



ACTIVE TRAVEL

Workplace Advice



Supporting Sustainable Travel

Kyle & Lochalsh Community Trust



Creating a better future together



Physical activity in the workplace

WHAT IS ACTIVE TRAVEL?

Active travel refers to a mode of travel that involves a degree of physical activity. The key focus when developing a Workplace Travel Plan (WTP) is to assess employee travel habits, encourage and enable staff to travel in an active manner more often for everyday journeys, while identifying barriers to active travel in your neighbourhood and putting in place initiatives to help overcome these barriers.

Not only has it been proved that increased activity has numerous health benefits, it also help reduce carbon emissions and help work toward reaching net-zero carbon goals.

While we understand that in rural locations, consistent active travel is unrealistic, the aim of an WTP is to promote travelling in an active manner for shorter journeys on a more regular basis.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Active travel has many potential benefits including health, environmental and economic. Encouraging active travel such as walking or cycling will help to reduce the carbon emissions costs and pollution associated with using vehicles.

It is recommended that employers develop policies to encourage employees to walk, cycle or use other modes of transport involving physical activity to travel to and from work as part of their working day.

WHAT IS SUSTAINABLE PRACTICE?

Offering incentives such as prizes e.g. a pedometer, sportswear or gym/sports class memberships, signing up to the Government's Cycle to Work Scheme (to enable staff to buy a bike tax-free) as well as hosting activities or cycling and walking events may encourage your staff to increase active travel.

Electric bikes (or e-bikes) are pedal bikes assisted by an electric motor. This can make cycling accessible to a wider range of people over longer distances – potentially with less sweating involved!

Healthy habits are built by taking small steps consistently!

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WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY?

Being physically inactive has been linked to an increased risk of a range of health conditions including:

- coronary heart disease (CHD)
- stroke
- osteoporosis
- cancer
- type 2 diabetes
- obesity
- mental health problems

On the other hand, evidence shows that participating in physical activity can help to prevent disease, maintain a healthy weight and promote mental health and wellbeing.

People who take part in regular physical activity have:

- up to a 35% lower risk of coronary heart disease and stroke
- up to a 50% lower risk of type 2 diabetes
- up to a 50% lower risk of colon cancer
- up to a 20% lower risk of breast cancer
- a 30% lower risk of early death
- up to a 30% lower risk of depression

WHAT CAN YOU DO AS AN EMPLOYER?

- Install secure cycle parking nearby or campaign with your local community council for secure cycle storage in your local area
- Provide showers, changing facilities and lockers where possible
- Sign up to the Government's 'Cycle to Work Scheme' and let staff know that it applies to e-bikes too
- Encourage and promote active travel options by sharing resources in your business and on your website
- Display walking/cycling routes and maps of your local area in staff areas
- Survey travel patterns of your staff to find out where they live and how they currently travel to work. Find out what could help them to incorporate more walking or cycling into their journey - we know that in rural locations distance can be a challenge however try to think outside the box - is there parking slightly further afield which could be utilised by staff in order to help increase their step count?
- Liaise with the local leisure centre to find out about facilities, membership promotions and options for your staff
- Start a step challenge! How about collating the pedometer count for the whole staff every week and see how high you can get it?

Useful websites & resources

• Sustrans are the charity that makes it easier for people to walk and cycle. Their website contains lots of information on active travel, including a specific section for 'Workplaces', which has guidance on 'Changing the way your staff travel to work' and information on the 'Workplace travel challenge'. The 'Get active' section covers topics like: 'How to start cycling to work' and 'How to improve bike storage for offices and employees' - <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/for-professionals/workplaces/>

- <https://www.nhs.uk/better-health/get-active/>
- <https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/get-involved/national-walking-month/>
- <https://www.cyclescheme.co.uk/employers>
- <https://www.pathsforall.org.uk/encouraging-active-travel>
- <https://www.transport.gov.scot/active-travel/active-travel-funding-opportunities/>
- <https://www.homeenergyscotland.org/active-travel-for-employers/>
- <https://roadsafety.scot/road-user-advice/active-travel/>
- <https://www.rospa.com/policy/road-safety/active-travel-hub/employers>

