

# **Sustainable Travel Action Plan**

2025-2030

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# Introduction

The University of Northampton (UON) produced a Framework Travel Plan (FTP) as part of the planning requirements for the relocation of Park Campus to the Northampton Waterside site (off Bedford Road, Northampton) in 2018 and produced a Full Travel Plan in 2022.

The Sustainable Travel and Parking Action Plan covers all UON sites. Waterside locations are referred to as campuses and the remaining locations: Scholars Green Village, The Development Hub, The Innovation Centre, St John's Halls, Podiatry & the Resource Centre.

The Travel Plan set out how the UON ensured that single occupancy journeys were to be reduced in both staff and students, and what sustainable measures continue to be implemented to encourage active travel and lower carbon emission travel year on year. The original Travel Plan for the County Council ended in 2022, so this action plan will set out how we will continue to implement, measure and document reducing our carbon emission impact for Scope 3 emissions and encourage the increase of sustainable and active travel.

## Vision

The University of Northampton's vision for travel is that by 2028 more sustainable forms of commuting will be embedded across UON's staff and students' choices that are made when it comes to commuting to and from the University; whether this be from home to work, home to study or for business travel.

## Strategic Targets for Travel and Commuting

The strategic targets for Travel and Parking are outlined below.

**Target 1.** Achieve a year-on-year increase in sustainable forms of travel to reduce our Scope 3 carbon emissions.

**Target 2.** Measure the travel patterns of staff and students by annual surveys to establish behaviour change initiatives.

**Target 3.** Continue to provide education for travel to staff and students through events, collaborations of lectures and advertising of alternative travel schemes available to all.

## Enablers of the Strategy

Several enablers have been identified to support successful implementation of this Strategy and associated Management Plans:

**Governance.** We have developed a governance structure that ensures we hold ourselves accountable to deliver on our sustainability vision, ensure effective oversight and decision-making on this Strategy, to measure performance and to ensure responsibility, and accountability.

**Leadership.** Ensure commitment from leaders at all levels of the University to support the implementation of the initiatives in this Strategy.

**Collaborative Working.** This Strategy will be delivered through working collaboratively with the whole University community, including gathering ideas and drawing on expertise and resources from all.

**Community and wider stakeholder engagement.** Support our identity as a civic university by linking our sustainability vision to that of Northampton and wider regional/national community.

**People.** UON cannot deliver this Strategy without the engagement of our students and staff. We need to harness commitment to sustainability across UON, continue to use existing networks and develop champions to promote change, and encourage positive behaviour.

**Communication.** Ensure our students, staff, stakeholders at local, regional, and national levels are aware of our Travel Plan's vision, ambitions, and achievements.

## Links to Wider UON Plans and Policies

The Targets detailed below do not stand alone, these are part of our ongoing environment and sustainability work. This Strategy focuses on specific travel and parking issues that have been identified as significant, whilst complementing continued progress in all other areas.

This Strategy directly impacts upon and is directly influenced by other UON policies, procedures, and plans such as Environment and Sustainability Strategies and Travel for Business.

## Target 1: Achieve a year-on-year increase in sustainable forms of travel to reduce our Scope 3 carbon emissions.

During the life of the original Travel Plan set out in 2018, we set out to reduce single occupancy vehicle (SOV) journeys by 20% over 3 years as requested by the Council. Due to the pandemic and most of the University working/studying from home, this was achieved in 2020, but when the return to work happened and a reduction in people wanting to car share or use buses due to health and safety, the final year's percentage was higher than the original baseline figure.

Mode	2019 – Waterside	2020 - Waterside	2022 - Waterside
SOV	71%	37%	79%
Cycling & walking	10%	11%	24%

However, we did see a large increase in the active travel percentage after the pandemic.

This made us look at our car driving culture and alter the way we report to demonstrate that our staff and students are becoming more accustomed to active travel. Whilst a 20% reduction in SOV use is unattainable due to circumstances out of our control – for example needing to drop children off at school before work - we want to concentrate on increasing the sustainable travel percentage year on year. This includes:

- Cycling
- Walking
- Bus
- Train
- Electric Vehicle
- Car Sharing
- Motorcycling

It does not include working from home.

By increasing these modes of travel each year by 1% for staff and 1% for students, we can gauge how our active campaigns and implemented measures (e.g. Cycle to Work Scheme) affect staff and students' commuting choices.

