# 4. Workplace travel planning

## 4.1 General approach in each town

### 4.1.1 Overview

Workplace travel planning was a significant strand of work in all of the Sustainable Travel Towns. However, the amount of time dedicated to the initiative varied considerably between the towns, being highest in Peterborough and lowest in Darlington (see 4.3).

Prior to the start of the Sustainable Travel Town programme in 2004, Worcestershire County Council had been the first of the authorities to engage in promoting travel planning to employers, commencing work in 2002. Peterborough City Council had begun soon afterwards in 2003. In the same year, Darlington Borough Council had agreed its own travel plan and begun work with a small number of employers on an ad hoc basis, but their more focused efforts in this area had not started until 2005. At the time of the interview, all three authorities had their own travel plans in place.

In promoting workplace travel plans to employers, officers in the three towns aimed both to encourage voluntary travel planning and to secure travel plans for new developments through planning conditions and/or agreements. In each of the towns, the approach to securing travel plans in relation to development had become, or was becoming, increasingly systematic over time, through the introduction of protocols for requiring travel plans and more stringent monitoring of their subsequent implementation.

In relation to voluntary travel planning, whilst there were many similarities in the programmes run by the towns, there were some key differences, and each authority had adopted a different strategy towards the central challenge of engaging employers. In Darlington, officers had concluded that it was most effective to work in-depth with a small number of committed employers. In Peterborough, officers had devised incentives for ongoing progress in travel planning with the development of a staged award scheme. In Worcester, officers had decided to concentrate their efforts on providing practical schemes to directly encourage sustainable travel amongst employees, and gain a positive reception from employers, rather than focusing on the development of formal travel plan documents. Officers in all three towns felt that their strategies were proving successful, though in both Darlington and Worcester, they considered themselves to be at a relatively early stage in their travel plan work, having spent some time in determining their approach. The main components of the three programmes are summarised below.

### 4.1.2 Darlington

In Darlington, on the basis of experience in school travel planning, officers had moved towards providing more intensive support and encouragement for a smaller number of organisations, with a view to achieving more rigorous monitoring of travel plan progress, and better collation of survey data. They now aimed to provide this level of support to individual companies for a year at a time, anticipating that thereafter they would be able to reduce their input whilst still encouraging ongoing maintenance of the travel plan.

Officers were also keen to focus on the development of full travel plans in preference to the delivery of individual travel plan initiatives, such as worksite travel advice sessions. Interviewees particularly stressed the importance of face-to-face dialogue with employers as a means of engaging in their key concerns and seeking appropriate solutions, as well as sparking interest in the benefits of travel planning. Overall they felt that their evolving approach had been successful in attracting employers, improving travel plan quality and gaining greater commitment.

Although the council had so far worked with a good mix of organisations (including public and private and smaller and larger ones) their priority was larger employers, with the potential to influence more journeys. There were also plans to target travel by teachers, building on awareness raised through school travel work.

The travel planning team was working with the health sector on healthy lifestyle promotion by visiting businesses on-site. While this project had been hindered by staff changes and restructuring at the primary care trust, the partnership had provided a useful lever for involving employers. Through the Sustainable Travel Town initiative, the council was also part-funding a travel coordinator at one of the town's hospitals, contributing 25% of costs.

Another important partner was the Highways Agency and its consultants, who had been closely involved in creating an area travel plan for a number of proposed developments on the eastern side of the town. There had also been increasing interest in travel planning from within the council, for example from the authority's Agenda 21 sustainability officer.

The team had not established an employer travel plan network, but had recently held an interactive session attended by 12 employers to discuss travel issues and congestion problems in the town's Morton Park area, which was the focus of new development.

Support available to encourage travel plan development and sustainable travel at worksites, included the following:

- Assistance to employers in undertaking and analysing staff travel surveys and staff postcode plotting to identify key commuter corridors;
- Access to software for travel plan building, with support and guidance from officers throughout this process. Though uptake was not extensive, companies using the package had found it helpful and motivating;
- A discounted bus ticket scheme enabling employers to offer tickets at reduced cost;
- Capital grants for sustainable travel improvements at companies with an approved travel plan. In 2008 the total budget was £50,000, of which, at the time of the interview, £20,000 had been pledged to companies for cycle parking. Organisations were asked to provide matched revenue funding;
- Lunchtime travel advice sessions held at worksites;
- Cycle to work promotions;
- Cycle training sessions offered at the workplace;
- A cycle loan and purchase scheme (9 out of the 15 employees on the scheme had bought bikes);
- Loan of worksite pool-bikes to employers;

- A *Medal Motion* week to encourage Government department staff to travel sustainably, with incentives offered throughout the week.

