



BSU Travel Plan

Responsible Office	Estates and Services
Responsible Officer	Head of Facilities and Services
Approving Authority	SSG
Date of Approval	June 2025
Effective Date	June 2025
Related Procedures	
Related University Policies	Clean Air Zone, Climate emergency, Carbon Reduction Management Plan, Environmental Policy
Amended	June 2025
Supersedes	2017 travel Plan
Next Review Date	June 2026

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

At Bath Spa University, we are dedicated to minimising the environmental impact of our operations, a commitment clearly outlined in our Sustainability Strategy and Policy.

This Travel Plan aligns with and supports our Sustainability Strategy and Sustainability Policy by outlining practical measures to promote sustainable travel choices among staff, students, and visitors.

We have implemented travel plans at our Newton Park campus since 2007 and at Sion Hill since 2008. These were consolidated into a single, updated document in 2013. The current Plan provides comprehensive travel guidance and control measures across all campuses and student residences. It sets out University-wide SMART targets and will be updated to reflect any expansion of university operations to new locations.

This document replaces our 2017 Travel Plan. It expands its scope to include business travel, sets more ambitious targets, and presents information in a clearer, more accessible format. It outlines a forward-thinking approach to reducing the environmental impact of commuting and business travel, supported by short-, medium-, and long-term actions. Ongoing consultation with staff, students, and relevant stakeholders will guide its implementation.

1.2 About Us

Bath Spa University currently operate around six teaching sites in and around the city of Bath, as well as one site in Corsham, located approximately 15 miles to the east. We also manage a range of student accommodation, across three independently operated sites. Comprehensive details about our teaching and residential locations, along with travel options, are available on our website:

[Find Us – Bath Spa University](#)

Our main campus, Newton Park, is located within a historic parkland estate at Newton St Loe, about 5 km west of Bath city centre, and forms part of the Duchy of Cornwall estate. On-campus accommodation at Newton Park consists of purpose-built units at the northern and southern ends of the site, offering a total of 872 student beds.

In addition to Newton Park, the University manages 888 beds at Twerton Mill, Waterside Court, and Charlton Court under a nomination agreement and a further 43 bedrooms at Bankside House near the Sion Hill campus.

1.3 Scope

This Travel Plan applies to all Bath Spa University operations, including our campuses in Bath and Corsham but does not include BSUL at this time, this will be included in future versions. It addresses both staff and student commuting, as well as business-related travel. Business travel and commuting at our partnership organisations are currently excluded.

1.4 Context and Drivers

Our success as a university depends on us providing an excellent student experience. As such, the safety and wellbeing of our students is our primary concern. Safe, timely and affordable commuting transport is a central component of our efforts to deliver this.

As a Higher Education Institution and a certified Gold Mark Social Enterprise, we have a responsibility to carry out our business operations in such a way that minimises our negative environmental and social impacts, while working to improve the local economy and social cohesion. As part of this, we support our Local Authority's [Clean Air Zone](#) and [Climate Emergency Declaration](#), which directly supports the UK's Net Zero 2050 Target.

As part of our [Climate Emergency Declaration](#), supported by our [Carbon Reduction Management Plan](#), we have committed to reaching Net Zero emissions by 2030, which includes those from all transport-related activity.

1.5 Approach

Our approach to reducing and managing emissions and congestion related to our commuting and business travel will be based on the Travel Hierarchy. Reducing the need for travel by providing appropriate digital forms of communication will be prioritised where practicable. Sustainable modes of transport will be promoted and as far as we are able to influence public transport providers, we will make this as accessible and reliable as possible.

Our staff community is geographically diverse and public transport solutions are not available for many. Our approach will be to facilitate home working and to promote and facilitate the uptake of electric vehicles (EVs) to minimise emissions from this element of commuting.

