The Open University

TRAVEL SURVEY REPORT 2024

Report dated July 2025

Contents

1. SUMMARY

1.1 Introduction

Survey sample size of 1210 increased by 127% over the 2021 responses. This still represents a relatively small number compared to the staff population being employed by the University. The report clearly identifies staff sentiment in relation to various modes of travel, how they feel about them and possible improvements which could be considered moving forward.

We are pleased to report that we received 381 responses from home workers which represents 31% of overall responses, a fantastic contribution, thank you. Walton Hall response level was 60% an increase of 3.5% (728) while Regions / Nations response levels was 101 a decrease of -3.6% when compared to the 2021 survey data.

Since COVID in 2019, staff working patterns have changed resulting in significantly lower site occupancy levels (-66% - See 3.1.1), impacting on all staff travel activities. The survey has identified that there is a clear association between changes to staff working patterns and staff travel plans, this report will identify some of these practical changes.

1.2 Results Overview

Travel behaviour patterns:
Site occupancy levels at Walton Hall are low with highest attendances taking place mid-week. 71% of staff indicated they are unlikely to change current working patterns.

62% of staff use their own vehicles as the primary mode of transport to site mainly due to living >5 miles from site. A significant decimation of bus services to WH, the collapse of the car share scheme and the poor bus substitution taxi service called MK Connect has impacted on no change considerations.

Vehicle engine type usage shows a significant increase in less than 1.4ltr engines (25%) and >2ltr engines (3%).

- Staff Fact finding and information sharing:

Staff understanding of available travel related services:

- >80% were aware of the Electric Vehicle charging facilities, the Security Car registration database and the shower / bike shelter facilities,
- >50% were aware of the car share scheme, the cycle scheme and where to find information on the Travel Advice website.
- <50% were aware of the salary sacrifice scheme, bicycle maintenance facilities, EV battery charging and tyre pump facilities.

35% of staff indicated that they would consider purchasing an EV in the next 10 years with 48% having no plans to purchase one. Further indications on purchasing incentives reflect that 36% of staff consider EV costs to be too high. 87% of staff indicated that they have no intention to change their current modes of transport.

Click Travel booking system - 37% of staff consider the service to be more expensive than booking directly with the supplier, while 35% of respondents were satisfied with the services provided. However, 17% of staff felt that the system remains difficult to use even after system improvements have been made.

- Open ended respondent information: (4 below).

Travel Advice website visibility and data accessibility was considered poor. There was acknowledgement that the data and information available on the website provides staff support and shared knowledge, assisting with staff welfare.

With 62% of staff using their own vehicles to get to work, almost 50% of staff indicated that improvements to public transport services would encourage them to change travel habits by moving a public service transport.

Reward Schemes – Electric Vehicles – (Appendix 1)

- Respondents stated that they do not know enough about the EV scheme this includes understanding around the benefits, inclusions, exclusions, financial implications, battery concerns, technological details, re-charge practicalities, sustainability implications and EDI securities linked to manufacturing and modern slavery prevention.
- Respondents questioned the procurement and EV supplier selection process stating that EV costs were high, only high-end vehicles were available on the scheme, service providers for direct purchases were offering better financial deals, some R/N's do not have access to the SS scheme, queries why only EV vehicles were available on the scheme i.e. why hybrid / hydrogen driven vehicles did not form part of the offer, also requested was longer term SS scheme payback periods.

- Other general travel comments:

  Bus Services - in general bus services are considered poor or non-existent. MK Council decisions during COVID resulted in the decimation of many services with inadequate replacement services being provided, mainly due to the with-drawl of Government funding due to austerity cuts and lower footfall / passenger utilisation.

  WH had four services operating via the campus, this service has been reduced to one operating on a restricted timetable. This service does not fit in with our commuter journey plans resulting in fewer staff making the effort to come onto site and staff incurring addition expenses as taxis are needed to get to site.

  Some indirect bus services are available in the WH area; however, they result in staff walking into the site which takes around 30 minutes and exposes staff to elements of safety risk e.g. walking alone, impact of flooding, trip hazards, etc.

  Train Services – In general train services were satisfactory but staff expressed concern about the cost of tickets, some arrival and departure delays, the speed of rail travel, over-crowding and the reliability of the service.

  Taxi Services – WH taxi services was considered to be good 59% with comments including that the cost of the service was expensive. The newly introduced MK Connect service (replacement for busses) was considered to be a poor and inadequate service with 34% of respondents stating that they do not make use of this service due to uncertainty of collection and drop-off times.

Car Share Scheme – The significant reduction in site attendances (3.1.1) has resulted in the fall-over of the scheme with far fewer staff taking advantage of available car sharing and reserved parking facilities.

Cycling Services – Respondents expressed concerns related to safety, stating that Redway road conditions and cycling through some areas were no longer safe. Respondents requested that consideration be given to changing Cyclescheme rules and regulations, including a levelling up of electric and manual bicycle limits., (5.4.5) etc.

1.3 Other Survey Observations:

1.3.1 Scope 3 Carbon emissions: Survey results are mixed.

Positives: Lower staff footfall will have a significant impact on Scope 3 carbon emission levels.

Negatives: 69% of staff live more than 5 miles from site. Utilisation of own vehicles to get to site remains high 62%.

