

Greening our Journeys 2

Staffordshire County Council's own Travel Plan

WHY HAVE A TRAVEL PLAN?

We are all lax in the way we travel – we use the car too much without thinking of the alternatives or the consequences to our environment, our health and our quality of life. Statistics suggest that a continuation of present trends in car use will lead to increased congestion and pollution.

The effects can be felt at the local level through poor air quality, noise, and busier roads, and at global level through climate change. Journeys by road are becoming slower and more unreliable, causing problems for business and stress for drivers.

The need to address the impact of this on people's health – in terms of the air we breathe and of general fitness – is now also becoming more and more important.

FACT

British Heart Foundation statistics estimate 36% of deaths from Coronary Heart Disease in men and 38% in women are due to lack of physical activity

Regular physical activity can decrease the risk of developing heart disease, angina and strokes, and helps maintain good mental health. Walking or cycling some or all of the way to work can provide the daily exercise needed to support well being. Incorporating physical activity as part of the daily routine means you are more likely to keep it up – travelling in an environmentally friendly way and getting fit at the same time.

Staffordshire County Council, as a major employer in the county, wants to set a good example and hopes that organisations and businesses will follow the lead.

A SMALL CHANGE BY A LOT OF PEOPLE CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE.

SUPPORT FROM COUNCILLOR MIKE BOYLE - PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR SUSTAINABILITY



“This Council is committed to protecting the health of its workforce through a policy of environmentally sustainable practices, which encourage good travel habits and ensure our workforce is fit to serve the people of Staffordshire. Our Green Travel Plan combines leadership, good practice and choices for staff to enable them to stay fit and play their part in protecting the environment in Staffordshire for future generations. We hope that others will follow our example with their own plans”

Councillor Boyle (left) pictured here with the Sustainable Travel Team (front row) and Graham Jones, (Head of Community Programmes & Safety)

BENEFITS FOR ALL...

Local Community:

- ⇒ supporting the use of public transport, cycling and walking will help improve facilities for all
- ⇒ a healthier, more attractive environment in which to live and work
- ⇒ less traffic congestion
- ⇒ cleaner air

County Council:

- ⇒ healthier and more motivated staff
- ⇒ reduced congestion and improved access to sites for visitors and customers
- ⇒ leading by example – demonstrating good environment and transportation practice to other local employers
- ⇒ potential cost-savings

Staff:

- ⇒ increased travel choices
- ⇒ improved health, reduced stress
- ⇒ travel cost savings through discount travelcards, using cheaper alternatives and car-sharing
- ⇒ promotes equal opportunities by supporting those staff who, out of necessity or choice, do not use a car
- ⇒ more flexible working options

OUR TRAVEL PLAN

This is the Staffordshire County Council's **second** Travel Plan. It builds upon our past successes and demonstrates our continued commitment to minimising the impact of travel on the environment by reducing the amount of unnecessary travel and encouraging those who have to travel to do so in a more environmentally friendly way.

Experience from the original plan clearly demonstrates that we are prepared to make changes in our travel planning when provided with practical alternatives. We have reduced the amount of drive-alone journeys to work by 10% over the last 2 years, with an increase in walking, cycling and car-sharing.

The Travel Plan contains a number of new measures that will allow staff to make more informed choices about how they travel and provides the support to promote more sustainable ways of getting around.

Aims:

The over-riding aim of this Green Travel Plan will be to:

Reduce the overall amount of car travel by employees.

To achieve this four key objectives have been identified:

- ⇒ to increase the amount of car-sharing
- ⇒ to increase the use of alternative modes of transport
- ⇒ to reduce business travel
- ⇒ to develop a strategy to reduce the need to travel

This new plan will last 5 years, 2004 - 2009. It will be monitored regularly and updated where necessary.

Targets:

To help measure the success of our Travel Plan we have set new targets that we feel are realistic, challenging yet achievable, based on the successful results and comments from the staff travel survey.

