



# ACTIVE TRAVEL

How to produce  
active travel directions  
for your visitors and staff



Walking

Cycling

Public transport

Car





## Introduction

This guidance aims to help people to be physically active by encouraging them to travel actively when they visit your organisation. It will help you produce travel directions for visitors, and for new staff as part of their induction.

Most people now recognise that healthy food is important, and many organisations now offer healthy menu options in their catering. But physical activity is equally important for our health. This information will help you to provide travel directions that encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport.

Organisations have a lot to gain from encouraging active travel, from a healthier workforce who take less sick leave, to less pressure on car parking space.

## Why encourage active travel?

At present, two thirds of adults in England are not active enough for their health. Inactive people are at higher risk of many serious health conditions including obesity, coronary heart disease and diabetes. Adults need to build up at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity on most days – the equivalent of brisk walking. Walking and cycling for everyday trips can play a big part in helping people get the physical activity they need, and organisations can help by encouraging their visitors and staff to choose physically active travel.

As our society has come to rely more and more on the private car, people are walking and cycling far less, even for short trips. Often the car feels like the automatic choice, especially when people are travelling to premises they are unfamiliar with.

Providing the right information can help people choose a healthier way of travelling. Doing so can also contribute to the development of a travel plan for your premises.

Healthy and active travel brings other benefits too. Reducing car use helps to cut congestion and pressure on car parking, and benefits the environment by lowering noise and air pollution, including reducing carbon dioxide emissions which contribute to global climate change.

# How to produce travel directions to your premises

## Principles

Start with the assumption that people should not have to use a car to get to your premises; and remember, some people are not able to drive and others choose not to. Think about how people can get to you on foot, by bicycle or by public transport from the local area and from the nearest train or bus station. Then think about what information visitors will need to reach your area by public transport if they are coming from far afield.

Lay out your travel guidance in the healthiest order – start with walking and cycling, then public transport (because there is usually a walk at each end of the journey) and finally car travel. Of course some people will need to drive, but put information about driving and parking last, so that the healthier ways to travel are most prominent.

As a rule of thumb, a distance of about two miles is walkable for many people and up to about five miles is reasonable to cycle.

See the *finding information* section for further details of public transport, maps and the National Cycle Network.

## Travelling within the local area

The level of detail you give will depend on the area. Different approaches will be appropriate for urban and rural premises. For an urban location, people could be coming from many directions, so you might just provide a map showing the local area including train stations and bus routes. For a rural location, information about the route from the nearest public transport should include:

- distance
- description - is it hilly or flat, do roads have pedestrian footways, is it lit?

Always:

- include walking information and/or a map if your premises are in a town centre or within about two miles of a train station, bus stop or parking
- include cycling information if your venue is in an urban area or within about five miles of a train station, the National Cycle Network or other cycle route
- tell people where they can park bicycles securely, preferably protected from the weather
- tell people about local public transport, such as which bus routes the premises are on and, if there are only a few buses, their approximate frequency
- include numbers for local taxi services.

## Getting there from other places

Start with public transport. Where do train and bus services connect to? How much information you need to give will depend on your location. In a major city you do not need to list connections. For premises in smaller places, you should explain where trains and buses connect to; for example: 'There are trains every hour from Leeds and the journey takes thirty-five minutes' or 'There are regular buses from Exeter and Newton Abbot'.

To help people plan their journey by public transport, include details of Traveline and National Rail Enquiries (see *finding information* section).

Instructions for travelling by car should start with park and ride facilities where these exist. If possible, offer a 'park and stride' option too – is there a place people could park that would allow them 10 to 30 minutes walk to your

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premises, so that they can fit some physical activity into their day?

If air travel is unavoidable, give public transport options from the airport to your location.

### Active travel facilities at your premises

Explain where visitors can lock their bicycles. If you don't have bicycle racks, are there metal railings they can use? Or is there an indoor area where bicycles could be securely stored? Make sure you tell people where your bicycle facilities are if they are not immediately obvious, and ensure your reception staff are briefed.

If your premises do not have bicycle parking, consider installing secure and weather-protected racks and signs to help visitors find them.

### Selection of third party venues

A lot of travel is generated by events held at third party venues, such as conference centres, hotels and sporting venues. For delegates, these are often one-off trips to unfamiliar locations, so active travel information could be especially useful.

When planning an event, take into account the ease of access by walking, cycling and public transport; try not to select venues whose location has been designed solely with car access in mind. Discuss with the venue aspects such as:

- pedestrian access – are there pedestrian footways on the site, attractive short-cuts, pedestrian-only entrances?
- cycle access, cycle parking on site
- information and directions published by the venue – do they meet the standards laid down in this guidance? Is the venue willing to upgrade them.

### Finding information

#### Public transport information

Traveline ([www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk), 0870 608 2 608, minicom 0870 241 2216) offers public transport information including all buses and trains, with personalised door-

to-door journey planning.

National Rail Enquiries ([www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk), 08457 48 49 50, minicom 0845 60 50 600) provides information on train fares and up-to-the-minute details of any service changes.

## **National Cycle Network and cycle parking**

Sustrans ([www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk), 0845 113 0065, 9am – 5pm) provides information on cycle routes and online maps – enter your postcode to see if there are local routes. Sustrans also provides technical information, such as on cycle parking systems.

