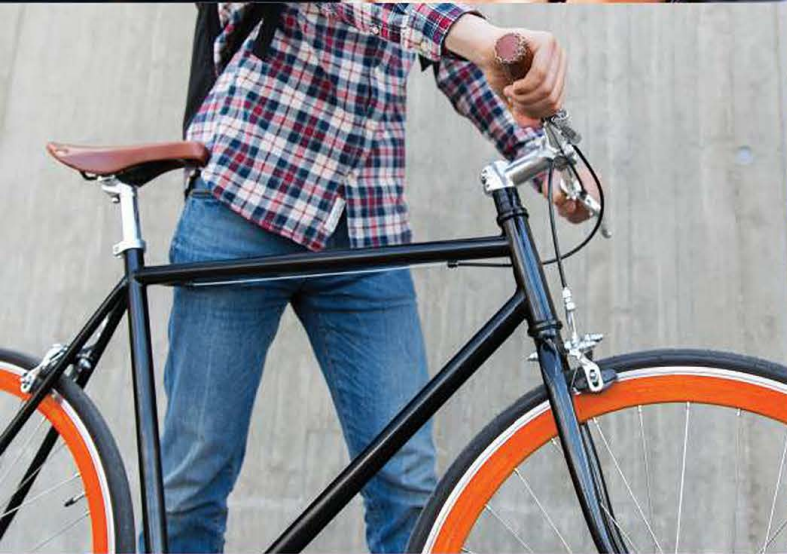




Edge Hill
University



Travel Plan Strategy 2023 - 2028

1. BACKGROUND

Context

The University's Environmental Sustainability Strategy (ESS), the implementation of which is being driven by the Institutional Environmental Sustainability Committee (IESC) at a senior level, sets a clear ambition for the institution to become carbon neutral by 2030.

Transport is a key contributor to the environmental impact of the University and the ESS, in recognising this, commits the University to developing a new Travel Plan to align with its strategic aims, which include to:

- Reduce the percentage of carbon intensive travel methods to and from the University.
- Review and reinforce long-distance journey policy.
- Advocate for environmentally friendly travel prior to enrolment and leading up to University holidays.

The initial University Travel Plan was introduced in 2004, since then it has been revised a number of times, with the latest iteration prepared in 2017 (to cover the period to 2021).

In 2020/2021 the COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on commuting patterns and business travel and thus the review and update to the Travel Plan was delayed until 2022, so as to ensure that the data and feedback that informs the measures and targets for the next 5-year period is reflective of an appropriate baseline position.

This latest iteration of the Travel Plan also reflects broader changes in the policy landscape (both internal and external), advancing transport technologies and changing work and study patterns.

University Profile

In March 2023, with the vast majority of employees and students were based at Ormskirk. Two-thirds of staff are full-time and the remainder work part-time. Around 43% of students live in their parental / family or own home during term time, whilst approximately 2,700 live on Campus in University accommodation.

Whilst the main campus is at Ormskirk, there are also satellite sites at St James' in Manchester city centre, Alder Hey and at Aintree University Hospital. The Travel Plan principally relates to travel to/from the Ormskirk campus, but also makes reference to satellite sites, where appropriate.



Travel Plan Structure

Following this introductory section, the Travel Plan is structured as follows:

- **Section 2:** provides a review of accessibility of the main campus at Ormskirk by sustainable modes of travel.
- **Section 3:** considers current staff and student travel patterns and how these have changed since the previous (2017) travel survey.
- **Section 4:** sets out the aims, objectives and targets for a reduction in CO₂e from commuting over the next 5 years.
- **Section 5:** includes an action plan of measures to be delivered and indicative timescales.
- **Section 6:** describes how the impact of the Travel Plan will be monitored.



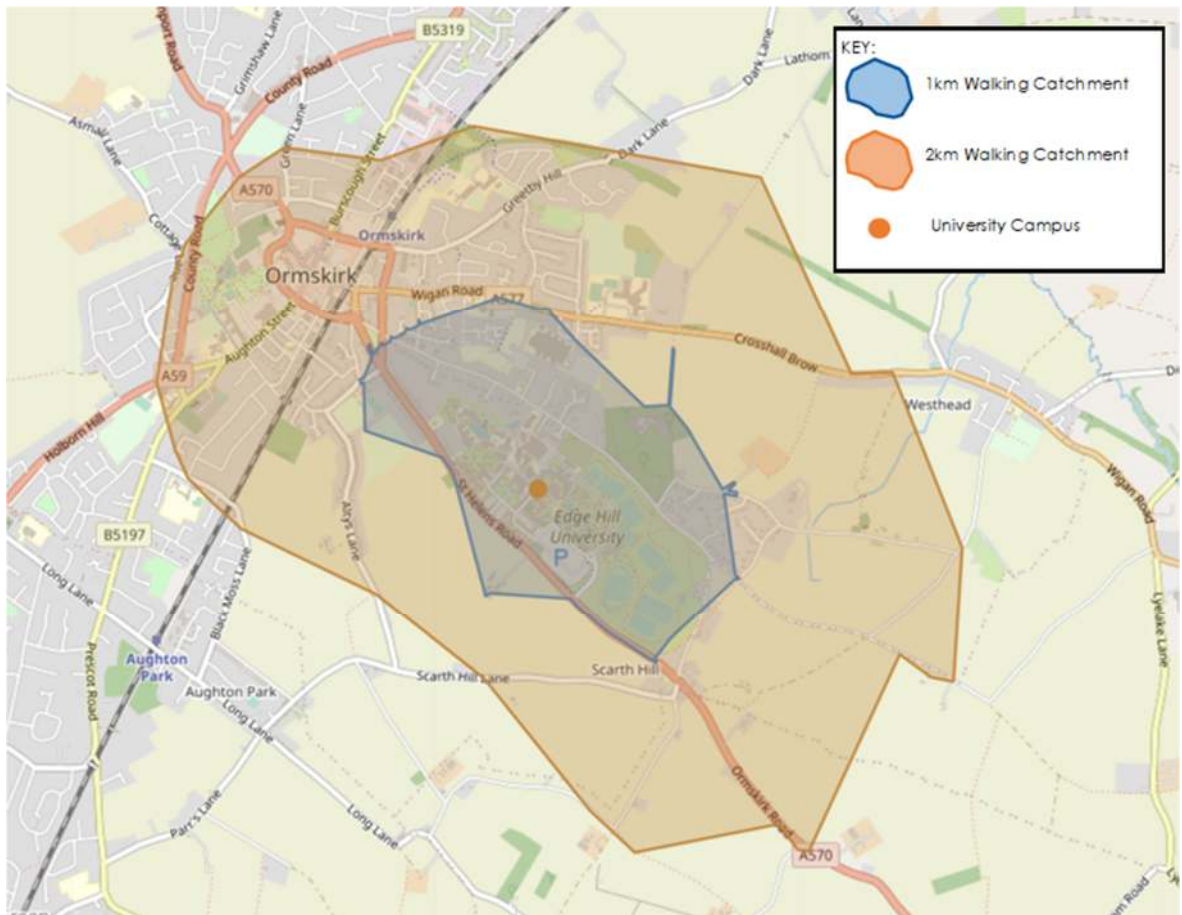
2. CAMPUS ACCESSIBILITY

Campus accessibility is a key determinant of how staff and students commute to the University. Considering any gaps in provision and opportunities to address these is a key element of the Travel Plan and feeds into the action plan.

Journeys on Foot

Figure 2.1 shows 1km and 2km walking catchments from the main campus; both Ormskirk town centre and train station are within less than a 20-minute walk. Routes are direct and include continuous footways and street lighting, with regular crossing points.