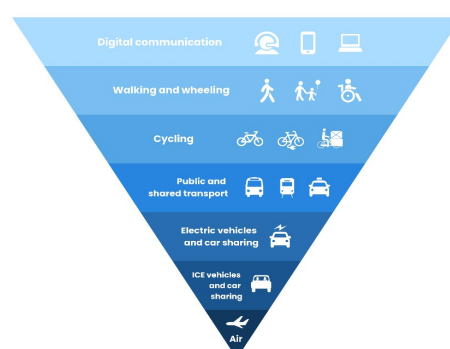


Figure 1. The Travel Hierarchy, which demonstrates the prioritisation of our commuting and business travel

Where emissions cannot be eliminated through behaviour change, management practice or technological advancement, we will resort to carbon offsetting to mitigate remaining emissions. This will have a significant cost to the University so every effort will be made to reduce carbon emissions as much as possible, before offsetting.

2.0 Policy

2.1 Travel Policy

Bath Spa University understands that commuting and business-related travel, while essential for the University's business, has negative impacts from congestion and pollution. At Bath Spa University, we take our sustainability responsibilities seriously and are committed to minimising the health, social and environmental impacts of our travel:

To this end, we undertake to:

- Promote travel to and from the University by non-car modes for students, staff and visitors, and to reduce travel by private car wherever there is a viable alternative
- Provide salary sacrifice cycle to work and Electric Vehicle Lease schemes for staff
- Work in partnership with local public transport providers and our Local Authority to provide safe, clean, affordable and reliable public transport services for students and staff
- Reduce business travel by air, by prioritising digital communication where practicable and minimise emissions by providing information to staff enable climate-sensitive choices to be made during booking
- Develop on-site residential accommodation where feasible to reduce the need for student travel
- Develop off-site residential accommodation only in areas that have sustainable travel links to the University
- Prohibit students (other than where registered disability dictates) residing in bespoke student accommodation under the control of the University or within easy access of bus routes from accessing a parking permit
- Encourage car sharing for those for whom travel by non-car modes is not a practical option
- Provide suitable facilities for cyclists at all sites encouraging active travel options - improve cycleway between Bath and NP
- Mitigate the environmental impacts of overseas student commuting through socially positive offsetting

- Review car parking charges to disincentivise fossil fuel car use and improve affordability for low paid staff that must attend campus

This Policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure that it continues to be relevant and fit for purpose.

2.2 Travel Plan Benefits

In addition to the Environmental, Health/wellbeing and financial aspects, implementation of a Travel Plan will bring other of direct benefits to the University as an organisation, to its students, to the local community and to the environment.

Overall Benefits to the University:

- Increased engagement generated by a healthier, more motivated student body
- Improved environmental responsibility
- Reduced congestion
- Reduced demand for car parking
- Improved access for employees, students, visitors, contractors and deliveries
- Support for and integration with the University Environmental Policy,
- Potential to increase the number of student applications to the University
- Enhanced image in the local community Increased recruitment and retention of staff

Benefits to Staff and Students:

- Improved access to places of work, study and for extra-curricular activities
- Commitment to environmental responsibility
- Reduced potential personal travel costs
- Increased choice of travel
- Improved health, reduced stress
- Improvement in quality of life
- Time savings and general convenience
- Improved integration with local communities
- Drink and drive avoidance

Benefits to the Local Community and the Environment:

- Reduced congestion
- Improved air quality
- Reduced journey times
- Potentially improved public transport services due to a higher demand on the services
- Reduced car parking on residential roads

- Reduced noise pollution from excessive cars and taxis
- Improved transport infrastructure for access to university events and venues

2.3 National and Local Context

Contribution of Travel to the Net Zero Transition

The UK Government's **Net Zero Strategy** recognises that achieving net zero emissions will involve a period of profound and unprecedented transformation. This transition will require “embracing new ways of doing things – from new ways of travelling, heating our homes, and using our land” (UK Government, 2021, p.60). To facilitate this shift, the Strategy proposes a systems-based approach to decarbonisation, supporting changes across multiple sectors. The Government aims to position the UK as a global leader in green innovation, with a strong emphasis on promoting sustainable transport and clean energy—both highly relevant to Bath Spa University's operations and ambitions (p.66).