  Interviewees mentioned instances where the council had been able to bring about improvements in the local travel network serving specific employment sites, including the reintroduction of a bus route and the installation of new cycle routes.

### 4.1.3 Peterborough

In Peterborough, officers had created a 'ladder of achievement' for employers engaged in travel planning, in the form of an award scheme, developed with the Cambridgeshire Travel for Work Partnership. This had been running in Peterborough since 2005.

The award scheme had six stages with points awarded for achievement of criteria within each stage. For some stages, the award could be bronze, silver or gold, depending on the number of points received. The focus was on 'outputs' rather than modal shift results, with the scheme designed to reward progress at each point in the travel plan process, as follows:

- Stage 1 award – for commitment to developing a travel plan with senior management support.
- Stage 2 award – a 'certificate of development', achieved when the company had written a travel plan document, carried out employee and site surveys and identified actions.
- Stage 3 award – linked to the formal launch of the travel plan
- Stage 4 award – a glass plaque, for companies that had implemented the actions set out in the plan and carried out a repeat survey.
- Stage 5 award – for 'Travel Plan Excellence', achieved when the company had had a 'live' travel plan in place for more than two years, thoroughly embedded in the company's culture, with a high level of staff awareness.

More recently, a Stage 6 'Certificate of Continuing Excellence' had been introduced. By autumn 2008, 31 organisations had received awards, including three that had reached Stage 5 and a further seven that had reached Stage 4.

Businesses developing travel plans were given membership of a travel plan network for employers run by the council that met twice a year. The network facilitated sharing of good practice, with presentations from employers, and dissemination of information about supporting schemes. Members also received quarterly e-newsletters and email updates. In addition, an introductory seminar offered information about travel planning to businesses that were new to the idea.

Partners participating in the programme included the Highways Agency, which had assisted in funding for a large number of travel plan initiatives at one of the city's business parks. The Inward Investment officer in Opportunity Peterborough, an urban regeneration company, also played a role in facilitating contact with companies coming to the city.

While the council had no explicit strategy for targeting specific types of organisation, the team had received particular interest from employers with an environmental remit such as Natural England and the Environment Agency. There were also some geographical areas where clusters of companies were engaged in travel planning, sometimes in response to local parking problems. In addition, the team had sometimes targeted those organisations that were local divisions of national companies, which had shown evidence of a commitment to travel planning on their corporate websites.

In addition to the travel plan network and the award scheme, the following types of support were available to encourage travel plan development and sustainable travel at worksites:

- Survey materials - organisations using a web-based survey were given individual feedback from officers; all sites were offered postcode plotting of staff to identify key commuter corridors;
- Access to a city-wide car share scheme organised by Liftshare;
- Locally produced guidance on developing a travel plan;
- Assistance in producing fold-out customised travel guides at key locations;
- A Christmas *I'll be Des* campaign, run by travel planning officers in conjunction with the Road Safety team, to advocate that employees drinking at seasonal festivities should car share and designate a driver to remain sober. The scheme was promoted with the offer of non-alcoholic 'mocktails' for staff.

### 4.1.4  Worcester

In Worcester, the county council had initially convened a travel planners' networking group for employers, which ran from 2005-6. Since that time, however, officers had taken a strategic decision to instead promote the idea through existing networks, run by other organisations. The team argued that this enabled them to reach a wider mix of employers and to target senior management more easily. Consequently they were now engaging with businesses through the forum of a Transport Working Group set up by the Worcester Alliance, a local strategic partnership for the city, managed by the city council, which brought together organisations from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors, and had made 'improving transport and reducing congestion' one of its priorities. In addition, officers were contacting businesses through Chamber of Commerce breakfast meetings and had also run a travel planning conference for Worcestershire employers.

In the course of the workplace travel programme, the team had moved away from pushing employers to create formal travel plan documents, towards assisting organisations directly in the implementation of practical measures that could be seen to make an immediate difference to employees, such as cycle racks, travel awareness days and free bike services. The authority's travel plan coordinator argued that this approach was more effective, given that employers were reluctant to incur costs, and there were no Government 'teeth' or incentives available to enforce the development of travel plans.

Officers had initially targeted larger organisations (in both the public and private sectors) because of their greater potential for modal shift and greater capacity to devote time and resources to travel planning. They had generally found larger organisations were more

interested as they were more likely to be meeting environmental reporting criteria and were sometimes required to have a travel plan as part of the tendering process. Public sector organisations had also proved more generally receptive. However, since the team had been successful in reaching most large employers they were now struggling to bring on board smaller organisations, with fewer resources.

