make the campus more accessible, e.g. information on building entry points, crossings, stepped access/ high gradients and key facilities.
- 4.4

As well as commuting the University supports walking events to promote wellbeing and sustainable activities such as litterpicks. The University also undertakes a number of walking focussed fundraising events.

Walking Strategy Actions

W1:	Implement a new wayfinding system and information for new staff, students and visitors promoting walking.
W2:	Work with local authorities to improve pedestrian facilities and road safety on routes to the University
W3:	Coordinate walking events throughout the year and promote the benefits of walking.
W4:	Offer incentives and rewards for walking trips that recognise differing walking abilities.



5. Active Travel: Cycling

- 5.1 The University is committed to encouraging and providing facilities for cyclists and has been recognised as the UK's most Cycle Friendly workplace as far back as 2015. Cycling has many health benefits, low environmental impact and ability to efficiently cover distance, particularly in a congested urban setting. The range and quality of ebikes has now enabled a greater proportion of the population to consider commuting by bike/ebike.
- 5.2 To maintain and increase the number of people cycling a range of activities are required promoting safety and security along with facilities for cycle parking, changing/showering and storage of clothes and equipment.
- 5.3 The University supports staff to purchase bikes through salary sacrifice as well as providing a hire fleet and a fleet of ebikes available for short term use. By working in partnership with Heeley Development Trust students are offered refurbished bikes with the purchase price being subsidised. The University funds bike mechanics to provide 'Dr. Bike' Services and support servicing and maintenance and provides self help sessions for bike maintenance.
- 5.4 The University provides cycle parking across all sites. Parking is a mix of secure sheltered/indoor long stay facilities designed for all day use, sheltered/unsheltered stands suitable for short stay, and residential storage for those who live at the student residences. Additional facilities such as public pumps, work stands, tool kits and wash stations are provided at key locations.

Cycle Parking Standards		
Long stay	Purpose built hubs Locked cages within buildings Mini hubs Bike nets	Allow 1 for every 10 members of staff in new developments Ensure future design allows for oversize bikes, e.g. cargobikes.
Short Stay	Covered cycle parking Sheffield stands	Allow one for every 20 students in new developments
Lockers	Lockers to store clothing and accessories	Aspire to 1 for every 15 members of staff
Drying facilities	Facilities for secure drying of clothing	Aspire to 1 for every 20 members of staff
Ebike Charging	Ebike/battery charging stations	Provide in key locations

- 5.5 The University will work with the local authorities to promote cycling safety with 1-2-1 cycle training, guided rides and information sessions. It will also promote initiatives such as 'dutch reach' to those who drive for and to the university.
- 5.6 The University facilitates a Cycle Forum to allow those who cycle or are interested in cycling to share experience, best practice and information for others. The cycle forum shall also be involved in decision making for future improvements to facilities and initiatives for those who cycle.

Cycling Strategy Actions

CY1:	Work towards meeting the cycle parking standards.
CY2:	Provide 'Dr. Bike' and maintenance services at minimum weekly on central campus and quarterly at USID/AMRC sites.
CY3:	Offer salary sacrifice for bikes via 'The Deal'.
CY4:	Offer refurbished bikes with a subsidy for students.
CY5:	Work with Police to promote security and bike tagging events.
CY6:	Offer a bike hire service.
CY7:	Provide an ebike loan scheme for staff considering the purchase of an ebike
CY8:	Support Schools and professional services to make use of pool bikes and cargo bikes..
CY9:	Provide information on cycle routes and facilities around the University.
CY10:	Support the University Cycle Forum.
CY11:	Organise promotional events and guided rides on and near campus and promote activities within the city, e.g. sheffield Cycling 4 All
CY12:	Offer incentives to promote and reward cycling, recognising different cycling abilities.
CY13:	Work with local authorities to improve local cycle routes. Particularly those crossing or within the University.



6. Public Transport Strategy

- 6.1 The University central campus is well served by a large number of high frequency bus services and Supertram. Many more services converge in the city centre with a short walk or connecting services. Sheffield Rail Station is accessible by tram in 10 minutes.
- 6.2 Samuel Fox House and other facilities at Northern General Hospital benefit from a high number of services to Sheffield City Centre and other local centres.
- 6.3 The student residences are well served by high frequency bus routes linking to the central campus and adjoining services in the city centre.
- 6.4 University of Sheffield Innovation District and AMRC facilities are seven miles to the east of the city centre. AMRC facilities to the south of the A630 Parkway have approximately four buses per hour to the city centre, with two buses per hour directly linking the central campus. USID facilities on Sheffield Business Park have one bus per hour to the city centre and 1 bus per hour to Meadowhall Interchange.
- 6.5 The main commercial bus operators in Sheffield are First and Stagecoach, with a number of tendered services operated by South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) to support the commercial routes. Operators issue their own tickets and passes with the majority of multi operator tickets, including those for most students issued, by TravelMaster. SYMCA controls and operates the Supertram network.
- 6.6 The University works with these operators and national carriers to promote the use of public transport for regular and one off journeys. In addition it is represented on the SYMCA Enhanced Partnership Forum to improve the quality of bus services in South Yorkshire.
- 5.7 HMRC rules on benefit in kind make it prohibitive to directly subsidise bus network passes or tram/rail passes. They do allow the subsidy or provision for services that are directly provided to serve a site or cluster of locations for staff.
- 6.8 Rail Train Operating Companies offer season tickets to employers to help spread the cost of season tickets.

