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# TRAVEL PLAN 2010-2015





## Foreword from the Vice Chancellor

Queen's University is committed to sustainable travel and this is acknowledged in both the University's Corporate Plan 2006-11 and the Estate Strategy 2009-19.

The Travel Plan 2010-15 reinforces this commitment and builds on the 2005 Plan. Notable achievements during the last five years include a seven per cent increase in staff travelling by train, the creation of a car-sharing database for staff and students, the establishment of a bicycle user group and the introduction of a salary sacrifice bicycle purchase scheme.

The new Travel Plan aims to build on these initiatives – extending access to more sustainable and, in some cases, healthier transport alternatives for staff and students.

There is a specific focus on reducing dependency on the private car. Key targets include a five per cent reduction in the number of staff and students travelling to University by single-occupancy car journeys, and a corresponding five per cent increase in the use of sustainable modes of travel.

Successful implementation of the Plan will result in reduced congestion, both on campus and, in the local vicinity, to the benefit of Queen's staff and students and the wider community.

**Professor Peter J Gregson**

President and Vice-Chancellor



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## 1 Executive Summary

**The 2010 – 2015 Travel Plan outlines the University's strategy for reducing single car use by staff and students travelling to the University.**

**The aim of the Travel Plan is to:**

**"Reduce the impact of University related traffic on the environment and the local community by encouraging staff, students and visitors to the University to travel by sustainable transport modes, achieving this through an improvement in the choice and availability of other sustainable alternatives."**

The Travel Plan is an integral document within the University's overall environmental policy, as well as being critical to the achievement of the aims and objectives of the Corporate Plan. It is also an important mechanism for ensuring that sustainability is incorporated into the University Capital Development programme.

There is clear evidence of a move in the last five years towards the adoption of more sustainable travel habits by staff and students, as a result of the successful implementation of the initiatives included in the 2005 Travel Plan. For example, there has been a 14.4% increase in the number of staff travelling by sustainable modes, while 77.6% of students now travel to the University by public transport, walking, cycling and car sharing. This is a very positive outcome and an endorsement of the effectiveness of the measures undertaken.

The 2010 Travel Plan seeks to build on the achievements of the 2005 Plan, implementing a range of initiatives to influence the travel behaviour of its staff, students, visitors and customers. In continuing the objective of raising awareness among staff and students of sustainable travel options, the Plan also includes the following key targets:

- 5% reduction in the number of students travelling to the University by way of single-occupancy car journeys
- 5% reduction in the number of staff travelling to the University by way of single-occupancy car journeys.

A series of initiatives or Continual Improvement Programmes (CIP), designed to reduce dependence on car use through the promotion of public transport, cycling and car sharing, will support the achievement of these targets.

Staff and student travel behaviours will be monitored through biennial surveys.

The Travel Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis by the University Operating Board.



## 2 Setting the Context: The Need for a Travel Plan



The University developed its first Travel Plan in 2005. This was in response to changes to national and local transport policy, which made clear that simply building new roads to accommodate an ever-increasing demand for car travel was not a sustainable option. Instead the emphasis shifted to making the most of the infrastructure already in place – both road and public transport – and to reduce overall dependency on the private car, resulting in a range of benefits for the University, the local community and the environment.

In continuing to develop the Plan, reference has been made to the various national and local transport strategies which have sought, through integrated planning, to improve the transport infrastructure within Northern Ireland. These are:

- The Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025 (2002)
- The Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002 – 2012 (2002)
- Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (2003)
- Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan 2015 (2005)
- Northern Ireland Sustainable Development Strategy (2006)

The 2010 Travel Plan, while a stand-alone document, is also an integral part of the University's overall environmental strategy, which supports both the Corporate Plan and the Estate Strategy (2009 – 2019); while also complementing a number of other policies including the Environmental Management System, the Sustainable Development Design Brief and the Carbon Management Plan.

As well as demonstrating the University's commitment to environmental sustainability, by providing the framework that will enable the institution to influence the travel behaviour of its staff, students, visitors and customers and thereby reduce its transport impacts, the Travel Plan is critical to the success of the institution's capital development programme.

Securing the necessary planning permission for a number of the planned major projects is now increasingly dependent on the University being able to demonstrate that we are actively engaged in reducing transportation impacts; as well as in seeking to change the travel behaviour of staff, students and visitors.

## 3 Understanding How We Travel

There is clear evidence of a move in the last five years towards the adoption of more sustainable travel habits by staff and students, as a result of the successful implementation of the measures, and achievement of the targets, included in the 2005 Travel Plan. Successful initiatives, many of which are ongoing, include:



- Provision and promotion of travel information to all new members of staff
- Establishment of a car sharing database for staff and students
- Provision of locker and shower facilities
- Increase in the provision of cycle parking and the establishment of bicycle user group
- Partnership with Belfast City Council in the Belfast Sustainable Travel Group.