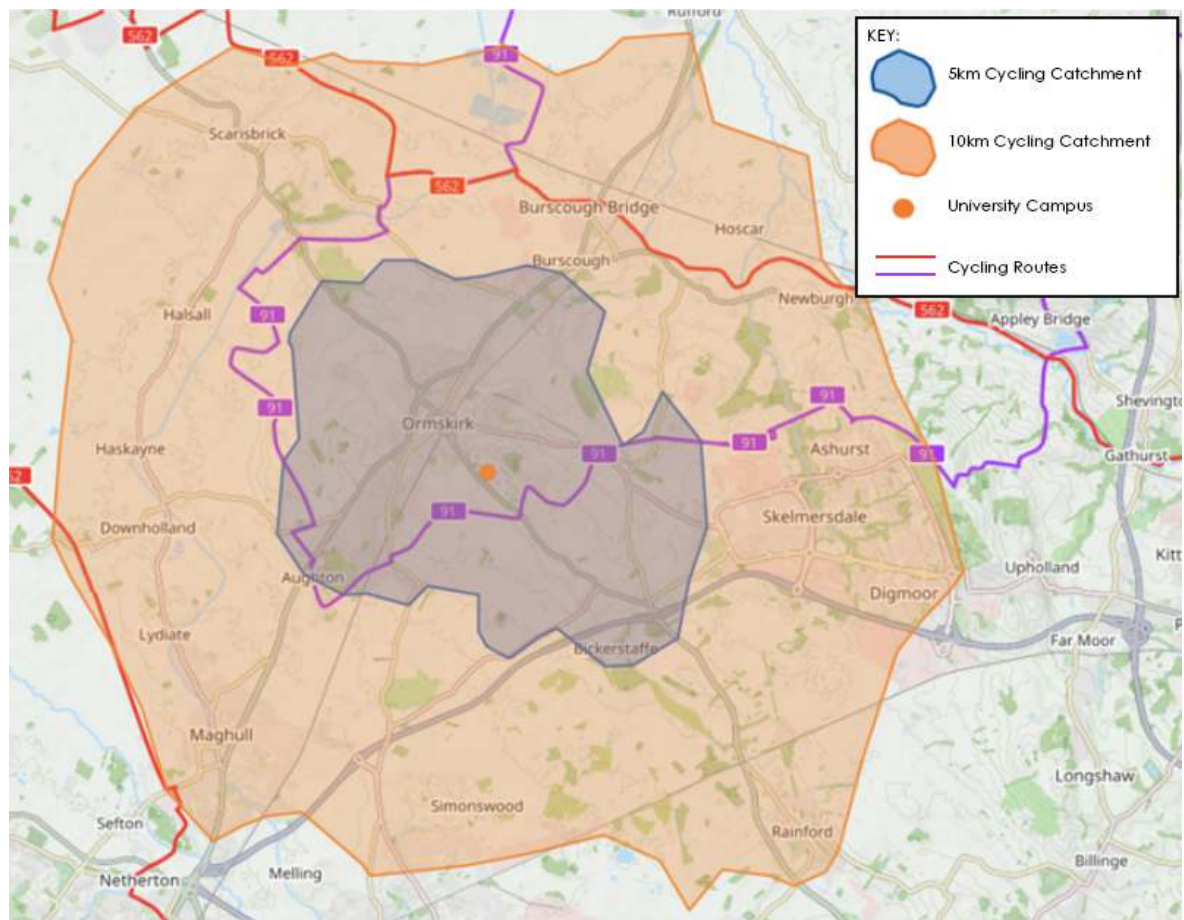
Figure 2.1 – Main Campus Walking Catchment



Journeys by Bike

Figure 2.2 indicates a 5km and 10km cycling catchment from the University; the town centre and train station are less than 10 minutes cycle from the campus. In addition, other residential areas, including Burscough, Skelmersdale and Aughton are located within a reasonable commuting distance, by bike.

Figure 2.2 – Main Campus Cycling Catchment



Cyclists can join the Bike Locker Users' Club (BLUC) in order to store their bike in any of the BLUC lockers on the main campus. Sheffield stands and wall-mounted racks are all available, along with showers, which can be used free of charge at the Edge Hill Sports Centre and the Faculty of Health and Social Care.

EdgeLink Bus

At the time of preparing this Travel Plan, the EdgeLink bus (EL1) offers a fast and reliable service straight to the campus from Ormskirk bus station, at a frequency of every 20 minutes.

There is a direct walking route between Ormskirk bus station and Ormskirk train station, meaning the bus is also convenient for those arriving by train.

Over time, the bus service timetable has been extended to provide services up to 22:08 (Monday to Friday) towards Ormskirk bus station, with additional late-night services running on a Wednesday.

The EL1 bus service is free of charge with a UniCard/Edge Hill Sport wrist band and is funded by the University and operated by Stagecoach. Passengers without these forms of ID are able to pay to use the service, including visitors to the campus. Buses enter the campus via the main entrance and serve stops near to the Forest Court accommodation and the Creative Edge building.

Additional Bus Services

In addition, the 152 bus service, operated by Mersey Travel, runs along the A570 St Helens Road, past the campus. The 152 service operates between St Helens and Ormskirk bus station.



Travel by Train

Ormskirk train station is served by Northern Rail services, operating between Preston and Ormskirk. Monday to Saturday, there is an hourly service in each direction, between 06:25 and 23:42, serving destinations including Burscough Junction, Rufford and Croston.

Ormskirk is also served by Mersey Rail services to Liverpool city centre, as well as more local destinations along the route, including (but not limited to): Aughton Park, Aintree, Orrell Park and Kirkdale. Services run every 20 minutes, Monday to Saturday, between Ormskirk and Liverpool. There is a 30-minute service frequency between Ormskirk and Liverpool on a Sunday.

The frequency of the EL1 bus service, in combination with Mersey Rail services towards Liverpool, allows for multi-modal journeys to/from the Campus.



3. TRAVEL PATTERNS & TRENDS

This section provides a summary of headline data collected in the latest staff & student travel survey (November 2022). A detailed report on the findings can be found [here](#); it also includes information on car parking and permit holder data analysis that has been duly considered in arriving at the Travel Plan actions.

A response rate of **50.1% of staff** and **10.1% of students** was achieved; this is particularly positive in the context of previous surveys and travel surveys undertaken within the wider HE sector.

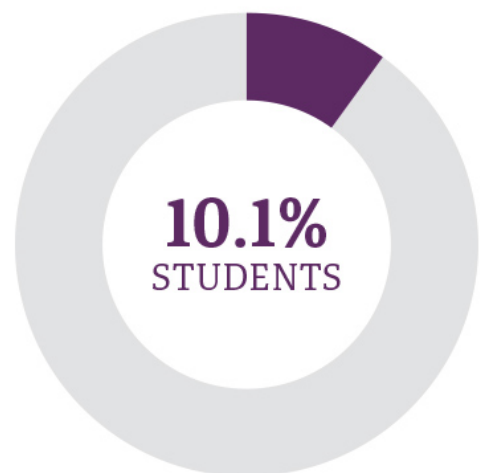
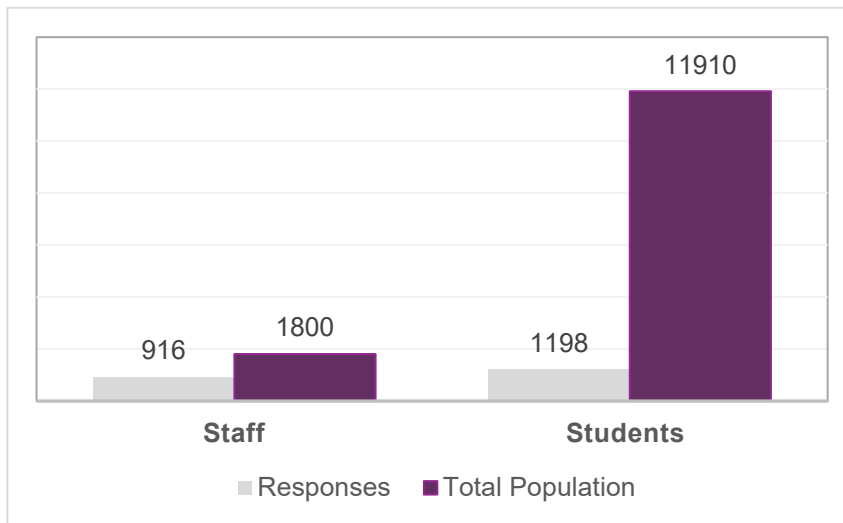