Public Transport Strategy Actions

PT1:	Provide and distribute information about public transport services, tickets and offers.
PT2:	Work with operators, SYMCA and TravelMaster to explore options for discounted season tickets for staff and students.
PT3:	Consider options to improve bus services to the east of Sheffield either through diversion of existing services, subsidies, or direct provision/tendering shuttle services.
PT4:	Provide Rail Season Ticket offers through 'The Deal'.
PT5:	Lobby for expansion of the Tram network in Sheffield to include AMRC and Sheffield Business Park.
PT6:	Consider initiatives to support public transport use by students who are home based and more reliant on public transport for commuting.
PT7:	Integrate public transport accessibility into the parking permit application process.
PT8:	Offer incentives and rewards for public transport use.

7 Car Parking Management Strategy

- 7.1 Travelling by car is the most carbon intensive form of travel and is responsible for 77% of the carbon emissions from staff commuting, despite being the primary mode of travel for only 30% of staff. To meet our net zero emissions targets and improve local air quality we must reduce the carbon emissions of this group of staff. This can be achieved by encouraging a shift to lower carbon forms of transport through either a change of mode to active travel or public transport, or by changing from Internal combustion engine to electric vehicles.
- 7.2 It is expected that the number of car parking spaces on central campus will reduce over the next five years. Car Parking must be managed to ensure facilities are not oversubscribed and parking is allocated on a needs based assessment that considers the factors that impact the difficulty of the journey.
- 7.3 Charges for parking will be agreed by the Travel Advisory Group to ensure that the parking facilities can be properly managed and maintained, and that funding is available to implement the Travel Plan Strategy. Charges will be set for considering the equivalent cost of public transport journeys and car parks will be categorised based on their location, recognising some sites are more accessible by sustainable modes of transport than others. Tariff structures recognise that staff who cannot work in a hybrid manner should proportionately pay less per day than those who are able to work from home.

- 7.4 Permits will be issued to manage which staff and students are able to access car parks, this will be using the following criteria:
- Medical conditions that impact on the journey which could include physical, cognitive or mental health conditions;
 - Availability of public transport;
 - Ability to walk or cycle;
 - Roles where it is a contractual requirement to be on site before 7am or after 7pm if public transport is not available;
 - The need to transport children to and from primary school or to pre-school care facilities as part of the commute
 - The need to transport cared for teenagers or adults to care facilities as part of the commute.

It is recognised that there may be exceptional circumstances not covered by these criteria and these will be considered on a case by case basis.

- 7.5 Permits would not normally be issued to facilitate business travel where this could be made using public transport or by utilising the University owned fleet or hire vehicles.
- 7.6 Being issued a permit is subject to agreeing to terms and conditions that ensure safe and fair use of the parking facilities, a permit may be revoked or refused by those who regularly contravene the terms and conditions or refuse to abide by them. Parking Facilities will be managed by a mixture of in-person patrols, CCTV and ANPR cameras.

7.7 Categories of Parking

Central Campus		
Category A (Staff & Students)	Guaranteed Space within a designated car park. Fixed rate per month.	Fixed rate per month charged at 1.5 x the category B monthly rate
Category B (Staff & Students)	Licence to hunt for a space within a number of designated Category B car parks at any time. No guarantee that space will be available.	Variable rates based on time periods using tariff structures similar to those used by public transport operators.
Category B (off peak)	As above, but does not allow parking during the daytime on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday during term time.	As above
Category B (DDSS)	Licence to hunt for a space within a number of designated Category B car parks at any time. No guarantee that space will be available.	Will be issued free of charge to students referred by DDSS where they are registered disabled but not eligible for a Blue Badge.
Blue Badge Permit	Issued to any member of staff or student who is in possession of a blue badge. This allows parking in accessible bays or standard parking bays, and in exceptional circumstances on yellow lines on campus, provided this does not cause an obstruction to other users.	Free of Charge
Temporary Accessible Permit	A permit that may be issued to staff following injury or illness to support a return to work. This would normally be issued for a period of up to 3 months following a referral from HR or occupational health. Under exceptional circumstances, these may be issued on a rolling basis to support a member of staff who has a disability but is not eligible for a Blue Badge. This will be assessed on a case by case basis following a referral by Occupational Health and considering the availability of parking in the vicinity of the workplace.	Charged at the rate applicable in the relevant car park.
Motorcycle Permit		
On Call Permit	Out of hours permit for emergency staff	Free of charge