The 2010 Travel Plan strives to build on the significant achievements of the five years. A key aim of the Plan is to foster positive sustainable travel behaviours amongst students in particular, through raising awareness of sustainable travel options which offer viable and efficient alternatives to single-occupancy car journeys.

### 3.1 Travel to Work Surveys

**To monitor and to understand the changes in travel behaviours, comprehensive staff and student travel surveys were undertaken in 2005, 2008 and 2010.**

The surveys were distributed to all staff and students, by email for those with computer access and by hard copy for those without access. The survey included questions on how staff and students travelled to and from the University, and reasons for their travel choices. Staff and students were also asked to identify the barriers which prevented them from using sustainable transport modes.

The 2005 and 2008 surveys undertaken focused primarily on staff travel habits, but the 2010 addressed staff and student travel choices equally. The response rates in 2010 were 924 staff (27%) and 1,097 students (6%). The results of the surveys have enabled the University to assess the success of measures introduced under the 2005 Travel Plan and to determine where further measures are required to facilitate greater uptake of sustainable travel modes and a reduction in car dependency.

The 2010 survey asked participants for their postal codes and, using Graphic Information Software (GIS), this has also provided useful information on the relationship between staff and student modes of travel and the distances travelled.

The following sections provide an overview of how staff and student travel behaviours have changed since the implementation of the 2005 Travel Plan.



### 3.2 Staff Travel

**Key targets in the 2005 Plan included increasing the number of staff walking, cycling and using public transport by 2.5%, based on the 2005 baseline travel survey. Over the five year Plan period, the following increases were achieved, as highlighted in Figure 1;**

- The percentage of staff walking to the University has increased by 1.2%
- The percentage of staff cycling to the University has increased by 2.7%
- The percentage of staff using the train to commute to the University has increased by 7%
- The percentage of staff using the bus to commute to the University has increased by 3.5%
- The percentage of staff commuting to work by means of single-occupancy car journeys has fallen from 44.4% to 41.8%.

A further target was to encourage car sharing through the creation of a car sharing database for staff and students. Despite the cost of a University car parking permit having risen by 57%, from £14 per month in 2005 to £22 in 2010, there was a reduction in the number of staff who car shared over the period of the 2005 Plan. Car sharing, in relation to both staff and students, will be a particular focus of the 2010 Plan.

Table 1 demonstrates that the University is performing well in the adoption of sustainable travel modes when compared with the most recent travel to work survey results for Northern Ireland as a whole. The University has at least 30% less car users than the Northern Ireland average, and correspondingly more staff travel to University by public transport, walking and cycling.

Figure 1: Usual Mode of Transportation on a Weekly Basis – Staff



# Staff

The following GIS image (Figure 2) shows the current mode of transport and location from which staff commute to the University on a daily basis within the Greater Belfast area. The map illustrates that staff choose the car as their main mode of transport despite the availability of public transport in the Greater Belfast Area.

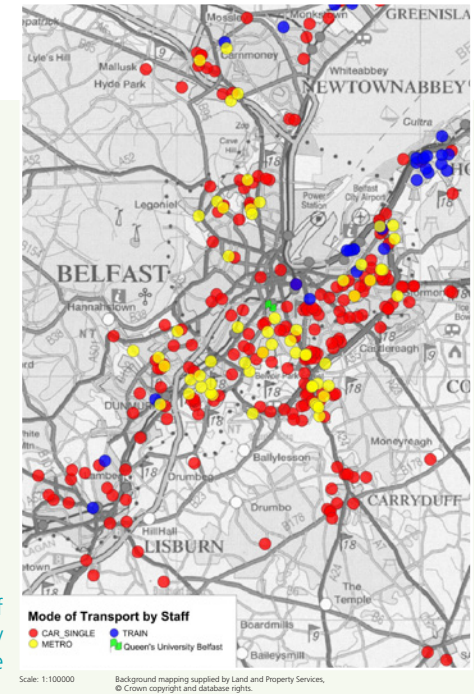


Figure 2: Staff Mode of Transport to Work by Home Post Code

Table 1: % Split by Modal of Travel for the University and Northern Ireland

Mode of Travel	2005 Response	2008 Response	2010 Response	Northern Ireland Average
Car driver – on own	45%	39%	41%	81%
Car Passenger	20%	18%	12%	
Bus	8%	5%	10%	5%
Train	6%	12%	13%	1%
Walk	13%	16%	15%	10%
Cycle	3%	7%	7%	1%
Other	5%	3%	2%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

### 3.3 Student Travel

The 2010 travel to work survey highlighted that 71% of students continue to travel to the University by sustainable modes of transport. It should also be noted that 6.5% of students car-share on a daily basis to the University.