There is a notable decline in use of public transport -13% and a decline in car sharing but more staff are walking to work.

Survey results revealed that:

- more staff were driving diesel vehicles 22%,
- fewer petrol vehicles 61% were being driven
- a sizable increase in the use of hybrid / small electric vehicles 16%.
- Also clear was a move to driving vehicles with smaller engine sizes 48% but an increase use of >2ltr vehicles (4%).

Most of the above negative factors drive up Scope 3 carbon emission levels and will need to be included in HESA data submissions as and when required.

1.3.2 Ways of working and changes to plans for travelling to the workplace:

Significant changes to staff workplaces, travel plans and continued evidence of the lowering of levels of staff working four / five-day periods in the offices have been confirmed. These factors will impact favourably on Scope 3 Carbon Emissions but will increase working at home scope 3 levels.

87% of respondents indicated that they could not be encouraged to change their mode of transport quoting issues like poor / inadequate public service availability, poor safety in the use of other modes of transport, and child-care concerns. These decisions will have an increase impact on Scope 3 carbon emission levels.

1.3.3 Electric vehicles and alternative modes of transport:

There remains a lot of scepticism surrounding the use of EVs with 44% of staff either not considering the purchasing of an EV at all or only considering a purchase in the next 10 years. Concern was expressed that EVs need to be more sustainable and provide a greener solution.

Nearly 36% of respondents felt that EV costs were too high, while 18% expressed concern regarding the lack of re-charge infrastructure. Significant concern was expressed that there was insufficient information available on EVs which included battery costs 11%, life and disposal / toxicity, battery ranges, re-charge times, second-hand markets, University charge point adequacy, information needed related to available re-charge schemes, etc. Incentives like access to an EV or subsidised funding scheme were requested along with free re-charge facilities on campus.

However, some respondents were prepared to trial the use of an EV should access be made available.

1.3.4 University facilities:

47% of respondents were aware of the existence of the Travel Advice website and its content while a quarter of respondents had never visited the website. Improved visibility of the Travel Advice website was requested, this included the provision of regular up-dates on travel changes, opportunities, and information. Comments indicated that staff induction programmes did not provide sufficient information on the available Travel Advice information.

Three quarters of respondents were aware of the car share scheme with 656 staff participating in the scheme.

Cyclescheme and their associated benefits are well known (74%), as are the availability of changing room facilities (81%). Few respondents were aware of the existence of the bicycle maintenance station 32%.

2. ACTIVITIES MOVING FORWARD AND ACTIONS ALREADY UNDERTAKEN

Quick fix areas completed or being undertaken include:

- New locker facilities and e-bike charge point facilities have been trialled at Geoffrey Crowther,
- Five additional charge point sets are to be rolled out shortly.
- An addition pump station has been installed at WH.
- A re-vamp of the Travel Advice website to ensure easier access and provide timely accurate information sharing abilities.

University driven initiatives will include:

- Direct engagement and focus on the EV scheme concerns and matters raised by the respondents.
- Review current Cyclescheme benefits associated with bikes and e-bikes.

- A drive on University sustainability initiatives through the encouragement of staff to take advantage of salary sacrifice scheme initiatives.
- Ensuring that EDI practices and principles – Modern Slavery, Equal Access, etc. are being applied through good business and operational practices.

2.1 Travel Advice Team driven activities will include:

- Website visibility to be revisited with a view to adding it to the front page of OU Life thereby driving greater awareness of available travel related information.
- Continue driving and liaising with service providers and MK Council over the provision of improved bus services and their routes.
- Consider multiple company sharing or the own procurement of alternate bus routes for staff.
- Continue driving the increased utilisation of the OU's journey share schemes – car, walk, cycle, bus, etc.
- Investigate Government subsidies for rapid charging and e-bike facilities.
- Review and consider parking requirements across campus including disabled and pregnant women.
- Review Salary Sacrifice Scheme opportunities by expanding service providers so as to allow:
    - Enhanced Salery Sacrifice scheme information so that all staff can take advantage of available schemes.
    - Easy access and availability to EV procurement opportunities through the expansion of service providers.
    - Expansion of Cycle Scheme suppliers so staff have broader and wider bicycle selection opportunities.
    - improved access to Cyclescheme suppliers enabling discounted bicycles for our employees.
    - Expansion of EV re-charging facilities including the possibility of rapid charger installations

2.2 Other actions underway:

- Review travel procurement opportunities so they present better value for money and offer greener options. Meet with procurement to review and assess current procurement practices including EV Scheme, Cycle scheme and Click Travel schemes.
- Post the latest weather up-dates to the Travel Advice Website.
- Investigate discounted rail services and advertise this information on the Travel Advice website and VIVA Engage Group. SmartGo Group to be approached to provide more information related to discounted train services.
- Investigate and publicise e-scooter / e-bike availability to travel to site from the train station, published on the Travel Advice website. Identify suitable parking facilities as and when legislation changes, in the interim, e-scooters will need to be left off campus as GPS systems will not work on site.
- Induction process to be reviewed for all staff with a view to sharing Travel Advice information with all new starters, use of new starter report to be investigated.
- Communication strategy on Travel Advice information to be implemented with regular weekly distributions of information to be undertaken. Advice to include advertising our facilities and where they can be found. EV charge booking system being developed in Resource Scheduler / Planon. Many of the EV questions and concerns raised have been escalated to the Rewards Team for review in order that an action plan can be considered.

