

**Draft response to Question from Councillor de Lacey to the Planning PfH
Re. Full Council 23th April 2010**

The Council's Travel for Work Plan was comprehensively reviewed in 2008.

This was a response to three key factors:

- the extant plan, from 2004, had become outdated and needed a refresh;
- a year-on-year rise in the lone driver commuting figures from 2005, and;
- ongoing and increasing pressure on the designated parking capacity at South Cambs Hall.

A thoroughly revised and updated version of the Travel for Work Plan was published in the autumn of 2008 and newly entitled: *Travel Link*.

There is little doubt that implementation resources have been stretched, beyond the initial expectations when the new plan was drafted, but essential and positive progress has been, and continues to be made, in delivering key actions.

Travel Link was developed and managed through a specifically established Travel for Work Steering Group. The Steering Group sought to oversee the initial phases of implementation. As mentioned above this was hampered by difficulties in allocating a specific member of staff to take on a Travel Plan Co-ordinator role. The Group was finally able to secure the very committed and enthusiastic services of the Planning Performance Manager to take on this role. Despite having to fit such work in around a very full range of other job specific responsibilities (which has meant time allocation for Travel for Work co-ordination activities has not always been predictable) tangible progress has been made with a range of key activities. The work of the Travel for Work Steering Group has now been subsumed within a broader Internal Sustainability Delivery Group – this also covers such issues as improving the efficiency of building utilities, procurement, internal recycling and the promotion of 'greener' staff and member behaviours.

The following measures have been implemented or are in the process of implementation:

Smarter Driver Training with the Energy Saving Trust

In February and March last year we provided approximately 50 essential/casual car users with Smarter Driving Training (offered and heavily subsidised by the Energy Saving Trust). Our staff received tuition from professional driving instructors on how to drive 'smarter' and reduce fuel consumption (and thereby CO2 emissions). The training was extremely beneficial in terms of cutting consumption and also improving driving safe driving technique through enabling drivers to read the road ahead better.

Pool Cycles

At South Cambs Hall we have a number of 'pool' cycles available for free loan to all staff. (one fixed frame and four foldaway cycles). These have certainly not been used and promoted sufficiently in the past. In order to improve usage and cut maintenance costs we are working with Cambourne Business Park to share availability of three of the cycles across the whole site, with two retained for sole Council use. Foldaway bicycles are ideal for use in covering part of a journey on business – readily allowing linkups with public transport stops (regular bus, park-and-ride and train).

Reduced cycle purchase and bus ticket costs through salary sacrifice schemes

We are in the process of adopting two salary sacrifice schemes, one for cycles and one for the bus (Stagecoach). Both schemes will allow the employee to benefit from a significantly discounted cycle purchase or annual bus ticket for use when travelling to and from work and during the weekends.

Website improvements

We have made a number of changes to our website to promote alternative modes of transport and to encourage staff and local residents to make the most of public transport, walking, cycling or car-sharing to the Council's offices rather than lone use of the car.

Travel Link noticeboards

We have two Travel Link noticeboards that contain information for greener travel and to raise staff and visitor awareness of the issue.

Camshare

The Council subscribes to the countywide carsharing database – Camshare. This online facility readily allows any member of staff to register their commuting journeys and seek matches with other colleagues travelling similar routes who would like to benefit from car sharing. These benefits are regularly promoted with assistance from the Cambridgeshire Travel for Work Partnership.

Camshare also has a public facing function that allows those registering to seek matches outside of the Council and Cambourne Business Park employee group.

Working from Home

The Council facilitates working from home where circumstances are appropriate. This option also appears to provide an effective alternative to working at South Cambs Hall on days when the meeting room booking system indicates that car parking pressures from external visitors is likely to exceed capacity.

Travel Link summary leaflet/brochure

In order to aid promotion, a *Travel Link* summary leaflet/brochure is presently being published that will provide an easy read introduction to more sustainable travel to and from the Council's offices. This will be of interest to existing staff but will be especially important for visitors and new starters (available on-line for website and e-mailing as well as a limited hard-copy production run).

Unfortunately the above steps have, as yet, failed to halt the increase in the all important lone driver commuting figure (which tends to be used as proxy for relative CO₂ emissions and traffic congestion issues from travelling to and from work) which has continued to rise for the fourth year running.

Lone driver commuting figures 2003-2009

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
50%	70.0%	63%	66%	74%	74%	77%
Hills Rd. HQ	Cambourne HQ	Cambourne HQ	Cambourne HQ	Cambourne HQ	Cambourne HQ	Cambourne HQ

The above figures are derived from the annual Travel for Work survey carried out on our behalf by Cambridgeshire Travel for Work Partnership. This independent survey is run at approximately the same time each autumn and provides us with important baseline data on all travel modes alongside the lone driver figures.

Despite the disappointing 2009 figure we are confident that the new initiative now embraced and being pushed forward via *Travel Link* will start to deliver results that should be reflected in the 2010 figures this year.