Outlying Sites		
Samuel Fox House Category B	Category B permit specific to this site.	As per Category B prices above.
Residences Category R	Parking at the Student residences. Not a guaranteed space within any particular car park	Fixed rate per month charged at 0.25 x the category B monthly rate. Annual equivalent for students
AMRC/USID	Permit specific to this site.	As per Category R Exemption for Apprentices
AMRC Cymru/NW	Permit specific to this site.	To be developed

Car sharing

- 7.8 Car Sharing is a useful way to reduce the number of car journeys onto congested sites or improve accessibility to sites difficult to reach by public transport. It can help reduce the carbon impact of commuting where it replaces single occupancy car journeys and is supported by the University as part of a holistic way to reduce our carbon emissions.
- 7.9 A number of technological solutions are available to support car sharing, and these can be supported by designated dedicated spaces for car sharers within car parks.

Electric vehicles and charging infrastructure

- 7.10 Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging infrastructure is provided primarily to support the university owned fleet and business travel. However it is recognised that EVs and Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles have a role to play in reducing the carbon emissions from commuting, particularly for those who are more car dependent. Changes to new vehicle legislation will gradually reduce the number of combustion engine vehicles and reduce our scope 3 emissions. This strategy aims to bring forward that change by supporting EV commuting.

Behaviour change

- 7.11 It is recognised that the ease of commuting by sustainable modes varies for different people, and for those for whom it is more difficult the car may provide the most practical solution. However results from travel surveys suggest approximately half of car commuters have considered alternative forms of travel. By employing the behaviour change frameworks set out in the Sustainability Strategy 2025-30, we will promote sustainable and active travel to reduce the overall demand on car parks and help reduce our scope 3 emissions. We will continue to use BetterPoints to proactively reward sustainable travel journeys and encourage car drivers to consider alternative modes of transport.

Visitors and Contractors

- 7.12 Visitors to the University shall be encouraged to use public transport or directed to commercial parking facilities where available.
- 7.13 Where there are locations that do not offer a viable public transport option or car parking solution spaces may be designated for visitors if practicable. This can be through designation of dedicated visitor spaces or offering spaces to the public with a tariff in place, this could include allowing use of car parks at the evening or weekend.
- 7.14 The use of contractors is required to maintain the university estate and specialist equipment. A contract permit system shall be in place providing access for essential works vehicles carrying tools or equipment with tariffs in place. This shall not be extended to contractors personnel or personal vehicles

7.15 Many car park facilities are used by visitors to access facilities such as sports pitches outside of the core working day. Evening and weekend tariffs will be set to ensure the facilities are able to be maintained and not inadvertently encourage car travel.

Car Commuting Strategy Actions	
CP1:	Implement the car park management strategy.
CP2:	Promote car sharing considering technological solutions and dedicated car share spaces.
CP3:	Promote the benefits of EVs and PHEVs, considering charging infrastructure that could be made available for commuters and continue to consider the viability of an EV/PHEV salary Sacrifice Scheme.
CP4:	Promote initiatives that encourage staff and students to use their cars less and reward a reduction in car use.
CP5:	Provide suitable facilities for visitors where practical alternatives are not available.
CP6:	Provide access for contractors where this is required to facilitate works.
CP7:	Ensure facilities promote safety for their users, including secure facilities for motorcycles.
CP8:	Offer tariffs for evening and weekend use of car parks which are used by visitors.



8. Marketing the Strategy

- 8.1

Good information, communication and marketing are required to encourage people to try different forms of transport. Lack of information can be a key barrier to mode shift. In addition, active travel modes and public transport journeys are generally more difficult than the equivalent car journeys.
- 8.2

In order to raise awareness and the promote the initiatives with the TPS, schools and professional services will be encouraged to provide and promote:

•

Comprehensive information for new starters and visitors on the availability of public transport options to Sheffield.

•

Ensure staff inductions include information on the range of options available for sustainable travel.

•

Ensure new starters are aware of restrictions on parking and should not assume that parking will be available.
- 8.3

Information on all the initiatives will be available online supported by regular emails to promote upcoming events.
- 8.4

Smartphone technology can be used to directly influence behaviour and promote sustainable transport. Since 2019 the University has successfully used BetterPoints to promote and reward sustainable travel and wider sustainability initiatives. As of the end of 2024/5 over 2500 members of staff and students actively use BetterPoints, with over 8000 registered users.