2.3 Details about the survey and the results

Background (1,2,3):
This travel survey was undertaken during 2024 in order to find out more regarding staff views on travel and the possible decision changes that they have made on their future travel methods.

Travel Survey Submission Results:
We had 1210 completed returns which represents an improvement 127% compared with our 2021 survey.

Year on year survey result comparisons show that returns from Walton Hall (60%) decreased by 28%. While AL staff returns reflect at 32%. Nations / SRSC returns 8.4% decreased by 47%.

	2024	2021	2019
Nations / Locations	8.4%	15.7%	12.9%
WH	60.1%	84.3%	87.1%
AL's	31.5%		

Nations / Locations were received from Belfast (6), Cardiff (64), Edinburgh (15), Manchester (4) and Nottingham (11).
Note: Assumptions and statements made have been based on data submissions only and therefore do not represent the views / responses of 100% of staff.

3. DETAIL FINDINGS FROM STAFF DATA RESPONSES

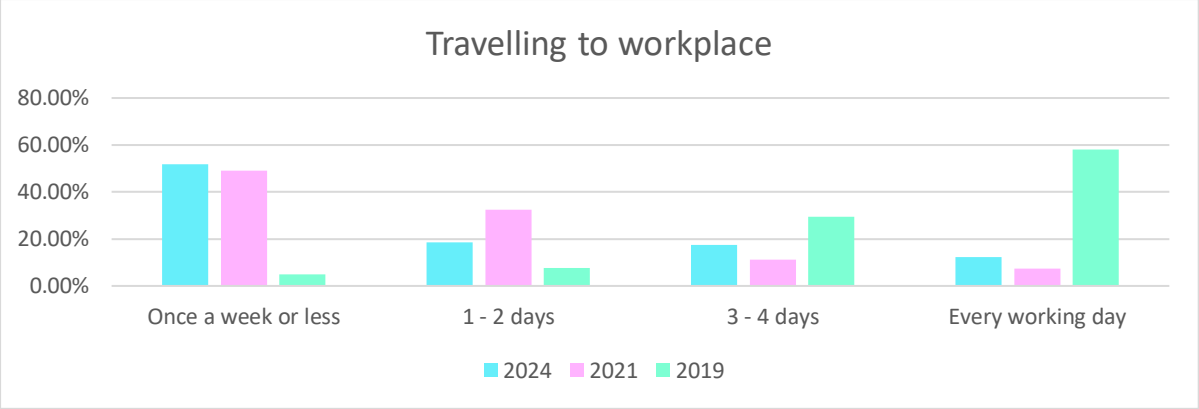
3.1 Staff Travel Behaviour Patterns (4,5,6)

3.1.1 Staff Working Patterns (excludes AL statistics).

At home working patterns demonstrate the low levels of site occupancy reflecting that those attending site do so mainly during midweek with occupancy levels being lowest on Monday and Friday.

			Nine Month's Attendance Numbers									
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Ave Monthly Attendances	%	Ave Daily Attendances
Mon	2207	2267	2231	2126	1146	2516	2738	1420	2460	2123	13.6	503
Tue	4298	4057	4197	4774	3653	4164	4785	3223	3782	4104	26.2	972
Wed	4769	3983	4210	3699	4923	4229	4722	3241	3805	4176	26.7	989
Thur	3182	4197	3380	3323	4130	3518	3110	3360	3340	3504	22.4	830
Fri	1732	1725	1384	1786	2111	1747	1664	1902	1590	1738	11.1	412
	16188	**16229**	**15402**	**15708**	**15963**	**16174**	**17019**	**13146**	**14977**			

The above results are further supported by the responses received from the next question.
Question: How often do you travel to your workplace?



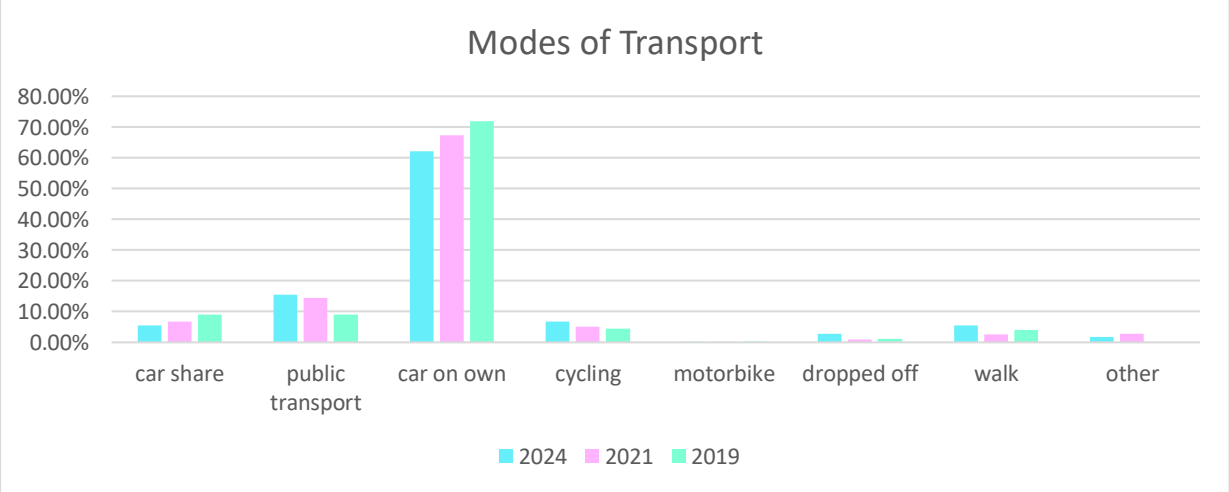
Result: Staff workplace patterns reflect that (52%) of staff work on site for 1 or less days a week, an increase of 3% compared to previous year responses. 18% of staff have indicated that they wish to attend site for 2 days a week which is a reduction of 14% from the last survey results. Further indications are that 30% of staff wish to attend site on a regular basis (3 to 5 days) per week, an increase of 11% compared to last year.