Figure 3 demonstrates that over 40% of students continue to walk on a daily basis, while there has been an increase in the number of students travelling by train and bicycle.



Figure 3: Usual Mode of Transportation on a Weekly Basis – Student



# Students

The following GIS image (Figure 4) depicts the current mode of transport and location from which students commute to the University on a daily basis within the Greater Belfast area. The map illustrates concentrations of car users in areas where public transport is available.

The 2010 Plan will seek to address these trends and to reduce the incidence of student single- occupancy car journeys.

Figure 4: Student Mode of Transport to the University by Term-Time Post Code

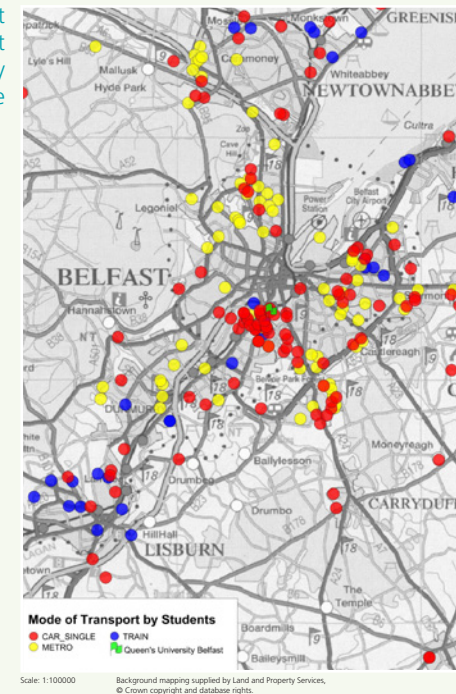




Table 2: Single Occupancy Car Journey Targets

	2005 Baseline	2010 Actual	2016 Target
Staff Car Driver Alone	44.5%	41.8%	38%
Student Car Driver Alone	13.6%	21.1%	17%



## 4 Travel Plan Objectives and Targets

The 2005 Travel Plan Mission Statement committed the University to:

**“Reduce the impact of University related traffic on the environment and the local community by encouraging staff, students and visitors to the University to travel by sustainable transport modes, achieving this through an improvement in the choice and availability of other sustainable alternatives.”**

The 2010 Plan continues this commitment, as well as retaining the overall general objectives as follows:

- Promote and encourage the use of sustainable transport, through the better provision and marketing of relevant travel information
- Disseminate public transport information to staff and students (in partnership with Translink) and the provision of transport information points around the University
- Encourage car sharing, through promotion of the staff and student car sharing database
- Encourage walking, through improved and better maintained footpaths in and around the University campus and through the provision of locker and shower facilities for walkers

- Encourage cycling, through an improved provision of cycle parking, showers, locker facilities, bicycle user groups and subsidised loans for cycle purchases
- Work in partnership with other major employers, including Belfast Trust and the Royal Group of Hospitals, to improve and develop transport initiatives.

A further objective has been added to the 2010 Plan:

- Work in partnership with the Students' Union, statutory agencies, and the local community to manage car parking demand within the campus and in the local vicinity.

In order to assess how successful we are in achieving these objectives, targets have been set for the five year period to 2015, as follows:

- 5% reduction in the number of students travelling to the University by way of single-occupancy car journeys
- 5% reduction in the number of staff travelling to the University by way of single-occupancy car journeys.

Table 2 (opposite) outlines the targeted modal split for single-occupancy car journeys by 2015, based on the actual figures shown in the 2005 and 2010 surveys.

A range of sustainable travel initiatives have been identified to support the achievement of the Travel Plan objectives and targets, and these are discussed in section 5.

## 5 Travel Plan Initiatives



### 5.1 General

A series of initiatives will support the achievement of the Travel Plan objectives and targets. These initiatives are known as Continual Improvement Programmes (CIP) and a summary is provided below. These, including rolling initiatives from previous years, will evolve and develop throughout the 5 year cycle of the 2010 Plan. A more detailed description of the initiatives proposed for Year 1 is given at Annex 1

### 5.2 Walking and Cycling

Walking and cycling combined represent just under 45% of all student journeys to and from the University and just over 20% of staff journeys. Measures already in place and which will receive ongoing support are:

- Provision of secure covered cycle parking facilities and Sheffield cycle stands at various locations
- Promotion of safe cycling, including provision of cycle safety equipment at discounted prices in the Students' Union shop
- Promotion of Cycle+, the University cycle to work scheme, which enables staff to purchase a cycle at a reduced cost
- Promotion, through better signage, of existing shower and changing facilities
- Promotion of initiatives such as Bike to Work week.