In relation to voluntary travel planning, officers recommended making sure that organisations had sustainable transport infrastructure in place and not being over-concerned with the 'red tape' of travel plan documents. The authority had been successful in marketing some sustainable travel offers directly to employees – for example, its cycle loan scheme – and considered that this was a promising way forward. They argued that the more support the council could offer employers, the more they would be prepared to do in return and that this approach would ultimately deliver reductions in car use.

Support available to encourage travel plan development and sustainable travel at worksites, included the following:

- Access to an on-line travel survey with analysis by county staff;
- A discounted bus ticket scheme;
- Grants of £5,000 offered on a match-funded basis to employers to encourage sustainable travel – e.g. to pay for an incentive to give up a parking space. (Approximately five to six grants had been given out);
- 'Travel awareness days' providing travel advice for whole or half days on-site;
- One-to-one adult cycle training;
- Free membership of Worcestershire car share database;
- A promotional campaign to encourage car sharing;
- A free visiting cycle repair service;
- An employee cycle loan scheme, offering loans of up to six months.

Officers had also worked on the introduction of specific public transport services for employers. The first of these was a subsidised commuter bus linking an area of the city with major employment sites. To promote the new service they had produced a postcard with a timetable and a detachable voucher that could be exchanged on the bus for a free one-week ticket. This was advertised in the newspaper, door-dropped in the local area and sent to employers on the route. Use of this service, however, had been relatively low.

The team had also recently worked with large employers at a business park on the edge of Worcester and had been able to offer a shuttle-bus service to a park-and-ride site. Businesses were to be given a 20% discount on annual bus passes for staff.

## 4.1.5 Tackling travel in the course of work

Interviewees were asked whether they had encouraged employers to tackle travel in the course of work, as well as car commuting. In all the towns, the programme's main focus had been on commuter travel, but officers were also able to cite examples of initiatives designed to address work-related travel.

In Darlington, the council's own travel plan had a strong emphasis on travel in the course of work. Staff discussion groups within the authority had highlighted that the payment of car user allowances was encouraging staff to bring their cars to work, and these issues were being reviewed as part of the travel plan process. Within the Acute Health Trust, the travel plan officer had sought to reduce travel in the course of work, including that by doctors. The council was also encouraging cycling in the course of work through the loan of pool bikes to employers.

In Peterborough, there had been efforts to encourage businesses to consider business travel, fleet transport and deliveries and some organisations had implemented relevant policies. For example, Royal Haskoning, an engineering consultancy, required its employees to justify the use of a car for business; the primary care trust had recently reviewed its lease car policy; and Tesco used biodiesel in its lorries.

In Worcester, the introduction of a car club (though this subsequently folded when the provider withdrew) was intended to assist in reducing commuter car use related to business travel, by offering employers easy access to pool vehicles, and so averting the need for employees to bring their own cars to work.

### 4.1.6   Ease of implementation

Interviewees pointed to several barriers that had affected the ease of implementing workplace travel planning in their areas. Some of these were demographic or structural factors. For example, in Darlington, some large businesses had a high number of shift workers, and addressing the travel needs of these employees was considered to be difficult because of personal safety issues involved in night travel. At the same time, the compact nature of the town was regarded as helpful in facilitating awareness of changing travel conditions and options. In Worcester, the large number of small to medium enterprises was considered a particular challenge for the travel plan programme, as these employers had fewer resources and could, individually, influence fewer employees than larger companies.

Other barriers were related to local transport policies and the attitudes underlying these. In Darlington, the strong political imperative to attract new businesses, meant there was a particular unwillingness to place tight limits on parking allocations, in case this deterred large employers. The travel plan team were attempting to overcome this by requesting staff travel surveys to identify whether there was an actual need. In Peterborough, a general perception that the city should be accessible for drivers, and the policies that flowed from this, were considered to be potentially undermining to travel planning. Specific barriers mentioned were a recent substantial increase in bus fares and the reluctance of employers to restrain car parking. In Worcester, officers pointed to the ready availability of parking in the city, and a lack of bus priority measures as factors detracting from their efforts to reduce car commuting.

Conversely, officers in all three towns pointed to positive aspects of local transport conditions and policies that had facilitated workplace travel planning, and also identified positive synergies between travel planning and other initiatives in their Smarter Choice Programmes (detailed in 4.6).

In discussing barriers to implementation, a common theme was the difficulties inherent in encouraging businesses to come on board with the programme on a voluntary basis. Officers said there was a lack of time and resources within many organisations to pursue travel planning; and some companies had no travel co-ordinator to take responsibility for the travel plan. It could also be difficult to persuade businesses of the benefits of travel planning. Interviewees highlighted the absence of Government incentives or penalties with which to support the programme and problems in enforcing travel plan commitments where there were no formal obligations. As already discussed, the town's individual strategies were largely developed in response to such challenges.

