

Feedback to Staff on Travel Survey

The survey of all University employees carried out this March has been analysed by transport consultants Colin Buchanan & Partners. I would like to thank all 3,463 staff who responded, and all who attended the four Briefing Sessions this Spring, for their contributions. The 52% response rate was good for such surveys and provides essential base-line data to guide the Transport Issues Group in overseeing the University's Travel Plan process. Travel Plans are now a planning condition for new developments at University sites and the survey findings will assist in their successful implementation, aid the search for alternatives to single occupancy car travel and hopefully contribute to reduction in traffic congestion and pollution.

Common to all staff surveyed is the desire for improvements in bus and rail services and the cycle path network and facilities. However, specific measures will need to be tailored to each University site to encourage alternatives to car travel. It is likely that a combination of incentives and control measures will be adopted at each University site to progress local Travel Action Plans.

Moving Forward

The Transport Issues Group now has responsibility for evolving parking policy and has oversight on all transport issues. A Travel Planning Manager is to be appointed within Estates & Buildings Support Services to manage the process of developing site-specific Travel Action Plans and other aspects of transport management. This will include assisting departments to minimise management and staff liability associated with their vehicle fleets and promoting suitable travel practices for all staff.

The recent "fuel crisis" provided a reminder of how dependent society is on petrol / diesel powered transport. We hope that the Travel Plan process to which we are committed (to facilitate new developments at University sites) will bring positive benefits to many in the University and the community. Hopefully this will result in the most appropriate, "sustainable" mode of travel being increasingly used to meet the needs of staff, students, visitors and suppliers – both for travel to work and while on University business.

The Survey Results

The Staff Travel Survey focused on two main areas:

1. Mode of travel to and from the University of all employees
2. Attitudes of car drivers and of all staff on possible measures that might encourage the use of alternatives to car travel.

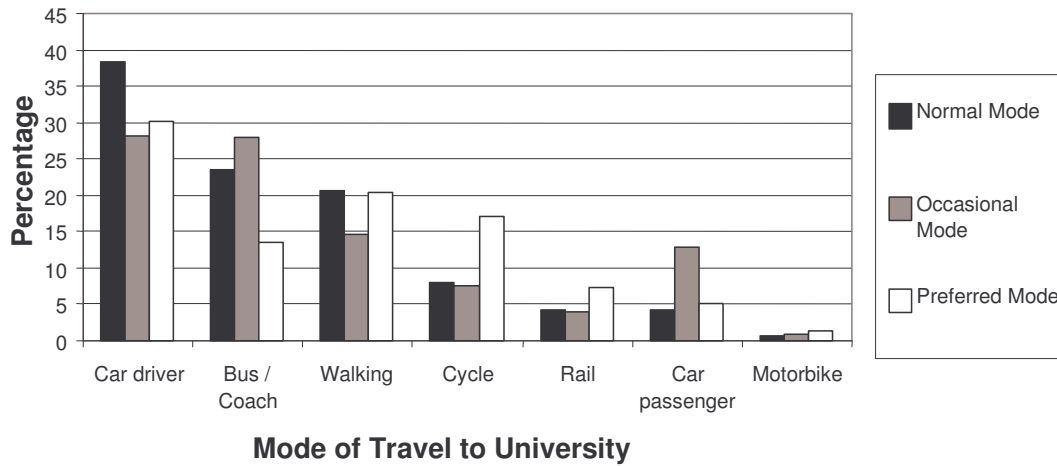
Overall University results are shown below with fuller data available in Buchanan's Report. Where appropriate, results were weighted by response rate from each workplace and each staff category.

Modes of Travel to the University

Overall results for Normal, Occasional and Preferred modes of staff travel to the University (Figure 1) show the high proportion of staff whose Normal mode is by bus (23.5%), walking (20.7%) and cycling (7.9%). Bus use is particularly high at Pollock Halls (42.7%).

On average, 42.1% of staff normally travel to University in a car either as driver or passenger, but this result varies considerably from site to site. As might be expected car travel is higher at out of town sites and where inter-site travel is required (i.e. 68% at the Royal, PMR and RHSC hospitals) and less in the city centre (29% at New College). The average distance all responding staff travelled to work is 9 miles and the average time spent travelling is 29 minutes.