Business Travel emissions also make up part of our carbon footprint and these should be reduced using the Travel Hierarchy (image) and working collaboratively with the Procurement team.



*Image: Travel Hierarchy*

Specific focus should be on reducing our aviation emissions by using the platform Diversity Travel to monitor the bookings made by Procurement Travel. By using this program, we can see on a monthly basis the frequency, distance and emissions from air travel as well as hotel bookings. Hotels report on their own emissions and therefore we should be choosing hotels that are carbon footprint conscious. Class of travel has an impact on our carbon footprint, with first and business class having the larger footprint. Class selection should also be considered when booking flights for staff.

### Measurement of Success

- Increase of active travel in the survey results by 1%+ year on year
- Increase in sustainable travel in survey results by 1%+ year on year
- Reduction in Scope 3 emissions year on year
- Reduction in emissions from aviation

## Target 2. Measure the travel patterns of staff and students by annual surveys to establish behaviour change initiatives.

Each year since 2019, a travel survey has been available online for staff and students to complete asking them about their travel habits and what would encourage them to travel in a more sustainable manner. They are also asked for feedback on what can be improved. Most results unfortunately do not provide suggestions within the University's control. For example, we cannot give out free parking for all, nor can we significantly increase the Uno bus routes. Due to receiving a low number of responses results in 2022, we did not believe the percentage and ways of travel were a fair representation of the University. This encouraged us to look at the way in which we surveyed.

In 2023, we combined the Travel Survey with other sustainability aspects such as energy, recycling, biodiversity, and engagement for Sustainability Survey. This was done to increase what subjects we can report on, entice more responses, and get a wider prospective of what engagement tools work with staff and students that we can use for future campaigns. The incentive for responses was increased for staff and students and future surveys will also involve a pop-up stand for face-to-face engagement and reward for survey completion.

### Measurement of Success

- Increase response rate of the surveys for both staff and students (% increase year on year).
- Increase of active travel in the survey results (% increase year on year).
- Increase in sustainable travel in survey results (% increase year on year).
- Decrease in single occupancy vehicle journeys (% decrease year on year).
- Constructive feedback about schemes or travel choices that would improve staff commuting (a measure of the success of our engagement and campaigns) and communicate to the relevant stakeholders and external partners.

Target 3. Provide education of travel to staff and students through events, collaborations of lectures and advertising of alternative travel schemes available to all.

Events and Campaigns for the original Travel Plan 2019 - 2022

- Cycle to Work competition
- Walk This May competition
- Go Green Week
- Travel Roadshow
- COP 26
- Clean Air Day
- E-Bike Trail Collab with Smart Move Northants & Outspoken
- My Green Journey
- Travel Drop in Clinics
- Cycle To Work scheme
- Car Sharing Club
- Cycle Hire for students
- Dr Bike
- Police Bike Marking

To continue sharing information on sustainable choices for travel, we aim to hold more travel-based events, work with groups such as Active Campus for active travel collaborations and quarterly events and competitions. Basing these around national holidays, such as Walk This May and Clean Air Day, it helps to raise awareness on a national scale and what other Universities and businesses, especially in the county, are doing too. There is scope for joined up working with lecturers on assignments that want to incorporate sustainability and travel choices, as well as continuing to feed into other strategies such as Travel for Business, by providing a travel hierarchy.



### Measurement of Success

- Increase engagement with competitions (% increase year on year).
- Increase engagement score with People & Planet via website content (% increase year on year).
- Increase attendance at events (% increase year on year).
- Increase engagement with faculties and departments as well as provide updates at departmental briefings and The Sustainability Board.
- Increase in uptake of schemes such as Cycle to Work, Cycle Hire Scheme and bus discount scheme (number increase year on year).
- Create a mandatory induction webinar for staff & students which includes sustainable and active travel options.

## Reporting and Monitoring

UON will measure and assess progress against the targets as outlined within this Strategy on an annual basis. The Environment & Sustainability Team will lead on the reporting and assessment process with feedback from supporting faculties and departments as needed. The survey results will be analysed and recorded in a presentation document to be distributed to the Upper Leadership Team (ULT), the Sustainability Board and be published on our website for students, staff and companies who assess content relating to our sustainability goals.

