

Active Travel
Champions



Promoting active travel: a guide for workplaces

This document has been compiled to support workplaces based in Scotland to encourage active travel at their organisation. It follows similar guidance to that used in the Active Travel Champions programme and draws from the resources listed on the Way to Work Scotland sustainable transport partnership website.



Please adhere to the Scottish Government COVID-19 guidance in your area when following this guide.

Understanding your needs

Understanding your organisation's current commuter habits, facilities available at each site, business travel needs and current staff behaviours is an important first step to providing staff with relevant and appropriate active travel provisions. You can get a good understanding of these issues by engaging with staff from the onset.

1. Survey

- An employee travel survey covering the basics of what main mode staff use to travel, why they use that mode and any barriers they have to using more sustainable modes is a great start to creating a baseline picture of your employee's travel needs. This can then be built upon by a whole host of other questions depending on your needs. An example baseline travel survey can be found [here](#).

2. Audit

- Conducting a site audit focusing on travel facilities is another great way to hone in on the successes, but also gaps, of your organisation's transport offer. For an example of some of the questions you could include in your audit, a comprehensive site audit can be found [here](#).

3. Working groups

- Creating an active travel working group is a great way to record progress, maintain enthusiasm and bring others on board. Some guidance on setting up such a group can be found on the Cycling UK [website](#). Although the guidance is centred on cycling, it's easy to extend the same process to all active modes of travel.

Increasing your resources

Use the information you have acquired to remove the barriers identified and seize any opportunities that have come to light. Working towards a travel award can provide a great framework for action and increase awareness across the organisation, whilst opening up new sources of funding.

- **Awards** - There are many awards that can help you to support walking, cycling and employees health and wellbeing that we recommend as a great starting point. Working towards achieving the awards will guide your process and increase the accessibility to active travel.
 - **Healthy Working Lives** - helps identify issues and improve health, safety and wellbeing in your organisation in a structured and productive way.
 - **Cycling Friendly Employer** - nationally recognised programme provides an award scheme and funding to help organisations make it easier for their staff to cycle for commuting and business purposes.
 - **Walk at Work** - an accreditation scheme for Scottish employers, recognising organisations that support staff to be active in and around the working day.

Find out more about awards at: www.waytoworkscot.org/awards/

Increasing your resources

- **Funding** - There are number of funding opportunities that are available to workplaces looking to promote active travel:
 - **Cycling Friendly Employer Development Grant Fund** - This fund is available to all employers in Scotland who are working towards becoming Cycling Friendly. Workplaces can apply for funding of up to £25,000 for facilities, such as showers or bike racks that will encourage staff to travel by bike.
 - **Smarter Choices Smarter Places Open Fund** - Grants available are between £5,000 and £50,000 but need to be match funded. It aims to encourage people to change their everyday travel behaviours by encouraging people to use buses and community car clubs for longer journeys, walking and cycling for short journeys, and home-working to replace daily commutes.
 - **Energy Saving Trust e-cycle loans and grants** - Providing a fleet of e-cycles for employees to use for business trips and commuting is a great way of reducing car journeys. EST have a number of ways that they can support you to introduce e-cycles to your workplace. They can also provide loans to support the introduction of electric vehicles within organisations.

Find out more about funding at: www.waytoworkscot.org/funding-facilities/

Creating awareness

After conducting the initial research, identifying funding opportunities, awards and working on a plan of action, it is time to promote all this good work to employees.

- **Travel challenges** - Travel challenges are a great way to boost morale, encourage team spirit and introduce a bit of healthy competition. There are a few prominent travel challenges or themed days in Scotland:
 - Sustrans Scotland run the **Scottish Workplace Journey Challenge** in March. It is a great way to get staff to evaluate their current travel behaviours and for them to change to more sustainable modes, whilst competing against colleagues and other workplaces across Scotland. The Challenge is completely funded by Transport Scotland and comes at no cost to the workplaces competing in it.
 - Other prominent challenges or themed days include, but are not limited to: Paths for All's **Step Count Challenge**, **Cycle to Work Day**, Love to Ride's yearly programme of **events**, and Living Street's **National Walking Month**.
- **Physical communications** – Creating a physical presence at your workplace makes a huge difference. This could include wayfinding signage, travel information on notice boards in prominent places (e.g. in the tea room), and posters in noticeable locations (e.g. the back of a toilet door). Encourage your communications department to create engaging, eye-catching materials.