Figure 3.1 – Response Rates to the 2022 Travel Survey



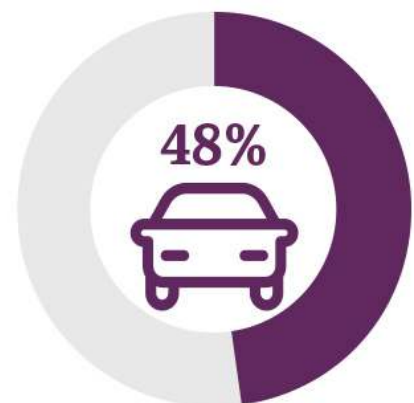
Key Findings - Staff

Working Patterns

Overall, 37% of respondents travel to work 5 days a week, with a further 43% travelling between 3 and 4 days a week. At the opposite end of the scale, 6% travel to work less than once a week.

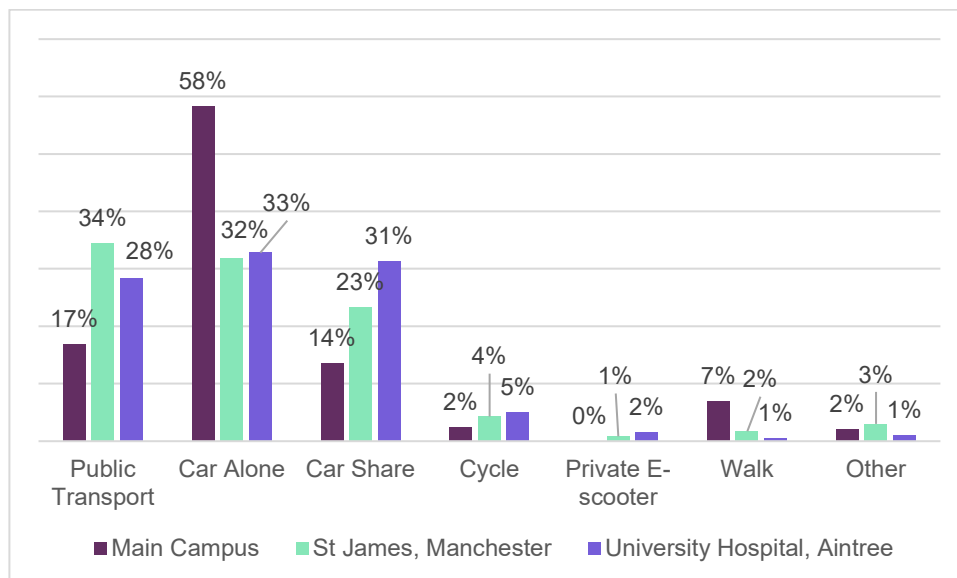
How Staff Travel to Campus

Overall, **48% of staff commuting trips are made by car alone**, although this varies between the different campus locations.

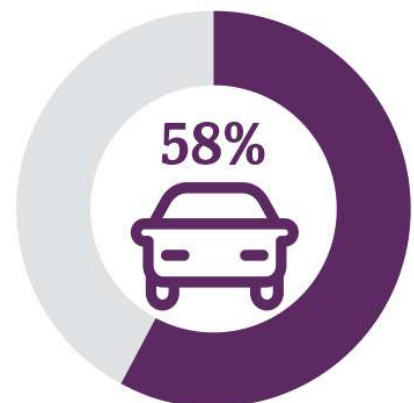


The usual mode of commuting trips is shown in **Figure 3.2**, whilst **Figure 3.3** shows how mode share at the main campus has changed since the previous survey.

Figure 3.2 – Usual Commuting Mode by Work Location – Staff



When considering Ormskirk in isolation, the **drive alone mode share is 58%**, which compares favourably to the 63% recorded in the 2017 survey.



There has been an increase in car sharing (from 10% to 13%) and public transport, with bus being significantly more popular in 2022 compared with 2017, but train being less so. Walking and cycling have both reduced since 2017.

Figure 3.3 – Trends in Mode Share – Ormskirk Staff

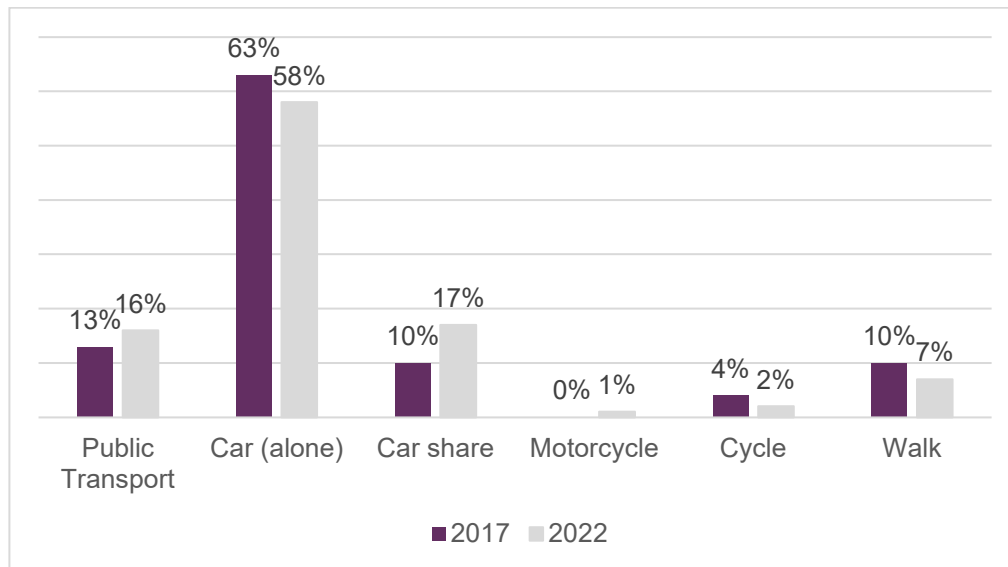
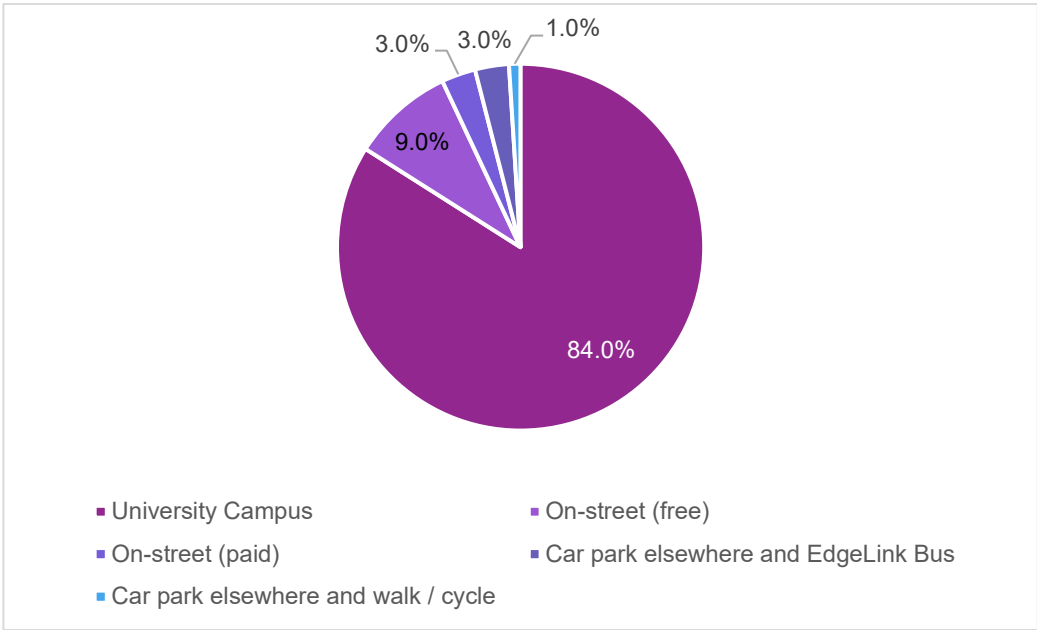