The Role of Transport in Decarbonisation

Transport is a critical component in achieving the net zero target. It plays a central role in sustaining daily life through road, rail, and emerging low-carbon modes of travel. Decarbonising this sector involves a transition to clean technologies, such as electric and hydrogen-powered vehicles, supported by renewable energy infrastructure. Public concern about climate change remains high; however, widespread uncertainty persists about what the practical implications of net zero will be. This uncertainty is a key barrier to behaviour change. Nonetheless, collective action is widely recognised as essential to achieving national carbon reduction goals.

A significant milestone in the UK's decarbonisation journey was the publication of the **Transport Decarbonisation Plan (2021)**. This plan outlined a clear pathway to reduce emissions across the transport system and called for a fundamental increase in both ambition and scale. Importantly, its core message was that decarbonisation is not about restricting activity but about enabling people to live, work, and travel in more sustainable ways. More recent developments, such as the **2023 Net Zero Growth Plan** and **Powering Up Britain** strategy, have reinforced this message while addressing economic and infrastructure challenges linked to the transition.

Implications for Bath Spa University

For Bath Spa University, transport-related emissions are not only a key consideration in sustainability planning but also an opportunity to generate co-benefits for the campus community. These include improved local air quality, increased physical activity through active travel options, and enhanced wellbeing due to reductions in noise and vehicle pollution.

These benefits align with the University's broader goals around health, sustainability, and community engagement.

West of England Combined Authority (WECA)

BSU is committed to supporting the Combined Authority's ambition to make walking and cycling the preferred choices for short journeys, helping to deliver cleaner air, healthier communities, and reduced carbon emissions in line with the 2030 net zero target. In collaboration with WECA, BSU hopes to contribute to the early development of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

Investment in walking and cycling facilities across BSU campuses will encourage greater uptake of active travel among students and staff, including the integration of new modes such as e-scooters. Planned improvements include the expansion of cycle routes, the creation of off-road and segregated walking and cycling paths, and the introduction of new road safety measures around the Globe Roundabout and the Newton Park entrance.

2.4 Recommendations for the Bath Spa Travel Plan

In response to these national strategies and local opportunities, the Travel Plan must take meaningful, evidence-based steps within the University's operational control. It should:

- **Address public uncertainty** by fostering awareness, communication, and understanding around what net zero means for staff, students, and visitors;
- **Provide accessible, sustainable alternatives** to existing travel behaviour, enabling individuals to make environmentally conscious choices without significant disruption;
- **Encourage collective action**, recognising that community-wide participation is vital to achieving long-term emissions reductions.

By integrating these principles, the Travel Plan can support Bath Spa University's commitment to sustainability while contributing to national climate objectives.

3.0 Current Travel Patterns

Commuting travel patterns across all Bath Spa University campuses are monitored through annual or bi-annual travel survey questionnaires and annual spot traffic counts at Newton Park and Sion Hill. The surveys offer detailed insights into travel behaviour, including mode and distance over time, while the spot counts capture modal split trends and car parking demand on a typical day each year. Together, these methods provide a comprehensive understanding of commuter travel choices.

Analytical reports produced by IMA Transport Planning help the University assess performance against its travel targets looking at Modal split (see below) and inform future transport initiatives.

Year	P/C	M/C	Bus	Car Driver			Car Passenger	Total Trips	Total Trips per FTE
				Sole	With Passenger	Total			
2011	1.3%	0.6%	42.6%	31.5%	10.3%	41.7%	13.7%	6681	1.45
2012	0.5%	0.3%	49.3%	38.2%	5.4%	43.6%	6.3%	4875	1.12
2013	1.1%	0.8%	48.9%	33.5%	6.9%	40.4%	8.8%	5875	1.20
2014	1.2%	0.4%	47.4%	33.8%	7.6%	41.4%	9.5%	5785	1.16
2015	0.9%	0.4%	56.0%	29.8%	6.1%	35.8%	7.0%	6463	1.20
2016	1.3%	0.1%	56.2%	31.0%	5.3%	36.3%	6.0%	6435	1.14
2017	0.8%	0.5%	59.7%	29.2%	4.4%	33.6%	5.4%	7064	1.11
2018	1.1%	0.4%	52.3%	33.8%	5.8%	39.6%	6.6%	6336	1.08
2019	0.9%	0.4%	51.6%	33.6%	6.3%	39.8%	7.3%	6302	1.11
2021	0.6%	0.1%	49.0%	32.4%	8.2%	40.5%	9.7%	4049	0.77
2022	0.5%	0.3%	48.0%	32.3%	8.6%	40.9%	10.2%	3742	0.69
2023	0.7%	0.4%	48.6%	37.7%	6.2%	43.8%	6.5%	4794	0.82
2024	1.2%	0.8%	45.1%	36.9%	7.7%	44.6%	8.3%	4832	0.88