Marketing the Travel Plan Strategy	
MS1:	Ensure information for new starters and inductions include information on sustainable travel and limitations of on campus car parking.
MS2:	Ensure sustainability initiatives in Schools include active and sustainable travel initiatives relevant to the School.
MS3:	Promote and utilise BetterPoints to rewards and influence travel behaviour.
MS4:	Provide regular updates on progress and success of the Travel Plan and use continuous marketing to promote it.
MS5:	Use Travel Surveys as an opportunity to get feedback on the Travel Plan.
	Promote the Travel Plan at freshers events and ad hoc staff events
	Work with external providers (e.g. bus operators, bike shops) to promote sustainable travel modes.

9. Monitoring and Evaluation

9.1 The University undertakes biennial travel surveys to collect information on staff and student commuting. Whilst for staff this remains a statistically reliable method, low response rates from students have meant surveys do not provide reliable information on student travel behaviour. Further work is required to better collect information on student travel.

9.2 Other methods of data collection can be used to help understand travel behaviours and use of facilities. This can include:

- Car parking permit application data.
- Car parking occupancy and sales information.
- Spot checks of cycle parking facilities
- Pedestrian and cycle count data
- Heat maps from BetterPoints
- Qualitative feedback, e.g. surveys
- Financial expenditure and income generation

9.3 Trends in staff travel 2004 to 2023

	2004	2014	2016	2019	2021	2023
Walk	17%	25%	19%	28%	19%	24%
Public Transport	31%	26%	21%	29%	28%	28%
Car (on own)	39%	21%	32%	24%	37%	24%
Car Share	5%	7%	9%	7%	8%	6%
Cycle	7%	9%	9%	8%	8%	16%
Motorcycle	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Other	0%	10%	4%	4%	2%	2%
CO2e (tonnes)		3368	3010	2297	2577	2531
Average CO2e per capita (tonnes)		0.465	0.386	0.277	0.324	0.294

9.4 Trends in Student Travel

	2004	2014	2016	2019	2021*	2023
Walk	71%	75%	67%	7%		61%
Public Transport	17%	13%	18%	11%		27%
Car (on own)	7%	4%	6%	4%		4%
Car Share	1%	2%	1%	2%		1%
Cycle	4%	4%	6%	7%		4%
Motorcycle	0%	2%				0%
CO2e (Tonnes)		3319	2369	1952		**

*No data due to COVID restrictions. **no data due to low response rate.

9.5 Data from travel surveys are used to give an indication of the carbon emissions resulting from day to day commuting. The headline figures from the 2023 survey:

Mode	Car Alone	Car Share	Public Transport	Other
CO2e(tonnes)	1801	147	550	32
Percentage of staff who use this mode	24%	6%	27%	48%
CO2e Share	71%	6%	22%	1%

This shows that the 30% of staff who travel by car are responsible for 77% of carbon emissions resulting from commuting.



10. Targets

10.1 It is reasonable to expect that actions in the Travel Plan will continue to influence staff and student travel behaviour. However this is in the context that many external factors can influence travel behaviours.

These include, but are not limited to:

- Availability of public transport, e.g. new bus services, reduction in bus services, public transport strikes.
- Changes in demographics, e.g. home location of workforce, number of employees.
- Financial factors e.g. fuel pricing and public transport prices
- Physical factors e.g. improved cycle infrastructure.

Objective	Key Action	Key Influence
Reduction in car drivers	Implement Car Park Management strategy	University (EFM & TAG)
	Reduction/restrictions of on-street parking	Local Authority
	Road User Charging	UK/Local Government
Decrease in CO ₂ e from driving	Availability and cost of EVs	University (HR/Finance) Motor Industry UK Government
Increase in Active Travel	Implement Cycling and Walking Strategy	University (EFM/HR/TAG)
	Improvements to local highway network for Active Travel	Local Authorities/SYMCA
Increase in public transport	Implement Public Transport Strategy	University (EFM/HR/TAG)
	Improvements to local highway network	Local Authorities/SYMCA
	Improvements to local bus network	Local Authorities/SYMCA/UK Government Bus Operators
	Improvements to Light Rail	Local Authorities/SYMCA/UK Government
	Improvements to Heavy Rail	Local Authorities/SYMCA/UK Government
	Competitive pricing	Bus operators SYMCA/Uk Government

10.2 The following targets have been agreed:

1. To reduce the percentage of staff who drive to work to 20% of the workforce by 2030
2. To reduce the carbon emissions resulting from staff commuting by 25% from 2024 to 2030

10.3 Action Plan Summary

A live tracking document will be kept with progress against all agreed actions in line the the University Sustainability Strategy