Figure 3.4 summarises where staff car drivers park; whilst the majority park on campus, there is a cohort that park on-street in the local area.

Figure 3.4 – Staff Car Driver Parking Locations



Just 5.9% of staff car drivers currently drive a hybrid or fully electric vehicle, however, over 60% suggest that they intend to switch to an EV in the next three years, with 42.4% indicating they d likely purchase a fully electric or plug in hybrid vehicle.



Staff that Walk or Cycle

Seven percent of staff currently commute on foot, with 2% cycling to campus (at Ormskirk). Feedback from those already travelling by active modes has been sought (**Figures 3.5 and 3.6**), as ensuring they continue to feel supported is extremely important in the context of achieving the objectives / targets of the Travel Plan.

Figure 3.5 – Feedback from Cyclists

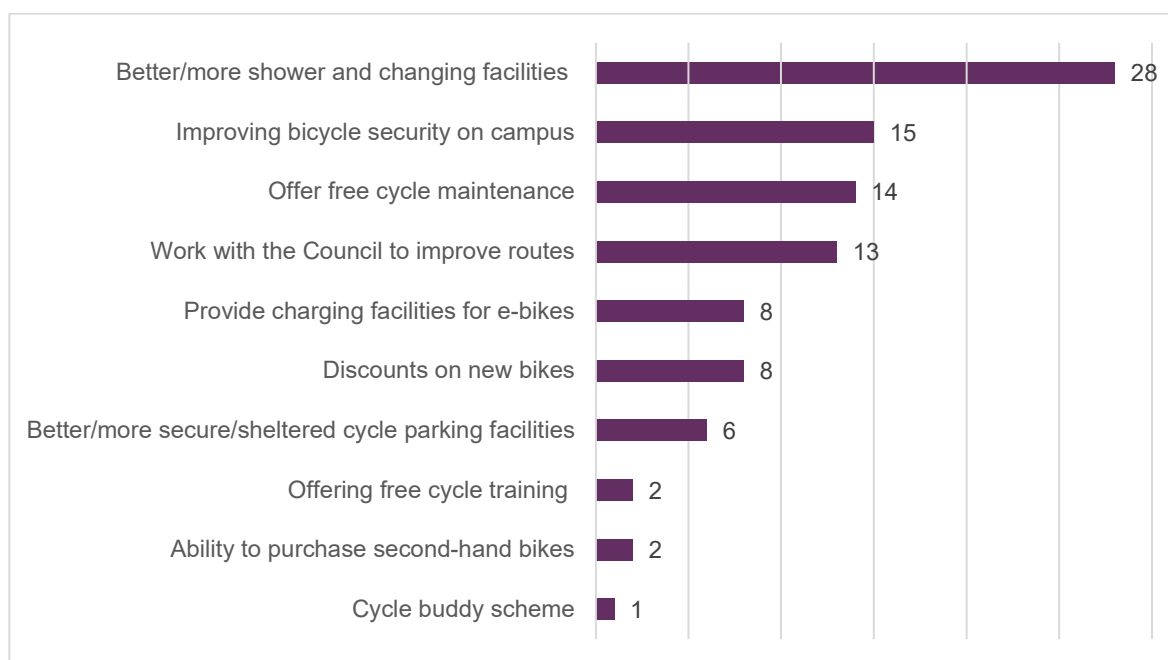
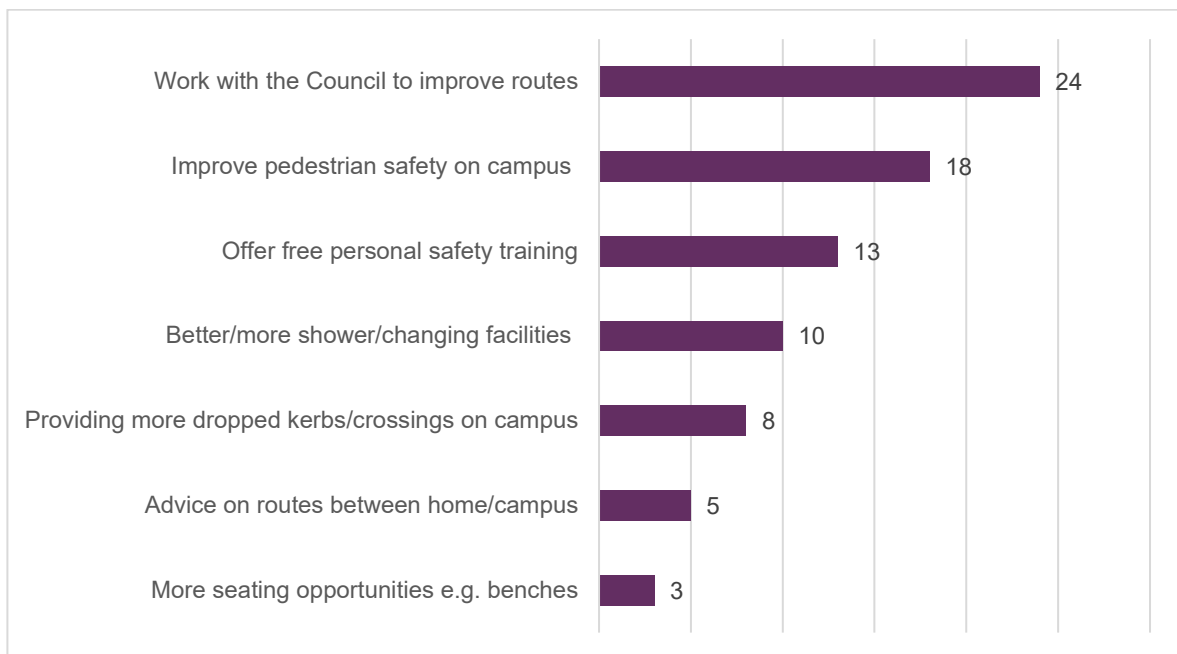


Figure 3.6 – Feedback from those that Walk



Staff that use Public Transport

Sixteen percent of staff currently travel to campus by public transport. The most popular bus services are the EL1 (Stagecoach) and 152 (Huyton) services, with the 375 / 385 (Arriva) also being used by a smaller number of people.

Given the University's financial commitment to it, feedback was specifically sought on the EdgeLink bus service (from the 60% of respondents who suggested they had used it in the last term; this was overwhelmingly positive, with the average score against four key indicators – professionalism of drivers, availability of seats, punctuality / reliability and frequency – being 4.2 – 4.3.