## **Maps**

Online maps searchable by postcode are available from [www.streetmap.co.uk](http://www.streetmap.co.uk) and [www.multimap.com](http://www.multimap.com); you can obtain maps from these sites for a royalty fee.

Make sure you include your postcode on the travel directions, so that people using these websites can search for your exact location.

Check with the copyright owner of any map you want to reproduce.

## **More resources**

Active travel and healthy workplaces (2005) Sustrans  
Further information about the benefits to employers of active travel. Available free from Sustrans information line, 0845 113 0065 or [www.activetravel.org.uk](http://www.activetravel.org.uk)

Walk in to Work Out (2004) Department for Transport  
A pack aimed at encouraging active commuting. Available from DfT Publications Centre, 0870 1226 236 quoting product code 01TA0750

Travel Plan Resource Pack for Employers (2004) TransportEnergy Best Practice  
Comprehensive guidance for any organisation contemplating undertaking a travel plan. Available free from the TransportEnergy Helpline, 0845 602 1425 or [www.transportenergy.org.uk/developtravelplan](http://www.transportenergy.org.uk/developtravelplan)

### Template for your travel guidance

This checklist and the attached example will help you to produce your own travel directions.

#### General

- statement encouraging active travel
- brief description of where your premises are situated
- address, including postcode, telephone, email, fax and textphone if you have one.

#### Travelling within the area

- description of the location, for example 'in the city centre' or 'in a country setting three miles from town'
- street map and/or description of walking route from train or bus station, parking or town centre if within 2 miles, or further if it's a nice walk
- distance from nearest bus stops; bus route numbers and frequency
- distance from National Cycle Network, other cycle route or railway station if within 5 miles; cycle route map if available
- cycle parking information
- taxi phone numbers.



## Getting to the area

- information on train and bus connections to the area, as appropriate
- Traveline and National Rail Enquiries details
- directions for park and ride where facilities available
- directions for 'park and stride' where possible
- directions and map if required for car travel to premises and car parking information
- air travel information if required, with public transport directions to premises.

### ▶ EXAMPLE

#### How to find Hotel Dynamic, Anytown

Hotel Dynamic encourages our visitors to walk, cycle and use public transport where possible, as part of a healthy lifestyle.

Hotel Dynamic is just over two miles from the centre of Anytown, in a quiet rural riverside location - see the attached map or [www.multimap.com](http://www.multimap.com).

##### ***On foot***

The pleasant, mostly flat, walk from Anytown takes 30-40 minutes. Starting from the station, follow the High Street to your right and turn left at the church onto River Road for about a mile. At the sharp right-hand bend go through the gate to the left onto the riverside path, which brings you into the hotel grounds. Go up the 20 steps and follow the path round to the front entrance.

As the path is not lit you may prefer to return by bus or taxi on darker evenings.

##### ***By bicycle***

Anytown is on National Cycle Route 79. Cyclists can follow the walking route above, or stay on River Road for a further 100 yards and then turn left on Lovely Lane (B3456), which is slightly longer but avoids the steps. There is a cycle rack to the right of the front entrance of the hotel.

##### ***By bus***

Local bus 1A passes the hotel. It leaves hourly from outside the butcher's shop on the High Street, 5 minutes walk from the station. Contact Traveline (see below) for a current timetable.

##### ***Taxis***

A taxi from Anytown will cost about £5 and take 10 minutes: Anytown cabs 01555 1234567.

## Getting to the area

### ***By public transport***

Anytown is on the main line from London to Leeds, although not all services stop. More frequent trains stop at Othertown, 10 miles away, and there is a bus every 30 minutes between the two, stopping outside the station.

For a personalised journey plan by public transport go to Traveline ([www.traveline.org.uk](http://www.traveline.org.uk), 0870 608 2 608, minicom 0870 241 2216, 7am to 10pm).

For information on train fares and up-to-the-minute details of service changes go to National Rail Enquiries ([www.nationalrail.co.uk](http://www.nationalrail.co.uk), 08457 48 49 50, minicom: 0845 60 50 600).

### ***By car***

There is free all-day car parking at Anytown station for those who would like to fit a walk into their day.

See the attached map for directions to Anytown and to Hotel Dynamic. The hotel has a clearly signposted car park.

## **Hotel Dynamic**

**Lovely Lane**

**Anytown**

**AN55 5GH**

**Tel: 01555 9876543**

**Fax: 01555 3216549**

**Email: [info@hoteldynamic.co.uk](mailto:info@hoteldynamic.co.uk)**

## The importance of active travel

*“The minimum recommended level of physical activity for an adult is 30 minutes of moderate activity on at least five days a week. This is not a demanding target, but two thirds of British adults do not reach it, and the consequences can be seen in our levels of obesity, heart disease, diabetes and general level of fitness.*

*The Chief Medical Officer has pointed out that “for most people, the easiest and most acceptable forms of physical activity are those that can be incorporated into everyday life. Examples include walking or cycling instead of driving.....” In the same way that responsible employers seek to provide access to a healthy diet, we should now do all we can to make physically active travel possible for our staff, customers, visitors and neighbours.*

*We have worked with Sustrans to produce this guidance so as to improve our own, internal performance in the area of physical activity. We are making it available to anyone who can use it, in England and around the world, and hope it can play a small part in creating a healthier environment.”*

**Professor John R Ashton CBE**

**Regional Director of Public Health/Regional Medical Officer, North West of England**