When comparing travel to workplace responses between NL and WH, fewer regional staff 20% indicated they wanted to be in the office for >3 days compared to those at Walton Hall 31%.

Contributors to some of the attendance change profiles could include that 70% of WH respondents live >5 mile from the office compared to 56% in the NL. Increased travel costs (economic climate) and decimated bus services are also likely contributors to deterring staff from working an increased number of days in the office.

3.1.2 Modes of Transport

Question: What is your current and most regular mode of transport?



Result: Own Car Utilisation: The above results chart demonstrates that 62% of staff use their own vehicle as transportation, this represents a 5% reduction when compared to the last survey. While there has been a 1% increase in staff public transport usage, 2% more staff cycle to work and 3% more staff walk to work. All of these are positive factors impacting on university scope 3 carbon reduction initiatives.

Negatives are that 1% fewer car shares took place contributing negatively to university Scope 3 carbon reduction efforts.

NL lead the way on carbon emission reduction efforts with increased usage of public transport 20% and lower usage of own cars -23%. WH shows a 4% reduction in these two areas. These positive trends impacting favourably on Scope 3 carbon emission levels.

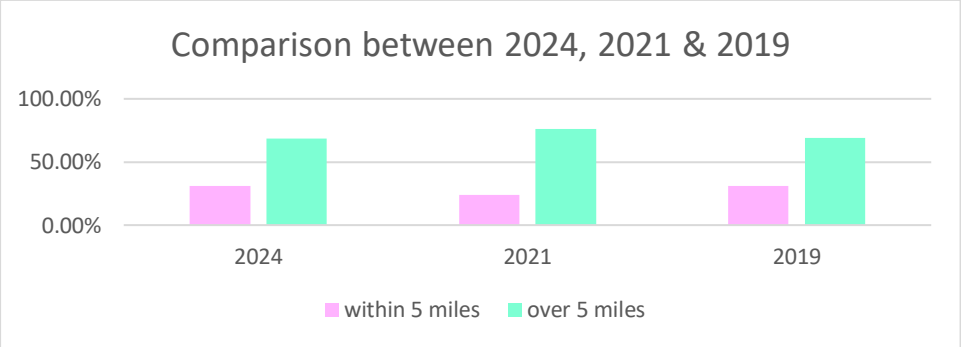
Public Transport: Regional decimation of bus service provisions by many local councils have forced staff to use alternate modes of transport. Words such as appalling, unreliable, no-show busses, infrequent, multiple bus change requirements (not practical / service discontinued), long travel times, overcrowding and a miss match of bus and train services have been specifically stated by staff. These factors in conjunction with current university workplace scheme practices and higher bus service costs mean that lower carbon emission transportation utilisation is more than likely to decrease than increase. Poor services between the MKC station and the university has driven requests for the re-introduction of university sponsored bus services. Some positives included the liking of bus fees (£2) with a few bus services being reasonable.

Car Share: Usage has declined significantly with changes to staff ways of working and significantly lower levels of site attendances across all areas.

Other modes of transport: Cycling, drop-off and walking have all shown high levels of utilisation by staff, these are encouraging factors contributing positively to University Scope 3 carbon emission levels. NL have shown a 12% increase with WH being a 6% improvement.

3.1.3 Travelling Distances:

Question: How far do you live from your workplace?



Data indicates that more staff 30% live within 5 miles of our offices compared to 24% in 2021, but the majority 70% of staff live more than 5 miles from their local office. The high levels of staff living >5 miles from site combined with lower site occupancy levels complicate travel initiatives associated with car share schemes, improved bus services, cycle and walk to work promotions. The achievement of carbon reduction goals are by default being made more difficult. A further impact being increased carbon emission levels from scope 3 travel.

3.1.4 Vehicle Engine Types (9)

Question: What Vehicle engine type and size do you drive?

	2024	2021	2019
Petrol (300)	61%	64.0%	66.5%
Diesel (89)	22%	18.9%	27.9%
Hybrid	9%	4.4%	3.9%
Electric	7%	2.1%	1.7%
n/a	0%	10.0%	0%
Other	0%	0.6%	0%

Petrol vehicles remain the most popular type of vehicle to drive. There has been a small decline in the use of these vehicle types. There is an interesting increase (3%) in diesel vehicle usage which will drive up University Scope 3 carbon emissions.