**PROFESSIONALISM
OF DRIVERS**



**AVAILABILITY
OF SEATS**



**PUNCTUALITY /
RELIABILITY**



FREQUENCY

Business Travel

The main focus of the Travel Plan is on day-to-day commuting trips, however, the environmental impacts of business travel should not be underestimated or ignored within the Strategy. It is recognised, however, that there is a delicate balance to be struck between the commercial goals of the University and environmental impact of travel.

The survey asked respondents whether their role requires them to travel for business; over half suggested it did.

Of these, 54% suggest they travel within the local region, 44% do so further afield within the UK and 25% do so internationally.



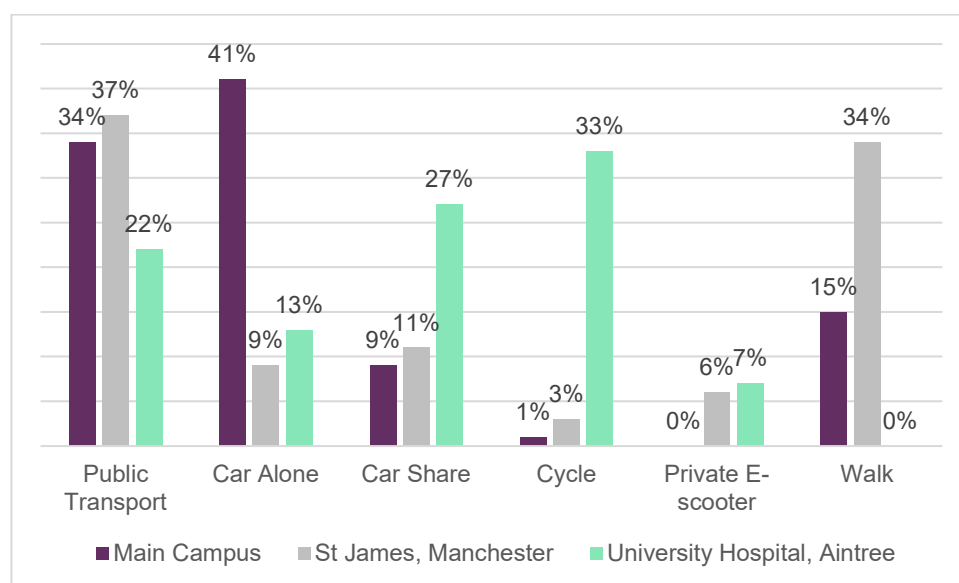
Environmental considerations play a part in how frequently staff travel for business and awareness / intent increases the further afield business travel is. Whilst the relationship between environmental considerations and mode of business travel is less linear, those that travel internationally are more likely, overall, to consider the environment than those travelling locally.

Key Findings - Students

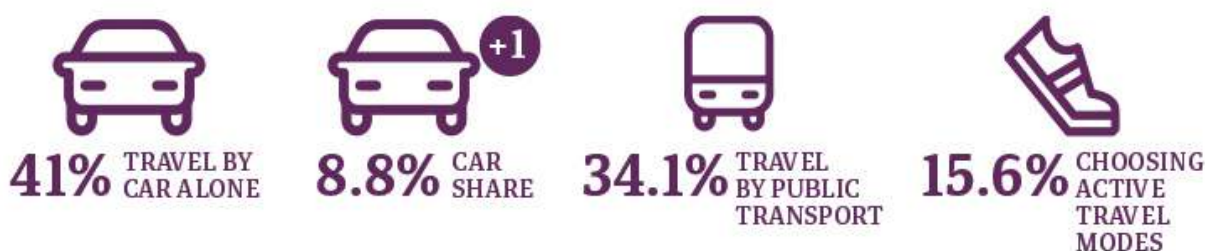
How Students Travel to Campus

Figure 3.8 summarises the mode share for students, by location; it excludes those in accommodation on Campus.

Figure 3.8 – Student Mode Share, 2022



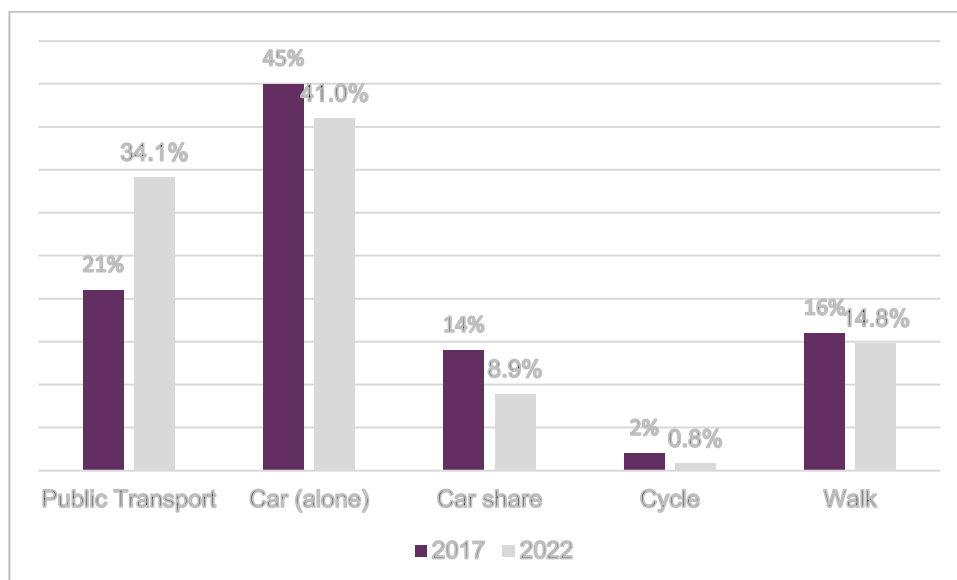
There is significant variance in how students travel, depending on where they study; at the Main Campus, 41% travel by car alone and a further 8.8% car share; 34.1% travel by public transport, with 15.6% choosing active travel modes.



At both St James, Manchester and University Hospital, Aintree, the proportion of respondents travelling by car alone is much less (8.6% and 13.3% respectively), with car sharing being more popular. Public transport is also more popular at these locations.

Figure 3.9 shows how mode share amongst students travelling to the Ormskirk campus has changed since the previous survey in 2017. There has been a reduction in the proportion travelling by car alone (with car sharing, walking and cycling all having reduced and public transport seeing a significant increase).

Figure 3.9 – Trends in Mode Share – Ormskirk Students



Student Car Drivers

Students that drive to campus were asked the reasons why they do so; the most popular answers were: length of journey, having a car parking permit, journey time reliability and flexibility and having no practical alternative. Ninety-three percent of student car drivers park on campus, with the remainder parking either on-street in the local area or a car park in Ormskirk.

Less than 1% of student car drivers currently drive a hybrid or fully electric vehicle, however, 25% suggest that they intend to switch to an EV in the next three years, with 9% indicating they d likely purchase a fully electric or plug in hybrid vehicle.

Students that Walk or Cycle

Nearly 15% of students currently walk to campus with a further 0.8% cycling. Feedback from these groups on how the University should continue to support them with their commute are summarised in **Figures 3.10 and 3.11**, respectively.

