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ACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUTING POLICY

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UNIVERSITY
OF SUSSEX

ACTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUTING POLICY

This is the official University of Sussex policy on active and sustainable travel and commuting. It replaces previous policy documents on this topic.

PURPOSE

This policy document is designed to provide further guidance and guiding principles on promoting active and sustainable commuting to enable us to realise our strategic commitments around travel as set out in **Sustainable Sussex**, the University of Sussex Sustainability Strategy and **Action Plan**.

Ultimately, it is intended to help us realise our vision of being one of the most sustainable universities in the world by reducing our carbon emissions from transport, whilst supporting staff and student health and wellbeing and that of our local community through reduced air pollution and better health outcomes.

OBJECTIVES

- I. To set new annual active and sustainable commuting targets each year from August 2022.
- II. To incentivise active and sustainable travel – including cycling.
- III. To reduce the emissions made by car journeys.
- IV. To make all of the University's vehicle fleet ultra-low emissions by August 2025.
- V. To review and optimise all signage, cycle lanes and pedestrian paths on campus and commission a feasibility study into the creation of an active and sustainable travel hub.
- VI. To continue to work with our local strategic partners to improve the sustainability, decarbonisation, affordability, safety and quality of public transport to and from campus and across Brighton and Hove.
- VII. To support remote working through our new **Remote Working Framework**, reducing the need to commute to and from campus in some instances where appropriate.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. RESULTS DRIVEN:

We, as an institution, will set and measure progress against annual targets for more active and sustainable commuting from August 2022 onwards. These targets are likely to include but will not be restricted to the following:

- a) walking/running
- b) cycling/E-bike
- c) ultra-low emission vehicle (ULEV) car journeys
- d) ride-sharing/carpools
- e) bus
- f) train.

2. REWARDS FOCUSED:

The University will continue to provide a competitive package of staff and student rewards and benefits to encourage the uptake of more active and sustainable commuting choices. This includes the provision of:

- a) an active and sustainable travel rewards scheme, where staff and students receive financial rewards for sustainable travel choices (currently 'EcoGo')
- b) a **Cycle to Work scheme** – which now includes electric bikes
- c) a 10% annual discount for use of the **Brighton Bike Share scheme**
- d) cycle trains, cycle safety and maintenance support to encourage more staff and students to cycle to campus in a safer manner
- e) staff discounts on public transport, including through the **Easit scheme**.

3. DECARBONISING CAR JOURNEYS:

We are working hard to support our staff who need to make journeys by car to do this in the most sustainable way possible. We will do this in the following ways:

- a) introducing progressive parking charges where cleaner vehicle users pay less – subject to a full equality analysis by August 2023
- b) encouraging ride sharing where feasible – including exploring opportunities to work with the University of Brighton to create a shared carpool for our neighbouring campuses
- c) investigating creating a new ultra-low emission vehicle (ULEV) leasing scheme for staff, based on salary sacrifice (like our Cycle to Work scheme), which would make it cheaper to drive an ULEV on account of tax benefits, by January 2022
- d) making all of the University’s vehicle fleet ultra-low emissions by 2025 by only procuring and leasing new vehicles that are ULEVs.

4. UPGRADED INFRASTRUCTURE:

We will continue to provide and improve our active and sustainable commuting infrastructure. This includes:

- a) continuing to provide a good range of pedestrian pathways, cycle lanes, cycle racks, bus stops, access to the railway station and electric vehicle charging infrastructure
- b) reviewing and optimising all signage, cycle lanes and pedestrian paths on campus for a substantial increase in sustainable travel by August 2025
- c) commissioning a feasibility study into the creation of a new sustainable travel hub to improve cycling and public transport infrastructure
- d) conducting a further feasibility study into upgrading electric vehicle, scooter and bike charging infrastructure.

5. CIVICALLY ENGAGED:

We will continue to work closely with local strategic partners including Brighton and Hove City Council to promote a city- and region-wide approach to active and sustainable commuting. This includes but is not restricted to:

- a) continuing to prioritise pedestrian access to campus over car journeys
- b) lobbying for an upgrade to cycle lane infrastructure to campus
- c) supporting work to decarbonise rail and bus travel to and from campus with local operators
- d) working collegiately in joint campaigns and funding bids to promote safe, affordable, active and sustainable travel in the region
- e) providing academic advice and research support where possible.

6. EQUAL AND INCLUSIVE:

We understand that the way that people need to travel varies from person to person and is affected by a number of factors including gender, disability and income. We are committed to making our travel policies work for everyone. We will do this by:

- a) conducting equality analysis as standard – including detailed engagement with groups who have protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 ahead of setting a new progressive parking policy
- b) adhering to good practice accessible design when creating new transport related infrastructure on campus – using appropriate standards.



7. DATA LED:

We will make factual evidence-based decisions on active and sustainable travel using the best performance data possible. This will include but not be limited to:

- a) conducting annual travel surveys to better understand travel behaviour and patterns amongst students and staff
- b) regularly reviewing, analysing and reporting on number of trips, users, mileage and carbon emissions saved through a reporting dashboard as part of our contract with **BetterPoints** and our active travel rewards scheme **EcoGo**
- c) sharing data insights with key stakeholders that can help to inform wider local, regional and national travel plans as appropriate.