Creating awareness

- **Digital communications** – Creating a digital presence is more important than ever as remote working becomes the new normal, particularly for office workers. Promoting items of interest in staff newsletters, on staff internal communications channels and on your external-facing channels (e.g. social media and website) will help not only your staff, but any visitors and contractors arriving at your workplace. Ensure your opening hours and travel information are up to date on Google Maps too. Engage your communications and IT teams for assistance in preparing the materials to ensure a consistent message across platforms.
- **Cycle ‘buddies’ and peer-to-peer support** – Supporting a ‘bicycle buddies’ scheme is a great way to connect colleagues that are either confident commuters or new to the idea of travelling to work by bike. Buddies help guide new riders on their first few commutes, bridging the confidence gap. Other peer-to-peer support could include supporting staff travel ‘champions’ to act as points of support that colleagues feel able to go to with transport-related questions or concerns. Champions could then feedback relevant comments to management.
- **Training and professional development opportunities** – There are plenty of sustainable transport-related training opportunities on offer. Cycling Scotland offer a whole host of cycling-related **training courses**, including the ever popular **Essential Cycling Skills**. There are also opportunities for professional drivers to take **Practical Cycle Awareness Training**.

More training opportunities can be found on the Way to Work website:

www.waytoworkscot.org/training/

Going further

If your organisation would like to go the extra mile for your employees, here are a range of other suggestions to help embed an active travel culture within your workplace:

- **Lead by example** - Become an active travel champion at your workplace. [Here](#) are a few ideas to get you started.
- **Dr Bike maintenance sessions** - Hosting a Dr Bike session at your workplace is a great way to reward your cycle commuters and show your commitment to active travel. Some more information on Dr Bikes and how they work can be found [here](#).
- **Active travel breakfasts** - Food is always a great motivator and can be particularly helpful to provide the extra bit of motivation at the change of season e.g. spring or autumn. Here is a [step-by-step guide](#) to hosting a breakfast at your workplace.
- **Pool bike scheme** - Setting up a pool bike scheme allows flexibility for employees to travel by bicycle for business purposes. No matter what travel mode they arrived by to work, having a workplace pool cycle scheme on site provides convenience to your staff. A webinar guide on how to set up a scheme can be found [here](#).
- **Travel planning** - There are many online platforms available to help your staff travel more sustainably. Visit the Way to Work Scotland [website](#) to see some of the main suggestions.

Going further

- **Policy** - Ensuring your organisational policies are active-travel friendly, and your business strategy aligns with sustainable commuting and business travel is very important. Providing policies such as flexible working, a Cycle to Work scheme and bicycle mileage, should all be reviewed and aligned with your travel vision.
- **Corporate buy in** - Having senior management buy-in is key. Engage them with your ideas from the start. You never know - you might have a keen active travel champion in waiting amongst your senior leadership team!
- **Partnership working** - It is essential to bring others on board, whether they are from inside or outside your organisation. There are many sustainable transport partners willing to help you. The Way to Work [website](#) lists the main organisations working in Scotland, but there are many more. Contact us for partner details local to your organisation.
- **The bigger picture** - Advocate for better sustainable transport facilities in and around your workplace and to your key business travel sites. Partner with local public transport operators and car club schemes. Ensure those facilities are accessible to all and inclusive of every ability.
- **Places for Everyone** - Sustrans Scotland provides advice, support and funding for the creation of infrastructure that makes it easier for people to walk and cycle for everyday journeys. For more information please visit our [website](#) or contact us on the details below.

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Further information

If you have questions about any of the topics covered in this document, please contact us on the details below. We have an expert team who are always happy to point you in the right direction. We're on hand to answer any wider active or sustainable travel questions too.

Workplaces Team

Sustrans Scotland

Email: workplaces.scot@sustrans.org.uk

For more resources that can help you to support staff with active travel and give you inspiration, please visit the Way to Work Scotland website: www.waytoworkscot.org/resources/



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