Business travel is monitored using data from the University's accounts system. Combined, these data sources enable us to evaluate the impacts of travel on parking availability, local infrastructure, and the wider environment. They also support the development and refinement of transport policies and mitigation strategies and help assess their effectiveness over time.

4.0 Objectives

The objectives of this travel plan are four-fold:

- 1 To manage and reduce Bath Spa's commuter-related impacts on local road congestion, air quality and carbon emissions,
- 2 To manage and reduce carbon emissions from BSU's business-related transport, student field trips and overseas student commuting,
- 3 To enable the safe, timely and affordable transport of staff and students to and from their places of work and study and to improve student satisfaction across the University
- 4 To manage and plan for future transport and parking provision necessary for our business

The following sections will expand on these objectives and detail the associated targets and aspirations, and the actions we are implementing/planning to address these.

Where applicable, baselines will be set using the most recent data that reflect post-pandemic travel behaviour. For commuting related travel, this will be from the Nov 2024

travel survey. For business travel, this will be from the 2023/24 academic year data, which will be updated in this plan in 2025/26. Pre-pandemic travel data from 2017/18 will be used as a baseline for comparison until 2024/25 data becomes available for comparison.

4.1 Objective 1

Reduce commuting emissions, air quality and congestion

Transport modal split (Table 1), CO₂ emissions, journey numbers and distances are estimated from data collected from staff and student surveys. As such, they are only ever “best estimates”. There is no agreed/standardised methodology in the HE sector for how this is done. Our approach is to use the respondents post code, main campus of attendance, frequency of attendance and main transport mode to calculate distances travelled and journey numbers. These are converted to CO₂ using Defra conversion factors and extrapolated from the sample sizes to the BSU staff and student populations. Vehicle emissions for car-based commuting are assessed using standard Defra/GHG vehicle emissions classification. Vehicle classification data are collected through on-site recording carried out by IMA transport.

Our most recent full analysis comes from 2023/24; this is due for an update at the end of the 2024/25 academic year. The results are shown in figure 1 below and show a decrease in total commuting emissions due to a decrease in car use and in the number of days that staff and students are on campus per week.