Figure 1 - All University - Normal, Occasional & Preferred Mode of Travel

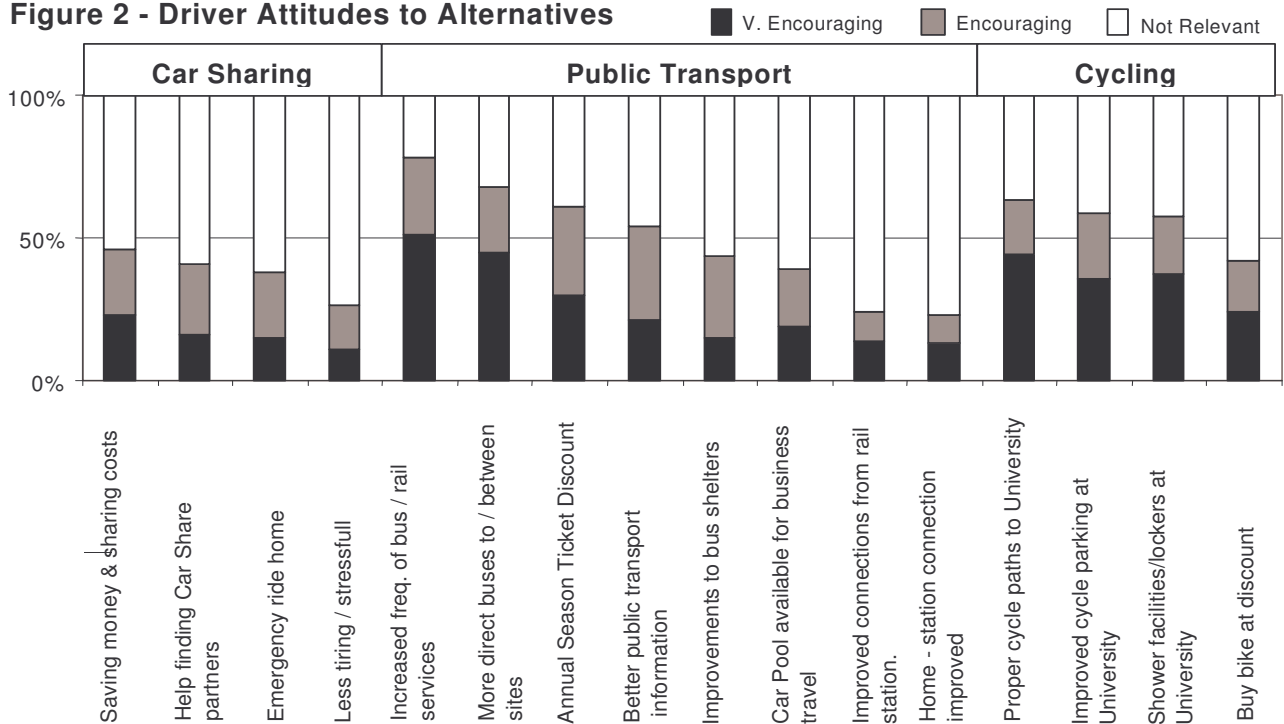


By contrast to the Normal mode, the Occasional and Preferred modes show that improved alternatives to driving may allow staff to take up their Preferred mode of travel – especially cycling and walking – or to make more use of their occasional travel mode, for example the use of the bus.

Encouraging Use of Different Modes

The survey has highlighted areas and campuses where particular Travel Action Plan measures will be more or less effective. Overall University results of driver attitudes to proposals that may encourage the use of alternatives to car use are shown in Figure 2. Results for all staff responding are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 2 - Driver Attitudes to Alternatives



Again, these results varied considerably from site to site. For example fewer staff at Kings Buildings found reasons for car-sharing encouraging, whereas staff at Summerhall indicated an overall interest in this option.

The overall results of driver attitudes also show that, in general, it is improvements in the level and frequency of bus services and the provision of more / improved cycle paths that are most likely to encourage the use of alternatives. The provision of annual season ticket discounts and better public transport

information also scored highly. Improved cycle parking and shower facilities / locker provision at University sites would also encourage more cycling.

Over half of all responding staff agreed or strongly agreed that six suggested measures would encourage a reduction in car use. The most popular measures supported were the use of home working where appropriate, the provision of better public transport information and the provision of parking spaces for car sharers. The exceptions were those measures concerned with parking permits.

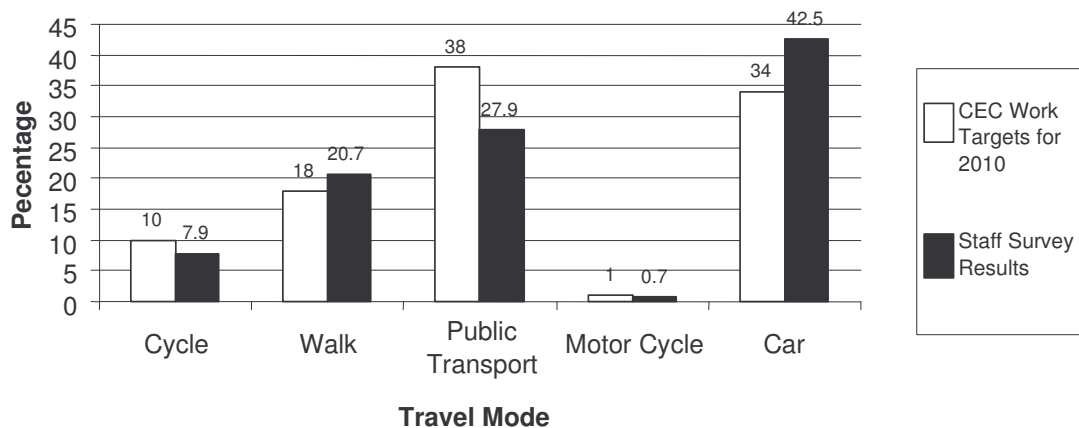
Parking Location

69% of the respondents who drive to work park in a University Car Park using an Annual Permit while 19% use free parking on residential streets. The remaining 11% make use of non-university, paid parking locations. About half of the 352 respondents who said they park on residential streets work at King's Buildings. So far little use is being made of the new Day Tickets available as scratch cards.

Conclusions

The survey provides encouraging baseline modal split results for staff travel. The City of Edinburgh Council's Interim Local Transport Strategy 2000 to 2003, sets targets for work related travel for the year 2010, and these are shown with the staff survey results (Figure 3).

Figure 3 - CEC 2010 Work Related Modal Travel Targets v Staff Survey Results



The chart shows that the University currently compares reasonably favourably with the City Council targets; however there is no room for complacency for a number of reasons:

- The University results are for staff only; the addition of results from the Student Travel Survey in November 2000 may cause a change for better or worse
- The high use of walking, public transport reflects the mainly city-centre situation of the largest proportion of University staff. Future changes such as the Medical School move to the new site at Little France, and any Veterinary School moves to Easter Bush will increase the pressure on car use
- The targets set by Edinburgh Council are to be reviewed and refined in future. For example, different targets may be set for city centre locations than for edge of town / out of town sites.

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The full Report on the Staff Travel Survey is available from David Somervell, Energy & Environmental Manager, Phone 650 2073, fax 650 9346, David.Somervell@ed.ac.uk