Some specific partnerships had proved particularly important in taking programmes forward. For instance, cooperation with health sector partners who could contribute to the programme; the participation of keen employers that were prepared to set the pace, and, in the case of travel plans secured for new development, the support of colleagues in the planning authority.

Interviewees also identified helpful 'background factors', including the rising cost of fuel and a growing awareness of health issues such as obesity.

In Darlington, the lack of a full-time travel planning officer and the diversion of staff time to other activities was seen as a barrier that had impeded the programme. All three towns, however, considered that with greater staff resources there would be potential to engage more companies and expand their programmes (see 4.8).

## 4.2   Scale of workplace travel planning initiative

### 4.2.1  Number of employees and organisations engaged

Tables 4.1 and 4.2 summarise the number of employees and organisations engaged in workplace travel planning in each of the towns, and show how the level of activity had grown since the start of the Sustainable Travel Town programme in 2004.

**Table 4.1: Workforce covered by workplace travel planning**

|  | Darlington | Peterborough | Worcester |
|---|---|---|---|
| Size of workforce in the town | ~34,000 | 98,900* | 49,648 |
| Number of employees covered by a workplace travel plan in May 2008 | 11,185 | 32,346 | 15,252# |
| Estimated number of employees covered by a workplace travel plan in 2004 | Not known | Not known | Not known |
| Proportion of employees covered by a workplace travel plan in May 2008 | 33% | 33% | 31% |
| Proportion of employees covered by a workplace travel plan in 2004 | Not known | Not known | Not known |

Notes: * Figure is for whole of Peterborough Unitary Area (including rural areas as well as the city), taken from ONS Annual Business Inquiry Analysis for 2006. # Figure is for number of employees, but travel plans also cover students and visitors (at Worcester University) and spectators (at Worcester Rugby Club and Worcester Cricket Club).

**Table 4.2: Organisations engaged in workplace travel planning**

|  | Darlington | Peterborough | Worcester |
|---|---|---|---|
| Number of employers in the town | 3,150 | 4,700* | 3,700 |
| Number of employers engaged in travel planning in May 2008 | 25# | 52 | 32 |
| Estimated number of employers engaged in travel planning in 2004 | 6 | 4 - 5 | 9 |
| Proportion of employers engaged in travel planning in May 2008 | 0.8% | 1% | 0.9% |
| Proportion of employers engaged in travel planning in 2004 | 0.2% | 0.1% | 0.2% |

Notes: * Number of employers in Peterborough is our estimate, based on number of VAT-registered businesses for 2006. Figures for Darlington and Worcester were supplied by the respective local authorities. # In Darlington, 25 employers had developed a travel plan by May 2008, but the council was only working actively with nine of them at this date.

At the start of the Sustainable Travel Town programme, few employers in the three towns had drawn up a travel plan. Worcester was the most active, and even there, just nine organisations had a travel plan.

By May 2008, there had been a significant effort to engage businesses and other organisations in the process of workplace travel planning, using a combination of encouragement to develop voluntary travel plans and planning conditions that required businesses to draw up a travel plan. Effort had in general been focussed on larger organisations, and so although only about 1% of all organisations in the three towns had drawn up a travel plan, the proportion of the workforce that had become engaged in workplace travel planning was much higher, at around a third.

It should be borne in mind that not all of the organisations engaged in a travel plan would have reached the point where it might be described as 'fully-fledged' – that is, a comprehensive package of measures including restraint measures (such as parking management) as well as incentives, information and improvement of the sustainable alternatives to driving alone. Section 4.2.4 reviews the evidence on the proportion of travel plans at different stages of development in each of the towns.

## 4.2.2  Scale of car sharing activity

All three towns had set up website-based car sharing schemes, and these were primarily used to match regular commuting trips (as opposed to 'one-off' journeys or journeys for other purposes). For example, in Darlington it was reported that 97% of the journeys which had been registered (i.e. for which a match had been sought) were daily trips. In Peterborough, 83% of the registered journeys were commuter trips.

Data collected by the three towns included figures for the number of people who had joined their car sharing schemes; figures for the number of journeys which had been registered (these two figures were not necessarily the same); and figures for the number of journeys for which a match had successfully been made. It is only this last figure that gives a sense of the scale of car-sharing activity that had been stimulated by the schemes in each town. However, it is important to note that this is not the same as the overall level of car sharing, since it is likely that some commuters had arranged an informal car share with a colleague, neighbour or partner without using the car share website.