A notable increase in both Hybrid and electric vehicle utilisation (9.5% overall) has been identified. This change is exceptionally encouraging and likely to be as a result of the University drive to encourage staff to participate in the newly introduced EV salary sacrifice scheme, the holding of road shows where EV vehicles are brought onto site for test driving purposes and advertising on VIVUP.

3.1.5 Vehicle Engine Size (10,11,12)

Question: What car engine size do you drive?

	2024	2021	2019
up to 1.39	48.0%	33.7%	57.1%
1.4 - 2	47.6%	64.9%	40.2%
above 2	4.4%	1.4%	2.6%

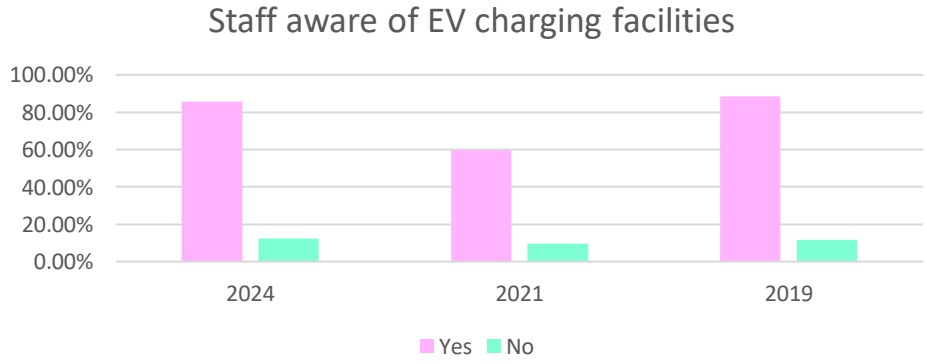
Result: Indications are that there has been a big increase (14%) in the utilisation of vehicles under 1.4lt since 2021. This trend could be as a result of the higher population responding to this survey and or economic / environmental impacts affecting our staff. When compared to 2019 results we are still below the level of these survey results.

An increase 3% has been recorded in the driving of >2ltr vehicles. These vehicles emit higher levels of carbon and represent around 4% of survey results. The second-hand car market remains lucrative so some staff may be buying up.

4. DETAILS ON FACT FINDING AND INFORMATION SHARING

4.1 EV Charging Facilities: (13)

Question: How aware are you of university EV charging facilities?



Result: 86% of staff knew that we have EV charging facilities, this represents a 26% increase over the last survey but is below results for 2019. The upward trend is encouraging. 90% of WH staff are aware but only 56% of NL staff know about the existence of EV charge points.

4.2 Salary Sacrifice Scheme (14)

Question: A new question was added to determine how aware staff were of the newly introduced salary sacrifice scheme. The scheme entitles staff to lease a new EV using salary sacrifice incentives, generating significant tax savings for the employee. Anyone interested in finding out more facts on the scheme should visit (Electric Vehicle Scheme). Only 45% of staff acknowledged knowing about the Salary Sacrifice Scheme. NL staff were less aware 30% than WH staff.

4.3 Electric Vehicles Purchase Considerations (15)

Question: Are you considering purchasing an electric vehicle (EV)?

	2024	2021
Yes, in next 5 years	25.4%	31.7%
Yes, in next 10 years	19.5%	31.1%
No	47.7%	37.2%
Already have an EV	7.4%	No data

Result: 45% of staff indicated that they would consider purchasing an EV in the next 10 years, while 48% were not considering an EV option. 53% of staff in NL were not considering buying an EV compared to 47% at WH. Fewer staff in NL indicated that they would purchase an EV in the next ten years 36% compared to 40% at WH.

19% of respondents stated that EV costs are too high while 10% stated that their decision not to purchase were vehicle related.

4.4 Incentives to purchase an electric vehicle

Question: Staff were asked what would incentivise them to purchase an electric vehicle or why they would not buy one?

Results:

- 36% of staff commented on the cost of EVs being too high.
- 18% of staff stated that the re-charge infrastructure was inadequate / unavailable either in their local areas or at the University.
- 11% of staff commented that they were not happy with EV batteries or do not know enough about vehicle driving distance ranges.
- 12% of respondents do not drive.
- 9% stated that their cars do not require replacement.
- 2% of staff expressed concern around the impact which EV's will have on the environment.
- Some positive news was that 3% of staff considered public transport to be a quicker service.

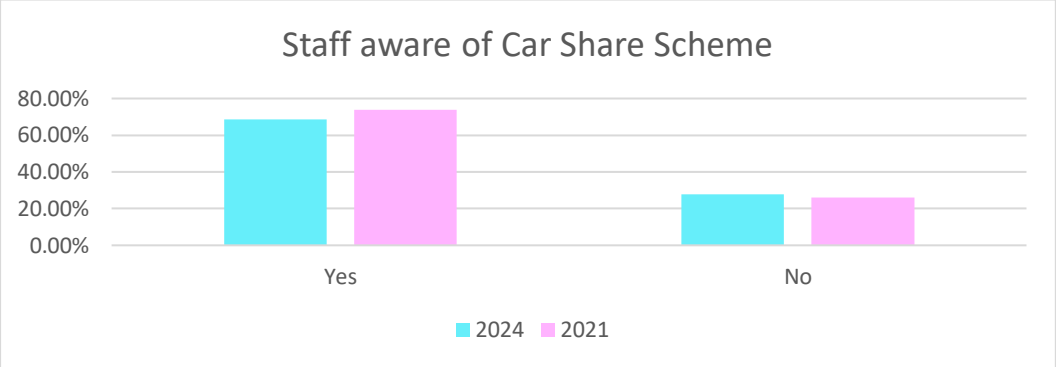
4.5 Car Registration on Car Share Database

Question: Are you registered on the WH Carshare database and how often do you check for travel buddies?