Figure 3.10 – Feedback from Student Cyclists

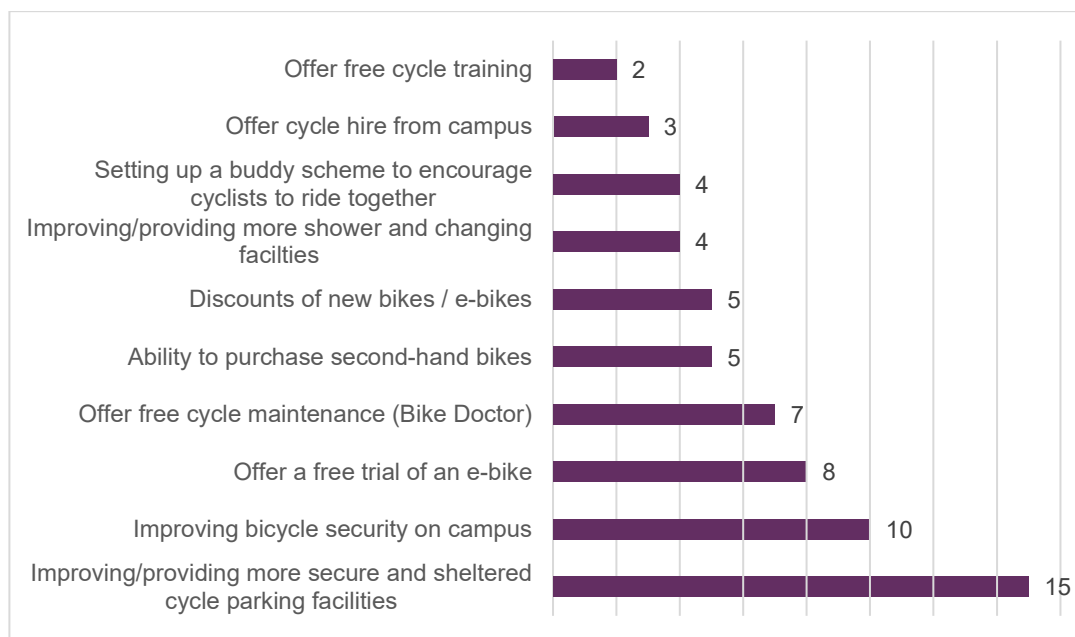
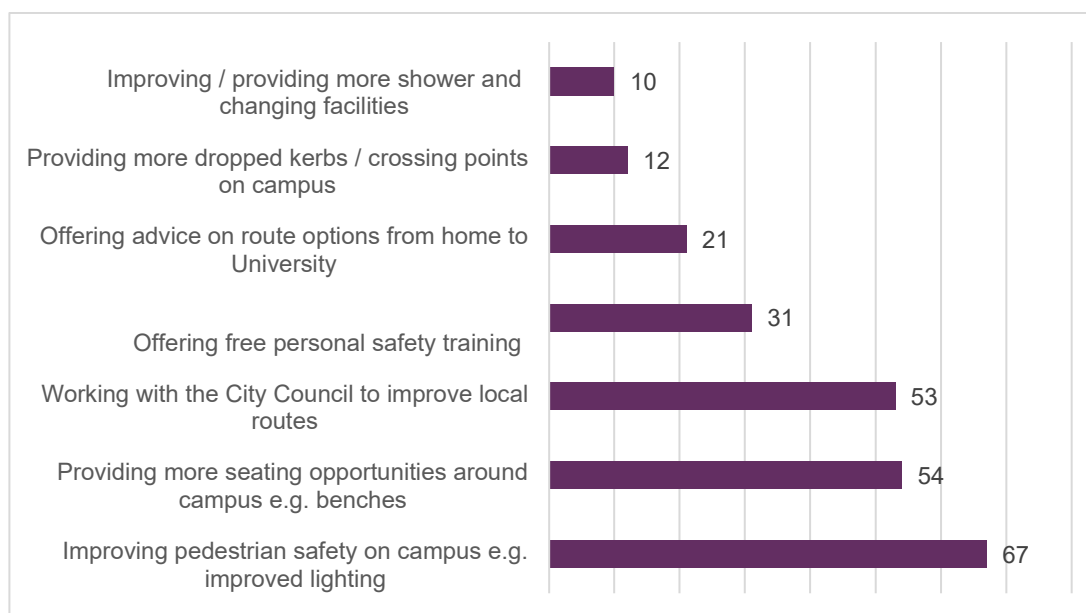


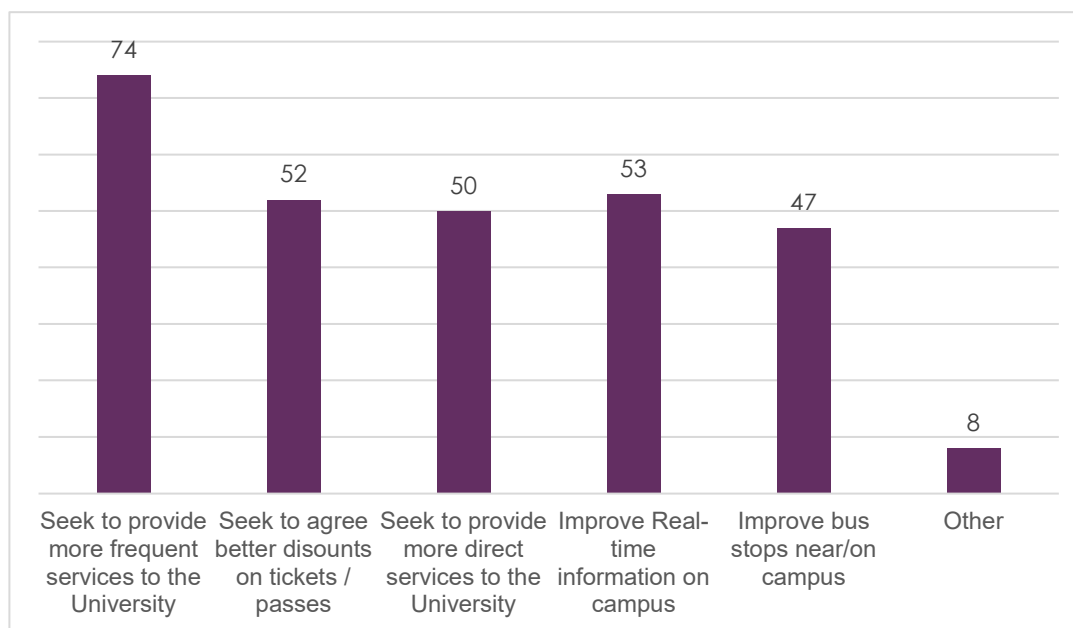
Figure 3.11 – Feedback from Students that Commute on Foot



Students that use Public Transport

Thirty-four percent of students currently travel to campus by public transport. **Figure 3.12** summarises the feedback from this group on how they feel the University could best support them with their commute.

Figure 3.12 – Feedback from Public Transport Users



As with staff, feedback was sought from students on the EdgeLink bus service; on professionalism of drivers, convenience and punctuality / reliability, students scored the service more favourably than staff, with all areas receiving an average rating of 4.5 or above (out of 5).

Encouraging Fewer Staff & Students to Drive Alone to Campus

The survey asked car drivers what might encourage them to travel to campus by a more sustainable mode. **Figures 3.13 to 3.16** summarise the most popular incentives for change amongst staff and students, with the results given due consideration in arriving at the Travel Plan actions.