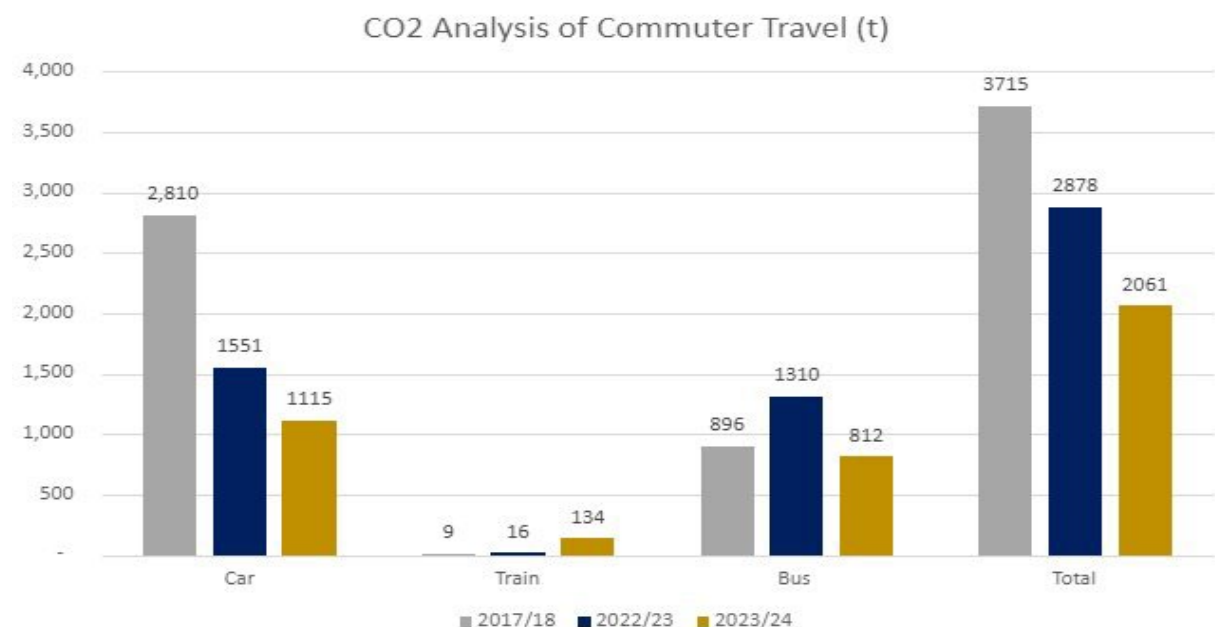


Figure.7;a graph.to.show.the.total.emissions.per.mode.of.transport?compared.against.the.8679.74 baseline.

Commuting Baselines and Targets

For local commuting, the two key parameters for reducing local congestion, pollution and climate impact are proportion of journeys by car and carbon emissions (which serve as a proxy for all traffic-related pollution).

The 2023/24 total for commuting-related journeys by car was 528,000 (Table 2). This is a significant (28%) reduction on the 2017/18 number of 729,000 journeys. This reduction in journey numbers is from a combination of a modal shift to bus travel by students and a behaviour shift towards home working by staff. The modal shift from car to bus travel by students has been largely driven by post code-related restrictions, which prevent students from accessing parking passes.

The reduction in staff commuting has been facilitated by a change in university culture, i.e. working from home, digital meetings etc coupled with key enabling work by our IT services department.

Table 1. Car driver daily commute distance, number of journeys and CO₂ split by staff and students for 2017/18 and 2022/23. The 2022 data will form the baselines against which future improvement can be measured.

	2017/18			2023/24		
Car Driver daily commute	Distance (km)	Car journeys	CO ₂ emissions	Distance (km)	Car journeys	CO ₂ emissions
Staff	5,314,133	305,335	1,033	3,900,509	188,912	552
Students	9,142,828	423,996	1,777	14,383,073	338,664	1,509
Total	14,456,961	729,331	2,810	18,283,583	527,576	2,061

It is thought unlikely that home working by staff will increase materially from its current level so journey numbers by staff are not expected to fall much further. However, carbon emissions from staff commuting could be reduced by incentivising public transport use, active travel and a switch from fossil fuel cars to EVs. These measures will form the basis of our approach to reducing staff-based commuting impacts.

In contrast to this, opportunities to reduce student car driving via better bus services, consolidation of student accommodation and further, more effective restrictions to parking permit availability, do exist. These actions will form the basis of our target for reductions in student journeys by car and consequent commuting emissions.

Commuting actions

1. Continue to facilitate home working by staff
2. Restrict parking permits for students to only those that are not able to reach the university by public transport and those that require personal transport to accommodate a registered disability

3. Continue to work with our public transport service providers to improve services
4. Work in partnership with our Local Authority transport officer, University of Bath and the RUH to develop an integrated public transport service
5. Expand measures to facilitate and promote active travel options, including an electric bike pool for staff, cycle safety/confidence training for staff and students and video based route-finding information
6. Promote the uptake of EVs by continuing to provide a salary sacrifice EV lease scheme and on-campus charging infrastructure

4.2 Objective 2

Business travel and overseas commuting

Business travel includes all forms of travel carried out by BSU staff, including for the purposes of partnership-building, knowledge exchange, research and cultural exchange. Historically, the calculation of business travel emissions has also included student field trips and overseas mobilities, undertaken as part of their studies.

Overseas student commuting refers to overseas students, traveling to BSU to study.

Business travel distance, mode and carbon emissions are calculated using a combination of expenses records and data provided by our corporate travel provider. Carbon emissions are calculated using standard GHG protocol calculations and methodology provided by Defra.

