



Property managers play a central role in identifying appropriate sustainable transport opportunities and facilitating their implementation. This involves understanding occupiers' needs and engaging asset managers and facilities managers to prioritise and deliver solutions that meet these as part of a building's infrastructure and service facilities.

Sustainable transport opportunities can be categorized into a number of areas.



1. GREEN TRAVEL PLANS

Green Travel Plans enable the collation, prioritisation and co-ordinated delivery and evaluation of a range of sustainable transport opportunities. While the requirements for a Green Travel Plan may sometimes be formalised as part of planning conditions associated with a development, Green Travel Plans are usually developed on a voluntary basis.

Green Travel Plan Development

Property managers often initiate the process of preparing a Green Travel Plan by gathering baseline information about the travel characteristics of occupiers and other building users, and their future sustainable transport needs.

While the content may vary based on local circumstances, the approach to developing a Green Travel Plan involves considering how to:

- Conduct a staff travel survey.
- Develop initiatives to raise awareness of the plan.
- Design incentives to encourage a change in travel habits.
- Create better cycling and walking facilities.
- Provide on-site bike maintenance services.
- Establish a car share register or buddy system.
- Negotiate enhancements to public transport with operators and local authorities.
- Design and enforce efficient car park management.
- Monitor progress against transport related targets.

Funding improvements

Property managers will engage asset managers regarding potential alterations to the physical infrastructure and options for funding these improvements:

- Where sustainable transport improvements involve major facilities upgrades, asset managers may be willing to invest in return for an enhancement in the longer-term value of the property.
- The installation and maintenance of new facilities, for example cycle repair workshops, may be funded through lease variations or user service charges.
- Local authorities and private transport operators may be approached in respect of funding or partnership agreements for the expansion or improvement of local transport networks.

EXAMPLE: CYCLING FACILITIES

A common occupier need involves the provision of facilities to encourage cycling to work as an alternative to car journeys. This may include:

- Secure bicycle storage.
- Showers.
- Changing rooms.
- Locker storage.
- Drying areas for clothes.

If these facilities are not already available or adequate, a property manager should work with the asset manager and occupiers to review existing provision and potential improvements.

Considerations may include:

- Cycle racks often require significant space and access. However, vertical and two-tier racking systems can be space efficient.
- Showers and changing facilities are typically provided close to cycle racks. They can, however, be situated anywhere convenient within the building.
- New facilities should support a building's sustainability strategy. For example, installing equipment and amenities that are energy and water efficient.

Engagement and evaluation

In multi-occupier buildings, establishing a Green Building Management Group can enable a range of sustainable transport needs to be considered. Such collaboration can enable improvements to be prioritised objectively and associated benefits to be evaluated consistently.

The ongoing evaluation of occupiers' needs, and the assessment of the effectiveness of sustainable transport activities in meeting these needs, and in contributing towards associated sustainability targets, is an important component of a Green Travel Plan.

This can be approached through periodic employee surveys. Increasingly, mobile apps, including CityAir and Walkit, for example, are being used to raise awareness of sustainable transport opportunities, and can be utilised to gain feedback and monitor participation at the initiative-level.



2. INFRASTRUCTURE AND LOCAL SERVICES

Infrastructure obstacles such as poor lighting on walking paths or inadequate cycle lane signage, for example, can sometimes discourage people from switching their transport mode.

Property managers can play an important role in raising the awareness of asset managers and local authorities about the need for improvement. By seeking regular feedback from occupiers about the quality of local infrastructure and services, property managers can prompt action from a range of local organisations and public transport operators, who often share similar sustainability goals with a property's immediate stakeholders.

Local authorities can help to secure discounts on public transport services, for example, and may be able to facilitate access to grants to assist with travel plan measures or provide practical travel planning advice in developing Green Travel Plans.

Public transport operators will usually want to align their services with peak demand, and may schedule timetables to fit with staff journeys and shift patterns, particularly if a property represents a large employee base.

Shared services offer an opportunity to move towards more sustainable transport options. For example:

- Public transport operators may be willing to provide additional services to and from local transport hubs.

- A commercial “shuttle service” could be established exclusively for a building’s occupiers.
- A subsidised shuttle service could be established in collaboration with other properties local and businesses.

If a shuttle service is unavailable, property managers can provide real-time public transport information and timetables via either tenant apps or information displays:

- The Highways Agency has developed a detailed traffic information service specifically designed for businesses called DATEX II.
- Transport for London, the AA and RAC all offer live travel news updates on their web pages.



3. PARKING AND CAR-SHARE

When managed effectively, parking and car-share schemes can encourage a shift away from car-use.

Parking schemes

Parking schemes may include parking restrictions, permit parking and parking charges, for example. As these can be emotive issues for existing car users, careful consideration and communication is necessary in gaining the support of the range of building users.

Consideration should be given to certain priority groups, generally including:

- Disabled/limited mobility users.
- Car-share users.
- Out-of-hours work responsibilities.
- Electric Vehicle Users.

Priority parking can be enforced by smart card operated barriers, other forms of controlled entrances or regular spot checks.

Where the majority of car park users are visitors rather than employees, such as at a shopping centre, for example, the most effective means of control is through flexible pricing mechanisms and priority space allocation. The income generated from parking charges generated could be re-invested to finance other travel plan measures.

Car-share schemes

Car-share schemes are generally most efficient when operated through a specialist third party such as Liftshare or through more informal arrangements such as GoCarShare. As participation is most effective when coordinated through large groups of potential users in a local cluster, property managers are well placed to assist.

Consideration should be given to certain priority groups



Disabled/limited mobility users



Car-share users



Out-of-hours work responsibilities



Electric Vehicle Users