In addition, the Travel Plan will implement new measures to encourage more staff and students to cycle:

- Inclusion of additional shower and changing facilities, as and where possible, within new and existing buildings
- Improved security at cycle stores, with CCTV coverage of all cycle parking areas
- Improved cycle routes across campus
- Improved lighting on key walking and cycling routes
- Expansion of cycle parking.

### 5.3 Public Transport

The University is currently well served by public transport, with two rail stations within close proximity to the Main site and the Health Sciences campus. The number of trains servicing the University area has increased significantly since 2005, with 13% of staff and 11% of students now using trains as their main mode of transport. The number of staff using trains in 2010 has more than doubled over the last five years. The University also sits within the major arterial bus routes into Belfast City Centre from South Belfast.

The most recent travel survey suggests there is considerable potential for the number of staff and students using public transport to increase, with 45% of staff and 65% of students saying they would make greater use of public transport if tickets/passes were discounted.



The University will continue to support and encourage staff and students travelling by public transport through the following measures:

- Explore the feasibility of introducing 'TaxSmart', a bus salary sacrifice scheme for staff, subject to financial advice
- Introduction of 'Metro' ticket purchasing facility in the Students' Union
- Publication of a staff and student travel information leaflet
- Robust promotional campaign aimed at both staff and students to incentivise the use of public transport.

#### 5.4 Car Sharing

There has been no change in the last five years in the number of students (6.3%) car sharing, either as driver or passenger, while the number of staff car sharing reduced by 7.9% (20% to 12%) despite an increase in membership (currently 164 staff and students) of the [qubcarshare.com](http://qubcarshare.com) website.

The recent travel survey showed that 41% of students and 65% of staff were not interested in car sharing, so the 2010 Plan will focus on ways to incentivise the Queen's car sharing scheme, including:

- Working with Travelwise NI on car sharing promotional events
- Greater promotion of the Queen's car sharing scheme to attract new members
- Liaison with the Students' Union to increase student membership of the scheme
- Review of the current staff car parking allocation policy, with a view to preferential treatment for car sharers
- Provision of dedicated car sharing spaces for staff within University car parks.

#### 5.5 Car Parking

The University regulates car parking through a permit management system and permits are issued to staff on an annual basis. Students, other than those resident at the Elms Village, are not eligible to apply for permits. Since 2005, the cost of a staff permit has increased by 57%, and currently stands at £264 per annum (for full-time staff). Permits are issued on a first-come-first-served basis, and where demand exceeds supply, a waiting list is created.



Managing the demand for car parking both within the campus and in the surrounding vicinity is a critical aspect of the 2010 Plan and, in addition to the initiatives already described and designed to reduce dependence on car use through the promotion of public transport, cycling and car sharing, the University will also undertake a number of specific measures:

- Review the University parking allocation and management procedures
- Support the DRD's proposals for introduction of controlled parking in the University area
- Continue discussions with our statutory and other partners on possible measures to alleviate car parking pressures, both within the University and in the surrounding areas.

It should also be noted that the Sustainable Development Design Brief commits the University, when developing its estate, to take traffic impact on the local community into account.

## 5.6 Business Travel

Business travel is crucial to the University's core operations, but a review of the Business Travel Policy will be undertaken to ensure that it supports sustainable modes of travel as well as reducing the overall impact of business journeys.

The following measures will be promoted over the five years of the Plan:

- Review current availability, utilisation and cost of video and telephone conferencing
- Establish a system for monitoring and measuring business travel.

## 6 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

In order to measure the effectiveness of the Travel Plan in meeting its targets, the following management and monitoring measures will be applied:

- A full staff and student travel survey will be undertaken in 2014 – 2015, towards the end of the Plan
  - In addition, an interim survey will be undertaken in 2012 - 2013 to monitor progress against targets
  - The monitoring surveys will be undertaken at the same time each year, for consistency and comparison
  - The Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis and a progress report presented to the University Operating Board, in May of each year. Approval will also be sought for the next stage of the Travel Plan and its implementation during the academic year ahead.
- A summary of the monitoring programme is shown below.

### Travel Plan monitoring programme

Monitoring Action	Academic Year				
	Year 1 2010- 11	Year 2 2011-12	Year 3 2012-13	Year 4 2013-14	Year 5 2014-15
Launch of 2010 Travel Plan	Sept				
Continual Improvement Plan Phase 2		Sept			
Staff and Student Interim Survey			Feb		
Continual Improvement Plan Phase 2			Sept		
Continual Improvement Plan Phase 3				Sept	
Continual Improvement Plan Phase 4					Sept
Full Staff and Student Survey					Feb
Review of 2010 Travel Plan	May	May	May	May	May