At the time of our interviews, the Darlington scheme was very small, with only nine cases where journeys had been matched. The scale of car sharing activity in Peterborough and Worcester was somewhat larger, with roughly 250 and 305 matched journeys respectively, as summarised in Table 4.3. However, as is clear from comparison with Table 4.1, this suggests a very small proportion of the workforce was car sharing as a result of the scheme: approximately 0.3% in Peterborough and 0.6% in Worcester.

**Table 4.3: Scale of car sharing activity stimulated by website-based car sharing scheme**

|  | Darlington | Peterborough | Worcester |
|---|---|---|---|
| Number of members | 78 (September 2008) | 916 (October 2008) | 1422 (June 2008)# |
| Number of journeys registered | 69 | 850 (May 2008) | Not known |
| Number of journeys matched | 9 | Approx 250* | 305~ |

Notes: # Figure is for Worcestershire, not Worcester. * The city council reported that 30% of 850 registered journeys in May 2008 had been matched. ~ Figure is for number of 'active car sharers'

Worcester was able to supply data on the number of members at each workplace. From this, it is interesting to note that 60% of all members registered with the car share scheme worked for the county council. The next largest employer, with 10% of all car share members, was Worcestershire NHS. Two employers – QinetiQ and Bizz Energy – each accounted for 5% of car share members. The remaining 20% of members were spread across more than 90 workplaces.

### 4.2.3  Use of the planning system

All three towns were using the planning system to require companies and other organisations to submit a travel plan when a planning application for new development was made. Between a third and half of travel plans had been secured in this way (Table 4.4), with the rest being developed by businesses on a voluntary basis.

**Table 4.4: Workplace travel plans required as part of planning applications**

|  | Darlington | Peterborough | Worcester |
|---|---|---|---|
| Number of organisations engaged in workplace travel planning | 25 | 52 | 32 |
| Number of organisations involved via the planning process | 13 | 23 | 11 |
| Proportion of organisations involved via the planning process | 52% | 44% | 34% |

In Darlington, travel plans were required as part of planning applications for new businesses or significant expansions of existing sites. The workplace travel plan officer reviewed draft travel plans and made a judgement as to whether they were sufficiently comprehensive. As experience in this area had grown, there had been an increased emphasis on the quality of the travel plan, and on monitoring to ensure that progress could be tracked.

In Peterborough, all planning applications were reviewed by a travel plan officer to identify those where a requirement for a travel plan was appropriate. This process had become more systematic and formal since work on business travel planning had begun. In some cases, the council specified that the developer must make a contribution towards the cost of public transport improvements. Developers were also asked for a 'travel plan support fee' of £500 per year for five or ten years, to help cover the cost of the council's work, ensuring that the travel plan was implemented properly after site occupation.

In Worcester, the city council (as the planning authority) contacted the *Choose how you move* team in the county council to invite comments on travel plans submitted as part of planning applications. The Local Transport Plan specified that a travel plan was required for any development for which a transportation assessment was produced. The county council was planning to make its monitoring of the progress of planning-related travel plans more systematic, and had developed an on-line database to assist with this. There was also an intention that the *Choose how you move* team would become involved in advising developers from the outset, and a desire to work more closely with Worcester City Council planners to ensure that Section 106 payments were used to fund work on sustainable travel.

None of the towns had, to date, taken any enforcement action against a company which had failed to implement the actions in its travel plan, although in Peterborough there had been two cases where this had been considered. Peterborough officers felt that it would be useful to set up a bond or escrow account, and require developers to put money in which would be returned after five years if travel plan targets were achieved, or used by the city council to implement travel plan measures directly if the targets were not achieved.

### 4.2.4 Quality of travel plans

The three councils were asked to rate the quality of the travel plan for all organisations in the town which were engaged in workplace travel planning, using a four-point scale:

FF – a fully-fledged travel plan, including parking management
VT – various travel initiatives, but not including parking management
C – considering a travel plan, or just starting implementation
M – minimal measures in place, and now inactive.

The distinction between 'fully-fledged' travel plans *with* parking management and various travel initiatives *without* parking management is important because previous research (e.g. Cairns et al. 2002) has indicated that travel plans that include parking management are more effective than those which do not.

The results of this exercise are set out in Table 4.5. It is notable that the proportion of *organisations* with fully-fledged travel plans is quite similar in all three towns, at between 24% and 29%. However, the proportion of the *workforce* that is covered by fully-fledged travel plans is somewhat lower, at 11-17%, as shown in Table 4.6 and Figure 4.1.