20% of all journeys to work shall be by cycling and walking

No more than 50% of all journeys to work shall be drive-alone by car

Reduce the recorded business mileage by car 1 million miles

OVERVIEW OF GREEN TRAVEL INITIATIVES:

Individual staff will obviously have varied personal travel requirements, so a wide range of incentives are offered. Using alternative forms of transport or car sharing will not suit everyone all of the time as people's travel needs often change from day to day. Staff will therefore be encouraged to 'pick and mix' between different forms of transport where they can.

If every car driver used an alternative just one day a week then congestion and all its related problems would be reduced by as much as 20% immediately.

General initiatives and promotion:

- ⇒ Removal of the essential car user requirements to bring a car to work every day
- ⇒ Promise of a free ride home to those without a car at work in the event of an emergency
- ⇒ A programme of investment to provide secure, weatherproof cycle parking facilities, changing facilities and showers
- ⇒ Interest-free loans, with monthly deductions from salary, to purchase a cycle and safety equipment or an annual public transport ticket
- ⇒ Promotion of Green Travel initiatives through information on the Council Intranet, TravelWise bulletin boards and access to departmental travel co-ordinators
- ⇒ Green travel information to be provided as part of every new employees introductory training
- ⇒ Issue of car-park passes to new employees to be based on the needs of their job
- ⇒ Customised, Personalised Journey Planning offered to staff and new recruits
- ⇒ Green Pea Awards

Travel to work:

- ⇒ Car-sharing database
- ⇒ Monthly cash prize draw
- ⇒ Designated car-share spaces at some sites
- ⇒ Staff discount on cycles, powered two-wheelers and equipment negotiated with local retailers
- ⇒ Low-interest loans to buy powered two-wheelers
- ⇒ Information on approved CBT training
- ⇒ Discounted public transport travelcards from ARRIVA Midlands North and First
- ⇒ Access to up-to-date public transport information at workplaces through 'National Busline' 0870 608 2608 and timetables
- ⇒ Adult cycle training / refresher / maintenance courses
- ⇒ Developing Local walking and cycle routes as part of Staffordshire Local Transport Plan.
- ⇒ Provision of maps showing suitable, local walking and cycling routes
- ⇒ 'Walk in to Work out' booklet - goal setting & health promotion
- ⇒ Publicity to promote the considerable health benefits of cycling and walking

Work-related travel:

- ⇒ Encourage the scheduling and location of meetings to reduce the need to travel
- ⇒ Cycling mileage allowance of 20p per mile for work-related journeys
- ⇒ Motorcycling mileage allowance of 24p per mile for work-related journeys
- ⇒ Expect car-sharing for travel to meetings where appropriate
- ⇒ Provision of pool cycles where there is demand
- ⇒ Access to public transport information and ticketing at workplace
- ⇒ Managers to lead by example and engender a Green Travel culture
- ⇒ Development of an effective means of analysing and monitoring business travel, including targets
- ⇒ Investigate video-conferencing
- ⇒ Visitor maps with public transport information
- ⇒ Fleet audit
- ⇒ 'Safer Driving Practice' courses

THE WAY FORWARD

We are determined to make this new Travel Plan work even better than the original. The involvement and commitment of all staff is essential. Every individual contribution is valuable – a small change in travel habits by a large number of people can have a major impact on the negative effects of transport on the health, economy and environment of our County.

In order to continue to carry this plan forward, the cross-departmental Travel Plan Working Group has been established and will review quarterly the effectiveness of the Travel Plan and the operation of the particular incentives. This group will also act as Departmental contact points on Green Travel issues, views or advice..

If you would like to know more, the Sustainable Travel Team would be more than happy to talk to you. Tel 01785 276615, or email sonia.atkins@staffordshire.gov.uk .

SOME TRAVEL PLAN MEMORIES



Pedal 'n' pub rides



Anne George, SC&H receiving an award for the 100th cycle loan issued.



Christening the new shower



Pea of the Year award



Well used cycle storage at Development Services



Santa gives Vince his travel card



Winning T-shirt design



Leek SSD Biker's Breakfast