As part of our Net Zero Carbon Pledge, we are required to report on our target and how we are progressing against reducing our carbon emissions. This is to hold us to account and enables UON to send a clear message on our commitment to the vision in this Strategy.

## Equality Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment is in place for this policy and procedure

<b>1. Policy/ Practice (name and brief description)</b> Sustainable Travel Action Plan
<b>2. Reason for the EIA</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ <b>Proposed new policy/practice</b></li><li>○ Proposed change to an existing policy/practice</li><li>○ Undertaking a review of an existing policy/practice</li><li>○ Other (please state):</li></ul>

<p><b>3. Person responsible for the policy/ practice</b></p> <p>Name: Hollie Darby</p> <p>Job title: Environment &amp; Sustainability Department/ Faculty: Estates &amp; Campus Services</p>
<p><b>4. Groups the policy, practice applies to:</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Student</p> <p>    ○ Parents</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visitors/Public</p>
<p><b>5. Data and evidence used to facilitate the screening of this policy/ practice including internal and external metrics and qualitative and anecdotal evidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benchmarking via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ County Council</li> <li>○ Sustainability Survey annual results</li> <li>○ Investors in the Environment Accreditation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>6. Gaps in information/ evidence to allow proper assessment of the policy/ practice and how this will be addressed</b></p> <p>Results of the survey regarding travel can differ due to the number of completions year on year. This will be factored in and a caveat included where appropriate.</p>
<p><b>7. Groups who have been consulted with in the development / review of this the policy/ practice:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Unions</li> <li>○ <b>Staff networks</b></li> <li>○ HR</li> <li>○ <b>ULT</b></li> <li>○ <b>Internal experts</b></li> <li>○ <b>External experts</b></li> <li>○ Focus groups</li> <li>○ Other (please state):</li> </ul>

## 8. Potential/actual impacts of the policy/ practice on the following characteristics

Reviewed characteristic	<b>Positive impact</b> <i>A positive impact is one in which a person or people will experience an advantage or benefit.</i>	<b>Negative impact</b> <i>A negative impact is one in which a person or people will experience a disadvantage.</i>	<b>Detail of impact</b> <i>If there is no impact – you do not need to fill in this section Explain how the proposal will disproportionately impact people who share the characteristic and/or what the effect of that impact will be on those people. This section should be completed whether the impact is positive or negative. With positive impact, detail the actions you will take to promote the positive impact to the university in the next column.</i>	<b>How will you mitigate or remove any identified negative impacts and/or promote any positive impacts?</b>  <b>Can any identified impact be justified for business reasons? If yes, please explain why.</b> <i>If an identified negative impact cannot be removed or mitigated, explain why this can be justified for business reasons. Where you identify negative impact which cannot be justified for business reasons, you should identify any changes you can make to your proposal which will mitigate or eliminate this.</i>
Age			No impact	
Disability			No impact	
Gender reassignment			No impact	
Marriage and civil partnership			No impact	
Pregnancy and maternity			No impact	
Race			No impact	
Religion or belief			No impact	
Sex			No impact	
Sexual orientation			No impact	

## 9. Ownership and approval

Owner: Environment & Sustainability Team, Estates & Campus Services

Author Date: APPROVED

Approved By: ULT + Sustainability Board

Date of Approval: July Twenty Twenty Five

Date of next review: 2028

### Version control

Version Control: V1

Amendments:

## Appendix 1. Associated Plans and Policies

All UON Plans and Policies outlined below can be found on the University of Northampton website [www.northampton.ac.uk](http://www.northampton.ac.uk)

### Plans

1. Travel Plan
2. Carbon Management Action Plan
3. Management Plan for Biodiversity
4. Investors in Environment Annual Action Plans
5. Heat Decarbonisation Plan
6. Estates & Campus Services Framework

### Policies

1. Environment & Sustainability Policy
2. Ecology Policy
3. Energy Policy
4. Waste Avoidance Policy
5. Waste Policy
6. Water Reduction Policy
7. Sustainable Construction & Refurbishment Policy
8. Travel For Business Policy

### Version Control:

Author: Environment & Sustainability Team, Estates & Campus Services

Author Date: May 2025

Approval Signatures: ULT + Sustainability Board

Approval Date: July Twenty Twenty Five

Current Status: APPROVED

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Amendments: N/A