**Table 4.5: Quality of travel plans (by number of organisations)**

| | | Darlington | Peterborough | Worcester |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Number of organisations engaged in workplace travel planning | | 25 | 52 | 32 |
| Number of organisations in each category | FF | 6 (24%) | 15 (29%) | 8 (25%) |
| | VT | 1 | 27 | 10 |
| | C | 5 | 7 | 8 |
| | M | 13 | 3 | 6 |

**Table 4.6: Quality of travel plans (by size of workforce)**

| | | Darlington | Peterborough | Worcester |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Workforce in the town | | 34,000 | 98,900 | 49,648 |
| Number of employees in organisations in each category | FF | 3770 | 12,285 | 5550 |
| | VT | 20 | 9,345 | 1390 |
| | C | 4450 | 9,600 | 3562 |
| | M | 2945 | 1,116 | 4750 |
| % of workforce in organisations in each category | FF | 11% | 12% | 11% |
| | VT | 0% | 9% | 3% |
| | C | 13% | 10% | 7% |
| | M | 9% | 1% | 10% |

**Figure 4.1: Quality of travel plans (by size of workforce)**
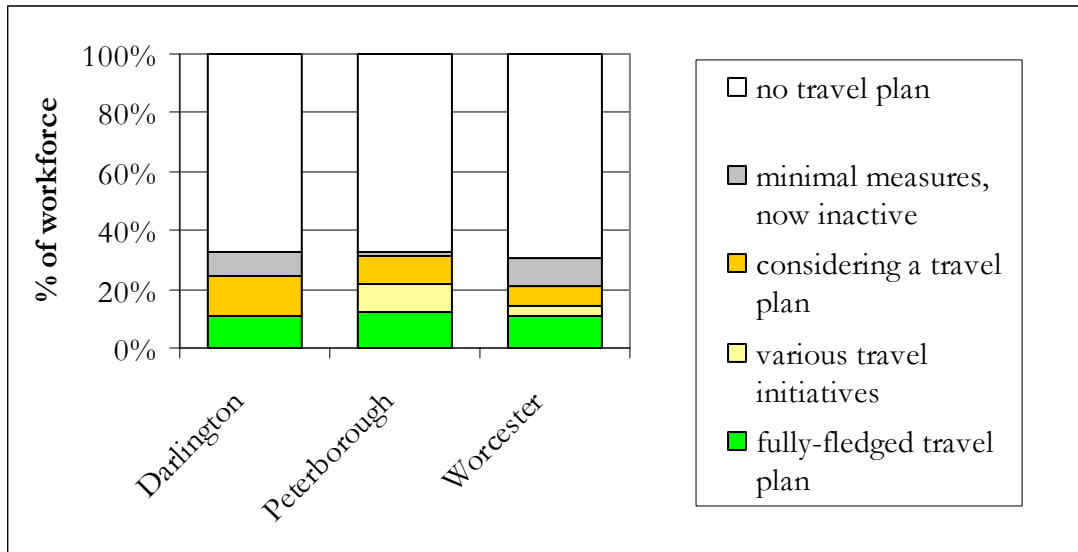


In Peterborough, the council's staged travel plan award scheme provided another way of assessing the quality of workplace travel plans (see 4.1.3). Awards had been available for four years (starting in 2005). Over that time, a total of 45 awards had been made, with increasing activity over time: there were five awards in 2005, rising to 13 in 2006; 12 in 2007 and 15 in 2008.

Some organisations had received awards at progressively higher levels each year, suggesting a 'serious' travel plan which was probably achieving change in employees' travel patterns (for example, Debenhams Distribution Centre received a Stage 1 award in 2005, and then a Stage 4 award in 2007). Other organisations had received an award at a fairly low level (e.g. Stage 1 or 2), but then received no further awards, suggesting that progress had halted and the effect on travel patterns was probably minimal. Broadly speaking, of the 31 organisations which had received awards, a third had progressed over time to at least a Stage 4 award; another third had received one or more basic awards at Stage 1-3 but not progressed beyond this; and the remaining third received an award at Stage 1-3 for the first time in 2008 (Table 4.7).

**Table 4.7: Number of companies receiving travel plan awards in Peterborough**

| | |
|---|---|
| Received a basic level award (levels 1-3) but not progressed beyond this | 12 |
| Received a basic level award, and then shown evidence of progress to levels 4 or 5 in subsequent years | 10 |
| Received a basic level award for the first time in 2008 | 9 |

## 4.3    Staffing and budgets for workplace travel planning

### 4.3.1  Staffing

All three towns increased the staff resource allocated to the promotion of workplace travel planning over the course of the project, as shown in Table 4.8. In the case of Darlington, the staff time allocated to workplace travel planning was stable at 0.5 full-time equivalent (fte) posts over most of the period from April 2004 (but rising to 0.7 fte at the time of our interviews in May 2008). However, both Peterborough and Worcester suffered significant fluctuations in the staff resource allocated to this smart measure, as illustrated in Figure 4.2. Broadly speaking, the average staff time allocated to workplace travel planning in Peterborough over the four-year period was about 1.5 fte. In Worcester, the average staff time allocated to workplace travel planning was about 0.75 fte.