Business travel

Baselines and targets.

Data to assess business travel emissions are collected and analysed at the end of the academic year. Hence, the most recent data available at the time of writing this plan are from 2021/22 (Figure 2). This Plan will be updated accordingly when the latest data is available.

Similarly, a target for the reduction of business travel emissions cannot be agreed until a baseline has been calculated.

- Business travel baseline - TBC
- Business travel target - TBC

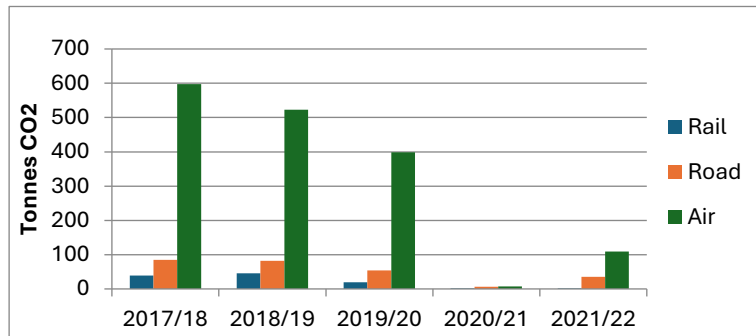


Figure 1. Business travel by transport mode 2017/18 to 2021/22.

Business.travel.actions

- To update the information for business travellers
- To enable climate sensitive booking of business travel before 2025/26 academic year

Overseas student commuting

Attracting students from overseas locations to study at BSU is a small but important component of our business model. Accommodating overseas students at BSU is potentially enriching for both our domestic students and for those visiting from different cultures.

BSU's reputation overseas is continuing to strengthen, which is leading to a growing demand from various locations, particularly India. However, the number of overseas students studying at BSU is limited by our capacity to accommodate them, both in terms of housing and space availability on courses.

It is our intention to build this capacity in a steady and sustainable fashion over the next five years. Hence, a reduction target is not applicable, and our approach is to understand how this source of emissions will grow over time and to plan for mitigation of the associated emissions, in line with our 2030 Net Zero target.

There is not yet an agreed methodology across the HE sector for calculating emissions from overseas student commuting. Our approach is to allocate one return flight from the country of domicile to the UK per student per year. We cannot know how many times individual students decide to return home during the academic year and many have historically stayed on site during the inter-semester breaks. Hence, in our current thinking, additional flights are the students' own choice and are not a Scope 3 responsibility for BSU. If an agreed methodology is adopted by the HE sector, our approach will be reviewed accordingly.

Overseas.student.commuting.baseline.and.target

- Overseas student commuting baseline - 1,043 t
- Overseas student commuting target - Not considered applicable at this stage

Overseas student attendance at BSU declined as a result of the pandemic (Figure 3). However, recruitment from India is currently strong and this growth is expected to continue over the next few years. BSU has yet to agree a strategy in this regard or set limits on how many students we wish to recruit from India or other overseas countries. This will have to be addressed before a target can be agreed. It may be that a target to reduce carbon emissions from this source is inappropriate and a mitigation strategy is necessary instead.

Due to this level of fluctuation and uncertainty, the pre-pandemic figure of 1,043 t will be used as the baseline, against which change can be measured.

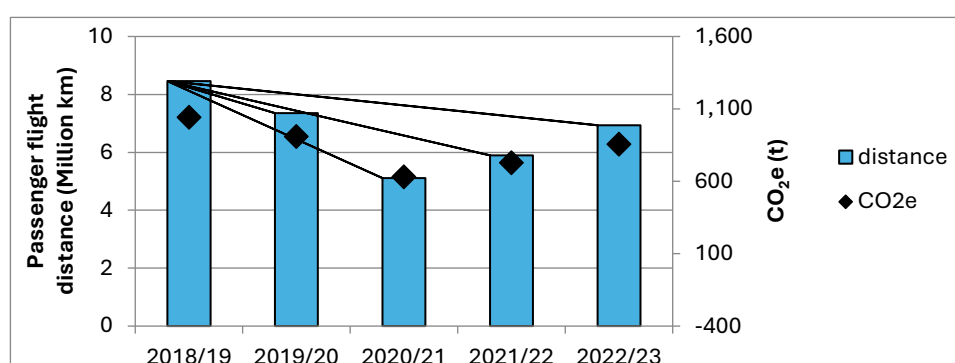


Figure 2. Overseas student commuting emissions.