80% of respondents at WH are not registered on the car registration database. This represents a decline of 5% when compared to the last survey indicating staff decisions associated with travel, post COVID.

4.6 Car Share Scheme Awareness

Question: Are you aware of the Car Share Scheme?



Result: 75% of staff are aware of the existence of the car share scheme. At present WH has a car share scheme with a membership base of 656. Changes to working at home patterns has significantly impacted on the expansion of this scheme with a 12% reduction in membership numbers reflected in responses to this survey compared to the last survey. Staff working patterns graph (3.1.1 above) shows that more staff are working from home therefore there are fewer opportunities to car share.

4.7 Considering changing mode of transport to work

Question: Are you considering changing modes of transport?

	2024	2021
Bike	7.53%	7.70%
E-bike	4.98%	6.50%
E-scooter	No Data	2%
None	87.48%	85.50%

Result: Overall, 87% of staff are not considering the change to a new mode of "other" transportation be it a bike, an e-bike or an e-scooter while 12% of staff are considering the purchase of new modes of transport. Consideration to purchase bikes / e-bikes for WH and Homeworkers are very similar (10% – 11%) while NL considerations reflect a 22% consideration

4.8 Staff awareness of Cyclescheme?

Question: Are Staff aware of the Cyclescheme and the benefits which are on offer?

	2024	**2021**
Yes	74.2%	79.7%
No	25.8%	20.3%

Result: 74% of staff are aware of the scheme and financial benefits which it offers. NL staff are less aware at 66% compared to WH at 75%

4.9 Facilities when cycling to work?

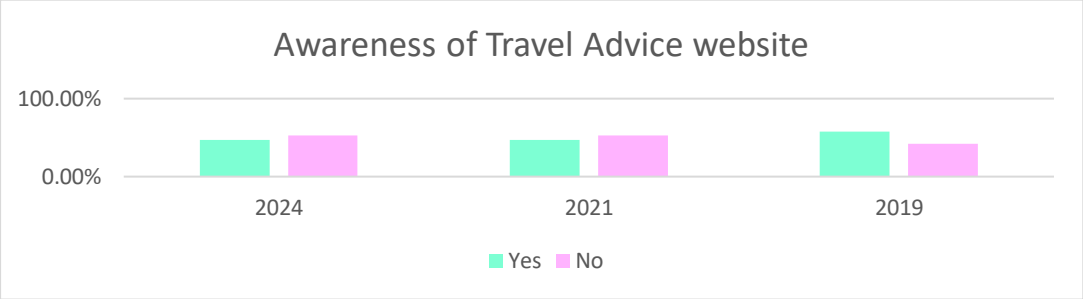
Question: Are staff aware of our facilities when cycling to work?

	2024	2021
Shower	81.2%	87.8%
Bike Shelters	92.5%	96.2%
Maintenance Stations	32.0%	18.9%
Bike pumps	33.1%	23.4%
E-bike battery charging facilities	22.6%	No data

Result: The majority of staff are aware of the availability of showers 81% and bike shelter facilities 93% available when cycling to work. Some improvement over knowledge of maintenance stations and bike pump availability . Some recommendations have been made to improve facilities which include making lock-up areas more secure, providing lockers for equipment, providing additional equipment like hair dryers, etc. Only 23% of staff are aware of electric bike battery and locker facilities.

4.10 Travel Advice website?

Question: Are staff aware of the Travel Advice website and how often do they visit it to obtain information?



Result: Only 47% of staff are aware of the existence of the Travel Advice website. At WH 50% of staff are aware, in the NR only 25% are aware and for Homeworkers it is 34%. 25% of staff never look at the website.

4.11 MK Connect / Taxi services – WH only

Skyline services were in general good 59% with 10% of staff unhappy with their service, ASL service was good 11% while a further 11% consider the services to be expensive.

55% of staff consider the MK Connect service to be bad, 34% of staff do not use this taxi service while 4% of staff consider the service to be good. Staff comments include the uncertainty of getting to meetings or work on-time due to customer pick-up service practices.

4.12 Click Travel Services

37% of respondents consider this service to be more expensive than booking directly with the supplier. 35% of respondents were satisfied with the Click Travel service but 17% of respondents feel that the Click system is not easy to use even after improvements have been made. It was noted that Click Travel do not provide the full range of transport services i.e. no coaches nor taxi services are provided.

5. Staff Open Ended Comments Review

Staff were asked to respond to open ended questions, providing thoughts and concerns that they may have regards all modes of travel, transport, external public and internal service provisions, data / information accessibility and sharing. The below reflects summations of some of the staff sentiments, comments and expressions related to the matter.

