

# Sustainable travel and transport

## About this guide

Sustainable travel means more than avoiding the motorway at rush hour. Embracing and promoting more sustainable ways to travel can drive bottom-line benefits for tourism businesses, as well as contribute to the reduction of environmental impact.

This guide explores the social, economic, and environmental benefits of sustainable travel and transport. Considering that reducing car usage is not practical for all businesses, we also share some tips on transitioning to sustainable alternatives.



## Five ways that sustainable travel can benefit your business

### 1. It attracts visitors

Being a business that promotes sustainable travel and transport attracts customers to whom sustainability is a key factor in their buying decisions. For example, being a cyclist-friendly B&B or café means you can attract the growing market of pedal-powered visitors.

### 2. It reduces business costs

Of course, sustainable travel and transport reduces your environmental impact, but it can drive economic benefits through lower fuel usage, less need for regular vehicle maintenance, and less waste creation.

### 3. It has health benefits

It is well-documented that using sustainable travel improves physical and mental health but if you have staff this brings the knock-on benefit of reduced absenteeism and presenteeism, and increased job performance.

### 4. It has bigger picture benefits

Sustainable travel can help to build stronger communities, including town centre revitalisation and developing 20-minute neighbourhoods.<sup>1</sup> So by adopting sustainable travel, you can contribute to economic growth and improve accessibility while respecting the environment, making better places to live, work and visit.<sup>2</sup>

### 5. It will help future-proof your business

With carbon reduction targets set with the ultimate goal of Net Zero by 2045, businesses are encouraged to play their part in reducing emissions. While it is not yet a legal requirement for businesses, if it does, you'll want to ensure that your business is ready to adhere to relevant legislation.



## Six ways to transition to sustainable travel

### 1. Facilitate and incentivise

If you have staff, organise a car-sharing scheme to reduce emissions - and help reduce their travel costs. Encourage more public transport use by being accommodating (for example, if taking the bus means a staff member arrives at five past nine), promoting money-saving deals like monthly passes, and even subsidise travel by public transport. In rural areas, this support could keep vital services in operation for the local community.

### 2. Tell visitors how to get here, sustainably

Publish useful information on your website about how to get to your business by public transport options on your website. Perhaps visitors can utilise the National Cycling Network? If access is only possible by car, always give precise directions to your premises, and promote the most fuel-efficient driving routes, in your 'how to get here' section.

### 3. Get them on their bikes

If you are a small rural accommodation provider and there is limited public transport in your area, once your guests have arrived encourage them to explore by bicycle. Provide bikes for hire or for them to use for free, and details of cycle-friendly local eating and drinking establishments.

### 4. Provide active travel support services

If you're an accommodation provider or a visitor attraction, provide services to support both staff and visitors who've arrived on two wheels, such as secure storage, repair kits and drying facilities, and washing facilities for both cyclists and walkers.

### 5. Install EV charging points

Look into installing electrical charging points at your premises, or at least, have an EV charging point map on your website. If your business is an SME in a rural area, you may be eligible for funding to install charging points. Check the Energy Saving Trust for more information.

### 6. Start a sustainable travel action plan

Most businesses are a long way off from having a formal sustainable travel policy in place, but you can set off in the right direction by starting an action plan. Create a spreadsheet to track, for example, travel expenses, fuel usage, and transport maintenance costs to identify where you can make improvements – and savings.