8. INNOVATIVE:

We strive to be at the forefront of low-carbon travel and transport innovation. We will do this through some of the following:

- a) researching and implementing best practice around low-carbon travel
- b) promoting innovation in the space of low-carbon inclusive travel within our student innovation competitions/grand challenges (such as our Pitch for the Planet competition) and wider research projects, methods and lab practices – including use of app-based and tech solutions to incentivise active and sustainable travel.

9. EVERYONE ENGAGED:

Minimising carbon emissions of personal and professional life, including travel and transport, is our collective responsibility. We will engage as many people on campus as possible in realising our policy in the following ways:

- a) educating staff and students on travel options and climate conscious commuting through Welcome Week events, staff inductions and sustainability webinars and road shows
- b) recruiting a network of travel champions to help support and promote safer, active and sustainable travel and to take part in critical mass cycle trains
- c) engaging students in competitions to help make the university a better, safer and healthier campus to travel around, such as through Love to Ride and the Move for Change Workplace Challenge.

10. EXTENDED TO THE SUPPLY CHAIN:

We will encourage the promotion of our active and sustainable travel values and principles as set out in this policy document with our supply chain where appropriate. We will do this through our **Sustainable Procurement Principles Framework** that helps to guide the selection of our suppliers.

Exclusions

Please note that this policy document does not include business travel, which will be the subject of a separate policy document by December 2022.



GLOSSARY

Active travel refers to journeys being made by physically active means, such as walking, cycling and wheeling. Active travel brings environmental, health and economic benefits by reducing emissions, congestion, air and noise pollution; improving health and wellbeing; contributing to economic performance and resulting in financial savings.

Sustainable travel supports the idea of conscious travel and being mindful of how our individual actions affect others and minimising the negative environmental impacts. A **sustainable travel hierarchy** is a useful tool to visualise the impact of journeys and help individuals make informed choices. The higher up the hierarchy, the more sustainable and greener the travel option. The most sustainable option, classed as active travel, is walking, followed by cycling and wheeling which require none or some equipment.

Ultra-low emission vehicle (ULEV) is the term used to describe any vehicle that:

- uses low-carbon technologies
- is currently defined as having less than 75 grams of CO₂ per kilometre (g/km) from the tail pipe. These are listed by the UK Government's **Vehicle Certification Agency**.

ULEVs range from pure electric vehicles and fuel cell electric vehicles, to plug-in hybrids and extended range electric vehicles. Pure electric vehicles, and other plug in electric vehicles when driving in the electric mode, produce no tailpipe CO₂ or pollution, are cheaper to run than conventional vehicles and can attract financial incentives.

Decarbonisation is the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions through the use of low-carbon power sources, achieving a lower output of greenhouse gasses into the atmosphere. Reducing the amount of carbon dioxide occurring as a result of transport and power generation is essential to meet global temperature standards set by the Paris Agreement and UK Government.

Ride-sharing is an arrangement in which a passenger travels usually in a private vehicle driven by its owner, free or for a fee, especially as arranged by means of a website or app.

An **Equality Analysis** is a way of systematically and thoroughly assessing, and consulting on, the effects that a service or policy is likely to have on groups/individuals with one or many of the protected characteristics and whether this may put them at an unfair disadvantage. The main purpose of an equality analysis is to pre-empt the possibility that any proposed policy could affect some groups unfavourably. If appropriate, steps are taken to avoid this happening.

The **Cycle to Work Scheme** is a **UK Government-backed initiative** that enables an employee to obtain a bike and/or cycling accessories to use for riding to work whilst making tax and National Insurance savings from their gross pay.



GLOSSARY

Salary sacrifice is where an employee agrees to give up part of their pre-tax salary in exchange for a benefit from their employer, in the case of our Cycle to Work scheme, the hire of a cycle for active travel and/or safety equipment. The salary sacrifice enables an employee to pay back the loan from gross rather than net pay for the hire period, allowing them to benefit from income tax and NI relief which is where savings are accrued.

A **Bike Share scheme** is a shared, public transport service in which bicycles are pooled for multiple users and made available for shared use to individuals on a short-term basis for a price or free. Many bike share systems allow people to borrow a bike from a 'dock' and return it at another dock belonging to the same system.

A **feasibility study** is an assessment of the practicality of a proposed project plan or method and an analysis that considers all of a project's relevant factors – including economic, technical, legal, operational and time feasibility considerations – to ascertain the likelihood of completing the project successfully.

Progressive parking policies aim to tackle parking challenges, not merely by building more parking, but instead through better parking management. This can include:

- managing parking demand and freeing up parking spaces for those who have the greatest need
- maximising available parking capacity and reducing the amount of circulating traffic
- increasing accessibility
- discouraging unnecessary use of private cars while encouraging sustainable travel
- ensuring parking management is consistent with the University's and Council's other transport, economic and environmental policies.

The Equality Act 2010 is an **Act of Parliament** legally protecting people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced previous anti-discrimination laws with a single Act, consolidating, updating and supplementing the numerous prior Acts and Regulations that previously formed the basis of anti-discrimination law.