Figure 3.13 - Measures to Encourage Car Sharing Amongst Car Drivers

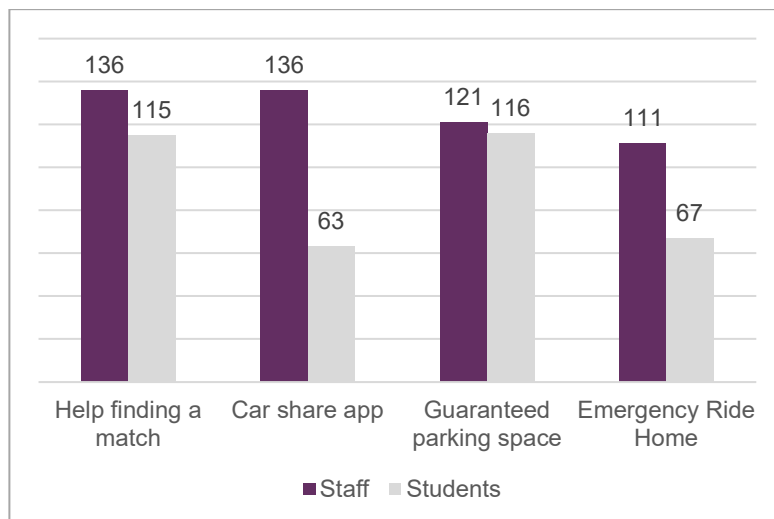


Figure 3.14 - Measures to Encourage Public Transport Amongst Car Drivers

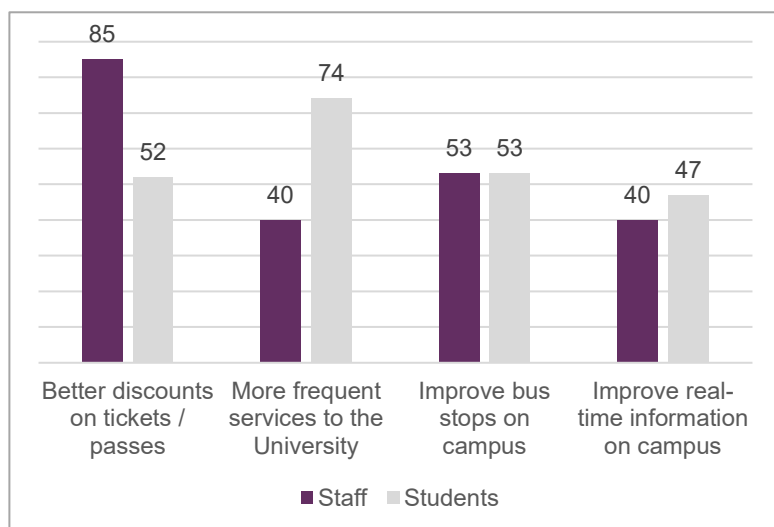


Figure 3.15 - Measures to Encourage Cycling Amongst Car Drivers

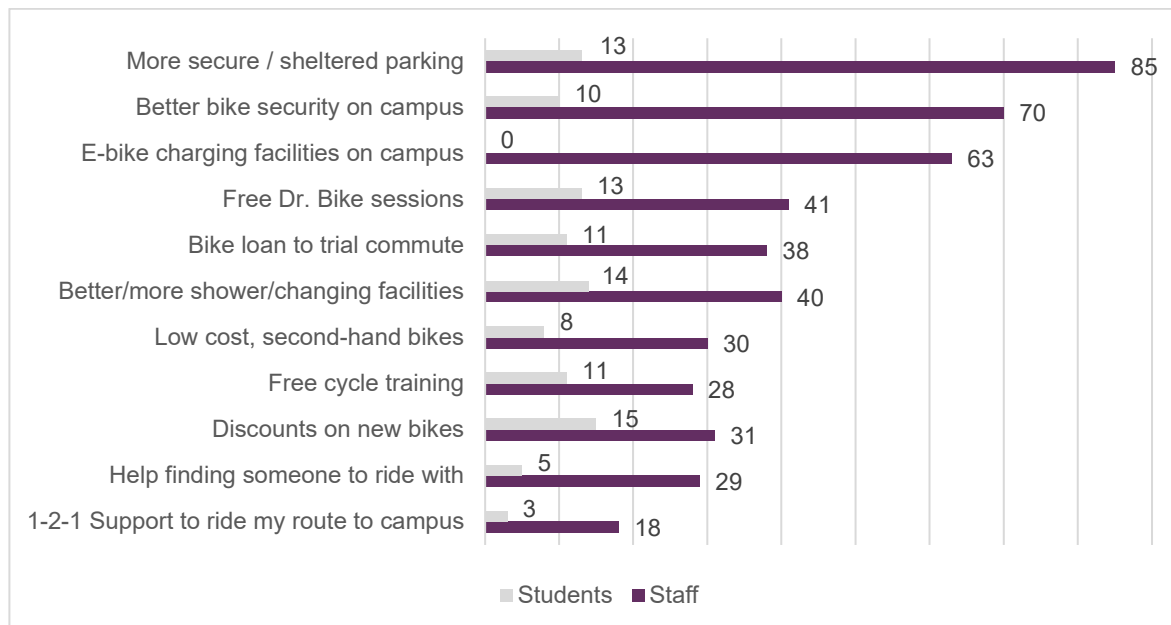
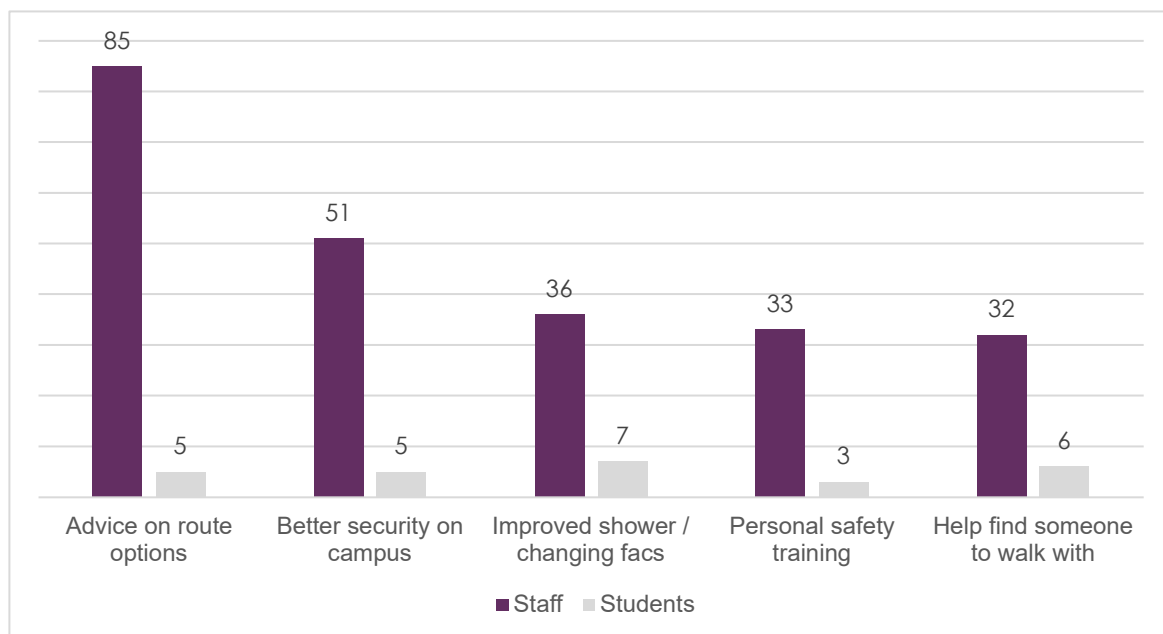


Figure 3.16 - Measures to Encourage Walking Amongst Car Drivers



4. 2023 TO 2027 - AIMS, OBJECTIVES & TARGETS

Aims

The overarching aims of the Travel Plan strategy are to:

Reduce the environmental impact of University related travel (to support our target to achieve carbon Net Zero by 2035) by encouraging staff, students and visitors to the University to travel by sustainable transport modes, wherever possible. This will be facilitated through a combination of infrastructure improvements, soft measures and policy directives.

Enhance the student experience and promote inclusivity, by creating a sustainable campus environment that is accessible to all.