The fluctuations in staffing were accompanied by changes in personnel in all the towns, and this is likely to have reduced the effectiveness of the work, since inevitably new employees take some time to become familiar with their roles.

**Table 4.8: Staff time (fte-posts) allocated to workplace travel planning**

|                   | Darlington | Peterborough | Worcester |
|-------------------|------------|--------------|-----------|
| Before April 2004 | 0.2        | 0.5          | 0.1       |
| May 2008          | 0.7        | 2            | 1         |

Note: All staffing totals include a small amount of time allocated to establishing car-sharing schemes. In Peterborough, a proportion of the travel plan officer time was devoted to negotiations with developers over residential travel plans, so 2 fte (May 2008) is an over-estimate of the staff resource for workplace travel planning.

**Figure 4.2: Changes in staff time allocated to workplace travel planning (fte posts)**
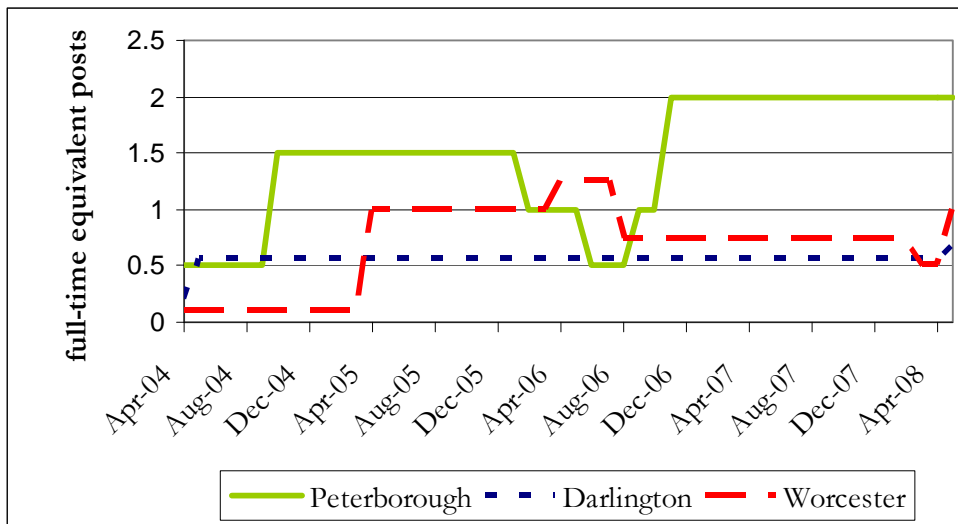
## 4.3.2 Budgets

Tables 4.9-4.11 summarise the total costs, staff costs and non-staff revenue costs of the workplace travel planning programme in the three towns. There was no major capital cost associated with workplace travel planning in any of the towns, although both Darlington and Worcester operated small grants schemes for local businesses to make sustainable travel improvements, which were sometimes used for capital projects such as installation of showers or cycle storage.

**Table 4.9: Total costs (including staff costs and non-staff revenue costs)**

|         | Darlington | Peterborough | Worcester |
|---------|-----------|--------------|-----------|
| 2004/05 | £18,000   | £39,000      | £3,000    |
| 2005/06 | £19,000   | £46,000      | £40,000   |
| 2006/07 | £22,000   | £55,000      | £46,000   |
| 2007/08 | £24,000   | £74,000      | £61,000   |
| 2008/09 | £78,000   | £73,000      | £59,000   |

Note: figures in this table are the sum of the figures in Tables 4.10 and 4.11, but may not add exactly due to rounding.

**Table 4.10: Non-staff revenue costs**

|         | Darlington | Peterborough | Worcester |
|---------|-----------|--------------|-----------|
| 2004/05 | £5,000    | £13,000      | £0        |
| 2005/06 | £5,000    | £8,000       | £13,000   |
| 2006/07 | £7,000    | £19,000      | £20,000   |
| 2007/08 | £9,000    | £16,000      | £40,000   |
| 2008/09 | £57,000   | £13,000      | £30,000   |

Note: figures include small grants for capital projects to businesses, costs associated with any car-sharing scheme, and cost of 'travel plan builder' software in Darlington.