4.4 Objective 3

Safe, affordable and timely public transport for students and staff

Baselines and Targets

Our baseline for this objective comes from the work of the SU and from our own anonymous Travel Survey responses, which both indicate that there are concerns with the safety, punctuality, and affordability of transport options. In particular, students are concerned with the frequency of buses provided, their size, and the overcrowding issues associated with this.

Actions

- Increased flexibility of bus provision to better integrate with need
- Engage with the student body to understand and act upon issues raised.
- Investigate Student Bike Pool and E scooter options

- Develop flexible and optimised public transport routes

4.4 Objective 4

To manage and plan for future transport and parking provision necessary for our business

As our site occupies a site of historical interest and is leased from the Duchy of Cornwall within the geographical area controlled by Bath and North East Somerset Council, we are bound to certain restrictions on our parking provision. While we understand that parking for cars will also need to be available on our campuses, and accessible to those who need it, we aim to balance this with our net zero aspirations. As a scope 3 emissions source, our staff commuting has been identified as an area for improvement in objective 1, however further thought must also be given to our physical parking provisions. Our aim is to therefore reduce reliance on our site car parks to ensure we can meet the requirements set by B&NES and the Duchy of reducing the physical size of our parking area.

Actions

1. Reduce parking at Newton Park in accordance with our Section 106 condition
2. Increase Public Transport use by 20% by 2030
3. Refresh our Car Sharing scheme and establish a regular group of users

5.0 Resources and Planning

5.1 Roles and responsibilities

The Transport Planning Group (TPG) will be reestablished, meeting bi-annually and will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Travel Plan and all travel related issues. The TPG will report to the Sustainability Steering Group (SSG).

- **Function** - Approve and review the Travel Plan for the University with the aim of providing strategic input on key issues actually or potentially impacting on the ability of the Transport Plan.
- **Membership** – Head Facilities and Services, Facilities Manager, Sustainability Manager, Students' Union President, Director Campus Life, Student Experience Manager, Transport administrator.

6.0 Monitoring

To ensure the Travel Plan is being carried out as intended, we will conduct monitoring and measurement on a frequent basis. This will provide insight into the success of the actions we have set, and allow us to target specific areas as required.

We will:

- Continue to carry out annual travel surveys for staff and students, potentially in conjunction with B&NES to utilise the annual Travel To Work Survey conducted for local businesses
- Use ANPR to understand daily traffic movements on site
- Engage IMA to carry out annual transport spot monitoring

Members of the Transport Group will meet as required with B&NES Council Officers and local public transport providers to agree future action by all parties, to help achieve the objectives of this travel plan.

The University will monitor and review the success of the travel plan, including progress towards targets, and will report progress to the Sustainability Steering Group.

The University will expand upon its longstanding monitoring programme with the following measures:

- Annual traffic counts at Newton Park (including a weeklong automatic traffic count), Sion Hill and in future at Locksbrook Rd, to monitor car, bus, cycle and pedestrian movements to the University
- Annual assessment of car parking, including on-site campus parking and on-street parking surveys on the roads surrounding the Locksbrook Road site
- Annual travel surveys of staff and students via on-line questionnaire to assess commuting behaviour and bus user satisfaction
- Annual assessment of staff expenditure and corporate traveller records to monitor business travel
- Annual assessment of overseas student commuting to Bath Spa
- Informal monitoring of usage of cycle parking facilities at all sites

In addition, the University's website will invite comments and criticisms on travel issues.

The University will inform the Council of the results of the monitoring programme. Based on the data collected, if necessary and appropriate, the University will review, together with the Council, the measures contained within this travel plan to achieve its stated aims, objectives and targets.

The results of our annual traffic and transport also the bi-annual travel surveys will be made available on our website.