5.1 Travel Advice Website

Respondents expressed concern regarding the visibility and completeness of data reflected on the Travel Advise website. Specifically targeted was the need for placing the website on the front of OU Life, an up-date of the Travel Plan, clearer presentation of bus service availability, discounted rail and bus tickets for staff and students and publishing of information on North/West rail developments. Further requests included advertising Santander bike hire opportunities.

5.2 Reduction in car travel

Question: What would encourage you to leave your car at home and use another mode of transport?

Result: 47% of staff requested improved public transport services, 16% stated that it was quicker and more convenient by car while 7% of staff stated that they live too far away to rely on public transport.

5.3 Rewards: Electric Vehicles:

EV Procurement through the Salary Sacrifice Scheme (SS) and EV information sharing:

Staff comments have highlighted that there is a significant lack of information related to the SS scheme (Appendix 2). Indications are that a greater take-up may be possible should the concerns and questions be answered. Inadequate EV information requirements relate to a number of key topical areas which include:

- Details of what the SS scheme is.
- Inclusions and exclusions which form part of the scheme.
- Financial information associated with the SS scheme.
- Battery information.
- Technical information.
- EV charging information.
- EV sustainability information.
- EV EDI related information. Respondents further challenged or enquired on whether improvements (Appendix 3) could be made to
- Procured EV service providers,
- EV vehicle selection opportunities
- EV SS scheme rules / boundaries
- EV information sharing related to the SS scheme.

5.4 Other Modes of Transport / Services:

Significant in-put was received from respondents related to other accessible modes and forms of transport. Provided services such as bus, trains, taxi and car share attracted much criticism in most instances, the below commentaries reflect some of the sentiments being expressed by respondents:

5.4.1 Bus Services:

There is general dissatisfaction surrounding bus services provisions at WH and in the NL. Terms such as appalling, unreliable, infrequent, withdrawn service, untrustworthy, mechanical failure, expensive, indirect and terrible have been expressed by respondents.

WH bus services to site have reduced as a result of COVID and lower levels of footfall, from four down to one service a day. The bus service operates early in the morning or late in the afternoon which does not suit many of our staff and students. To further complicate travel to site, the morning service does not align with rail link services so transport from MK station or MK Coachway require additional taxi services to get into the office resulting in additional costs for the staff and students.

Alternate bus services that do not run through site are available however, these result in an additional 30-minute walk to get to site. In the majority of these instances, staff are required to change bus at least twice, these journeys can take upward of two hours to complete due to long waiting times.

NL bus services in all but three locations are considered to be poor with many of the WH issues being expressed as concerns. Three regions Edinburgh, Nottingham and Manchester consider their services to be reasonable to good.

Respondents have requested enhanced advertising of:

- Links to major bus services.
- The three morning and three evening bus services available along with the journey times.
- The investigation of a bus service between Coachway and site.
- The investigation of a bus service between MK Station and site.

5.4.2 Train Services:

There is general satisfaction (except Bristol) with train operator services. However staff have some negative comments reflecting on:

- The cost of tickets
- Arrival and departure delays
- The train speeds which are too slow
- Some service reliability with cancellations taking place at short notice
- Increases to train capacities due to over-crowding

Respondents have requested:

- Lobbying for employee railcard at discounted rates
- Advertise available discounts.
- FOI train service delays / cancellations
- Improvements to the rail services

5.4.3 Taxi Services:

Taxi services are considered to be expensive alternatives to bus services. AT WH, the newly introduced MK Connect service is considered to be poor and worse than the bus services.

Respondents have requested:

- The advertising of available taxi services, identifying when the expenses are claimable or not,
- That MK Connect reliability of service be addressed,

- That the taxi booking form be re-designed as no accessibility info is being requested,
- That a café type pick up by taxi service be made available to staff arriving at MK Station, this should include a review of communications related to the journey share for taxies

5.4.4 Car Share System:

Reduced campus footfall means that the car share scheme has become unviable during COVID.

Respondents have requested:

- Advertising of the Journey Share system and accessibility to it for all staff
- That staff be encouraged to participate in the car share scheme
- Re-enforce with staff that parking is free
- Consider a review of accessibility to the car share system by non-OU persons,
- Adding a station run link for staff going to the station and who can share lifts
- The simplification of car share registering processes

5.4.5 Cycling Services:

Respondents expressed concerns related to safety. Concerns included riding on redways which require refurbishment, safety when riding through certain areas and the limitations applied when using the CycleScheme.

Respondents have requested that:

- Changes be made to CycleScheme (CS) values for bikes so that they match e-bike values (£2.5k).
- The inclusion of Cargo bikes into the CS scheme
- The extension of the payback period beyond 12 months
- The advertising of where bike shelters are on campus along with available facilities
- The advertising the CycleScheme, the benefits and how they work
- The advertising of e-bike charger and clothing locker facilities
- The obtaining of cycle route maps and have them available for staff
- The inviting of cycling confidence trainers / coaching on-site
- Provide contact information when pumps / equipment fails
- The introduction of solar panel charging
- The rolling out cycle facilities in NL
- Introducing a resident bike repair service on site

5.4.6 Website:

Only 47% of respondents were aware of the existence of the Travel Advice website with 25% of respondents never having visited the website. Respondents have requested to make the Travel Advice more visible on OU Life or making the website easier to find.