Objectives

To achieve these overarching aims, the following objectives have been set:

1. Facilitate travel by active modes through provision of high-quality infrastructure on campus, and pro-actively engage with the Council in pursuit of improving local routes.
2. Aim to make travel to campus by sustainable modes that Edge Hill University have control over as cost-effective as possible.
3. Ensure that the University continues to be served by high-frequency, high-quality, low-emissions bus services.
4. Promote, encourage and reward car sharing.
5. Promote and encourage sustainable travel, through targeted marketing, centred on relevant, user friendly, information and events that are accessible to all.
6. Engage with prospective students and staff in advance of them starting at the University in order to influence travel habits before they become established;
7. Manage University car parking in a manner which prioritises space for car sharers and those with less opportunity to travel by more sustainable modes.

8. Pursue actions that minimise and/or offset the environmental impact of travel for business and international travel, amongst both students and staff.

Targets

Whilst previously targets have focused on reducing the proportion of drive alone commuting journeys amongst staff and students, this takes no account of broader influences on the environmental impact on travel.

The overarching target for this Travel Plan period is, therefore, a reduction in carbon emissions from commuting; this will be achieved through a combination of encouraging mode shift (and reducing vehicular trips/mileage as a consequence), reconsidering working / study patterns and technological advances (such as increases in EV ownership and public transport emissions reductions).

To ensure that this takes into account any increase in staff and student numbers this will be calculated on a 'average CO₂e per head from commuting' basis, with the targets shown in **Figure 4.1**.

Figure 4.1 – Target Reduction in CO₂e from Commuting Average Per Head (2022 to 2027)

Group	2022 Baseline	2024	2027	Overall Reduction (%)	Equivalent CO ₂ e Saving (tonnes)
Staff	1.165	1.107	0.990	15%	279
Students	0.581	0.558	0.523	10%	589
Total Saving (Based on Current Headcount)					868

Achieving our Travel Plan objectives over the next 5 years would see us save 868 tonnes of CO₂e from staff and student commuting trips.

5. TRAVEL PLAN MEASURES

The following confirms the range of Travel Plan measures that the University is committed to progressing along with timescales for delivery, considering short term (2023 – 2024), medium term (2025 – 2026) and longer term (2026 and beyond) timescales for delivery.

For each initiative, the related objective(s) have been identified, along with the suggested target audience (staff / students / visitors) and location (main campus / St. James / Aintree).



Action Plan

	Action	Related Objective(s)	Target Group	Location	Timescale
Promotional Activities	Offer Personalised Journey Planning	5	Staff & Students	ALL	Short Term and ongoing
	Ensure website information on initiatives is easy to find / use and kept up to date.	5	Staff & Students	ALL	Short Term and ongoing
	Develop a Travel Guide for incoming students.	5, 6	Students	Ormskirk	Short Term and updated annually
	Deliver regular events and promotions – tied into sustainability, health and wellbeing, cost of living.	5	Staff & Students	Ormskirk	Short term and ongoing
	Offer tangible incentives for those commuting by car sharing, public transport, walking and cycling.	3, 4, 5	Staff	ALL (rewards may differ by location)	Short term and ongoing
Active Travel	Look to provide additional secure cycle parking on Campus	1	Staff & Students	Ormskirk	Short term
	Implement a Bike Hire scheme (to include e-bikes)	1	Staff & Students	Ormskirk	Medium Term and ongoing
	Audit of changing facilities, lockers, drying facilities etc	1	Staff & Students	Ormskirk	Short term
	Continue to offer the cycle to work scheme (and loan to those not eligible).	2	Staff	ALL	Ongoing
	Run regular Dr. Bike sessions	5	Staff & Students	Ormskirk	Short term and ongoing
	Provide e-bike charging facilities (could be incorporated into new secure parking).	1	Staff & Students	Ormskirk	Medium term

	Identify ways in which cycle security might be improved – bike marking event as an example.	1	Staff & Students	Ormskirk	Short term (could be included with Dr Bike sessions)
	Deliver personal safety training sessions annually.	5	Staff & Students	Ormskirk	Short term and ongoing
Public Transport	Look at ways to improve Real Time Information on Campus, in conjunction with bus operators. Promote bus operator apps as a means to communicate RTI	1	Staff, Students & Visitors	Ormskirk	Medium term
	Provide Taster Tickets (e.g. one month) to those that ordinarily drive but wish to try the bus.	2	Staff	ALL	Short term and ongoing
	Improve Bus Stops on Campus – assess the feasibility of providing a shelter at the Creative Edge stop.	1	Staff, Students & Visitors	Ormskirk	Medium term
	Improve ticketing information to reflect more flexible tickets.	5	Staff & Students	ALL	Short term
	Engage with operators on an ongoing basis to maximise the frequency of services / routes to Campus.	3	Staff, Students & Visitors.	Ormskirk	Ongoing
	Continue to offer a season ticket loan for an annual PT pass.	2	Staff only.	ALL	Ongoing
Car Users	Continue to provide a car share matching scheme. Consider whether Liftshare offers best value / benefit.	2, 4	Staff & Students	Ormskirk	Ongoing
	Continue to offer guaranteed parking for car sharers.	4	Staff & Students	Ormskirk	Ongoing
	Continue to offer a GRH.	4	Staff Only	ALL	Ongoing

	Targeted promotion of the above amongst permit holders.	2, 4	Staff & Students	Ormskirk	Short term and ongoing
	Confirm the University's approach to EV charging infrastructure provision	1	Staff, Students & Visitors	Ormskirk	Short term (deliver in the Medium term)
Business Travel	Implement a business travel policy that includes a travel hierarchy that prioritises the least polluting options and encourages staff to consider whether a journey has to be made.	8	Staff	ALL	Medium term
	Consider the benefits of a car club vehicle on Campus.	1	Staff	Ormskirk	Longer term
	Promote cycle mileage expenses for business travel	5	Staff	ALL	Short term
Travel to Placements	Ensure communications encourage sustainable modes of transport and offer PJPs to placement students.	5	Students	ALL	Short term
Travel at the Start / End of Term	Encourage trips to / from University at the start/end of a term/year to be made by sustainable modes	6, 8	Students	ALL	Medium term
Timetabling and Working Patterns	Undertake a review of timetabling / working patterns to better manage car parking demand across the week / term.	7	Staff & Students	Ormskirk	Medium Term

6. MONITORING & REPORTING

Monitoring

Robust monitoring mechanisms are required to track progress against the Travel Plan targets, aims and objectives. The following sets out the intended monitoring and reporting regime.

The staff and student travel survey will be repeated in late 2024 and 2026 (to coincide with the timing of the 2022 baseline survey). This will allow for progress to be tracked over time and to determine whether the targets for a 'per head' reduction in CO₂e from commuting have been achieved.

Monitoring will also consider the uptake and / or impact of various measures, so as to ensure that monies and time invested in their delivery are well-spent. The following will be recorded / on an annual basis in this context:

- Patronage on EdgeLink bus services.
- Feedback scores on EdgeLink bus services.
- Take up of Dr Bikes services.
- Number / frequency of cyclist expenses claims for business travel.
- Use of car club vehicle – number of hires and mileage driven.
- Number of interest-free loan applications for public transport season tickets.
- Number of Cycle to Work scheme applications.

Reporting

- 1.1 The University will report on the progress and impact of the Travel Plan on a biennial basis; the monitoring report will contain and staff and student travel survey results, including a comparison with previous surveys to identify trends. It will make use of the survey results to determine CO₂e per head and compare this with the Travel Plan targets.
- 1.2 A review of the action plan will be included, identifying progress against each action and any additional actions that have been undertaken / planned. Feedback from the monitoring exercise will be shared within the University community.