Respondents further requested that:

- Provision be made for the greater the visibility and sharing of Travel Advice information.
- The inclusion of travel advice information within Inside Track reports
- Expansion of the conveying of blog / news messages without links using Teams
- Allow for information accessibility from websites in a standardised format
- The website be up-dated as and when Travel Advice changes take place i.e. related to all services.

- The posting of H&S matters e.g. riding wrong way around the ring road

5.4.7 General:

- Some general comments received from respondents included:
- The advertising of discounts available to students
- Line managers promoting greener modes of transport
- The encouragement of staff to join VIVA groups to receive latest travel advice up-dates
- The sharing of travel advice information on the hub TV - communicating general info on travel advise weekly
- Possibly revisiting the name "Travel Advice" as perception is that it relates to flights
- The inclusion of travel safety information on the website e.g. security safety, best routes, stress management

5.5 Appendix 1 – Staff Questions related to EVs

Core information sharing and procurement requirements are missing, these include:

- A detailed information and understanding of what is being purchased – comments such as:
    - Explain what the SS scheme is and how it works e.g. does the scheme cover purchases and lease plans, what are the scheme payment periods, can payment periods change, what are the interest costs associated with the SS scheme, what types of vehicle can be purchased on the SS scheme and are there any restrictions, can the SS scheme be extended to cover the purchase instead of leasing of new vehicles,
    - What is included / excluded e.g. who pays for charge points at home and does this for part of the SS scheme cost profile, where can charge points be installed at home, are maintenance costs covered within the contract and what are they, are tyre replacement costs included within the contract,
    - What are the financial requirements associated with the purchase of an EV e.g. explain final residual values when returning the vehicle at the end of the lease, explain insurance costs and how they work, is there a cost model for each EV available on the SS scheme, how does the EV cost model compare to a conventional vehicle, what are the likely monthly running costs of an EV, what are the maintenance costs for EV's, what are the annual EV depreciation cost, what are the current internal and external re-charge rates, How do all the EV costs compare to those of a conventional vehicle, what are the current re-sale values for a three year old EV and how does this compare to a new EV price, how are re-charge costs generated via bank accounts, how does the EV re-charge cost compare to conventional petrol / diesel vehicles (cost per km), how has the university re-charge rate been calculated, how does the expense claim rate for EV's compare to conventional vehicles, what are the tax / Vat implications of the SS scheme and how do they impact on users participating in the scheme, what does the second-hand EV market look like, how can EV purchases be made more affordable given lower than inflationary wage increments in the past 10 years, how does EV scheme affect pension contributions,
    - How safe are batteries, what happens when batteries need too be replaced and who pays the costs for replacement batteries, how are batteries maintained, what causes batteries to explode, what are the insurance requirements associated with charging batteries at home, what is the lifespan of a battery, how much does it cost to replace the batteries, how does one dispose of batteries, what are the travel distances associated with EV the latest battery power technology, how has battery technology

changed and what will the future battery look like, are there any winter considerations associated with batteries which need to be taken into account,

- Technical information related to: catalytic converter comparisons compared to conventional vehicles have been requested, what are the different re-charge point types and how do they work, how can charge points be fitted where parking at home is open to the general public, what impact does switching on heating / lights have on battery travel distance ranges,
- How does one access different charge points, where are charge points situated, how can they be identified, how do I access the university re-charge points – explain the WCS scheme, advertise EV charge point accessibility for visitors, advertise access to closed WCS scheme for internal EV users / staff
- Is the use of an EV sustainable i.e. how does the weight of the car differ from a conventional vehicle, is the EV heavier therefore generating more carbon through damage to roads, how much carbon is saved using an EV compared to a conventional vehicle, what are the EV environmental benefits / concerns and how are these being addressed, how does the disposal of batteries save the environment / planet, how much CO2 is produced to manufacture an Ev compared to a conventional vehicle, what are the environmental benefits to owning an EV,
- EDI information related to: what are supplier chain modern slavery checks / controls and how are these monitored, lithium is a sought after commodity and associated with child labour, how can one be assured that these practices are not taking place, what disables EV's are available, engage with the EDI team on neurodiversity / disabled considerations related to all modes of travel,

5.6 Appendix 2 – Changes to SS Scheme

Respondents have challenged aspects of the SS scheme, challenges included:

- The use of one service provider (TUSKER) and the possibility for expansion of the EV scheme to other service providers.
- Perceptions that TUSKER was essentially taking tax advantages for the buyer as its own profit,
- ROI staff questioned the availability of a SS scheme for their area.
- Perceptions that the SS scheme is too expensive compared to going directly to the supplier, demonstration of cost structure differences between other service providers have been requested.
- Understanding why hybrid vehicles could not be added to the EV scheme.
- Requesting access to the SS scheme when working on a FTC.
- Asking whether SS schemes exist for hydrogen driven vehicles and could they be added to the EV scheme.

Key

*Scope 3 Carbon Emission – Carbon generated by staff, suppliers our other organisations who have been engaged by the University to perform works or services.

WH – Walton Hall Campus

NL – OU Nation & Locations