**Table 4.11: Staff costs**

|         | Darlington | Peterborough | Worcester |
|---------|-----------|--------------|-----------|
| 2004/05 | £14,000   | £26,000      | £3,000    |
| 2005/06 | £15,000   | £38,000      | £27,000   |
| 2006/07 | £15,000   | £36,000      | £26,000   |
| 2007/08 | £16,000   | £58,000      | £21,000   |
| 2008/09 | £21,000   | £60,000      | £29,000   |

Note: Staff costs are estimated on an equivalent basis in all three towns, using rounded average salaries. Figures include staff costs associated with establishing car-sharing schemes.

Non-staff revenue costs could be reliably identified by interviewees in the towns. However, staff costs for individual smart measures (including on-costs as well as salaries) were not available in a consistent format in the three towns. Only one town was able to disaggregate the overall salary bill for each year into sums for each individual smart measure, and the figures provided did not match well with expected costs based on the known level of staff resource. Staff costs for individual smart measures have therefore been estimated, based on the amount of staff time allocated to workplace travel planning in 'full time person-months' and the assumption that the staff costs for project officers to deliver individual smart measures would typically be of the order of £26,000 in 2004/05, rising by annual increments of £1000 to £30,000 in 2008/09. It should be borne in mind

that this is an approximation, and that in fact there appears to have been significant variation in the salaries paid to staff in the different local authorities.

### 4.3.3  Costs per employee targeted

The costs summarised in section 4.3.2 may be used to give an indication of the cost per employee targeted. We looked at the cost per employee in all companies with which there had been any engagement, regardless of how far advanced the travel plan was (i.e. including companies which were considering a travel plan (C) or had put minimal measures in place and were now inactive (M), as well as companies with fully-fledged travel plans (FF) or various travel initiatives (VT)).

In deriving these estimates, we took account of total costs (staff and non-staff revenue) for the five years from April 2004 to March 2009. These figures are summarised in Table 4.12.[1]

**Table 4.12: Local authority costs per employee targeted, 2004/05 – 2008/09**

|  | Darlington | Peterborough | Worcester |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cost per employee, all engaged companies | £14 | £9 | £14 |

Notes: Employee numbers used are those for all engaged employers as at May 2008: 11,185 in Darlington; 32,346 in Peterborough; 15,252 in Worcester. Figures are for five year period, and are rounded to nearest pound

## 4.4    Wider benefits of workplace travel planning

### 4.4.1  Benefits to the council and to business

Interviewees were asked about the benefits of their workplace travel initiatives, and specifically to consider whether there were identifiable benefits for social inclusion, health, road safety, quality of life and the way in which the council or other organisations involved in the initiative were perceived. The responses on each issue are outlined below.

**Social inclusion**
Officers in the three towns considered that the workplace travel initiative had contributed to social inclusion. In Peterborough, where a number of businesses employed people on relatively low wages, it was suggested that travel planning was widening work opportunities by making it easier for employees to reach workplaces without a car. One example was Debenhams Distribution Centre, which had installed secure, covered cycle stands and showers, a locker for each employee, plus 54 car share bays. In Worcester the

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[1] The figures in Table 4.12 are not calculated on the same basis as the costs per employee in Cairns et al. (2004). The latter were costs *in the most recent year for which figures were available* divided by the number of employees at organisations engaged in workplace travel planning in that year. This (approximate) method was used because detailed figures for spend in previous years were not available. Across the seven local authorities examined in that study, costs per year, per employee targeted, ranged from 70 pence to £5 (2003 figures). A rough comparison between the levels of spending per year per employee in Cairns et al. (2004) and those in the three Sustainable Travel Towns may be made by dividing the costs in Table 4.12 by five. This gives a cost per year, per employee of about £2.90 in Darlington, £1.80 in Peterborough and £2.70 in Worcester (2004 to 2009 figures, without adjustment for inflation).

programme had helped to build the charity Motov8, which worked with disadvantaged young people, by commissioning it to provide Doctor Bike repair sessions at companies. Officers pointed out that their cycle loan scheme was a benefit open to all. In addition, they noted that Worcester City Council was using travel plan grant funding to investigate video-conferencing facilities, with potential benefit for people with mobility problems.

### Health

Interviewees believed that their programmes were likely to have health benefits through initiatives designed to encourage active travel such as the cycle loans, cycle training and the installation of showers and cycle parking. In Darlington travel planning had been specifically promoted in the context of a healthy workplace initiative, and in Peterborough some companies had shown an increase in walking and cycling. However, none of the authorities had monitored health outcomes such as absenteeism.

### Road safety

There had been no evaluation of the specific impacts of the programme on road safety. In Darlington, officers commented that the relationship with employers helped in highlighting road safety concerns, for example in identifying the need for new cycling infrastructure. In Peterborough, the travel plan team had contributed to a campaign to encourage use of a designated driver during Christmas festivities (see 4.1.3). In Worcester, officers commented that both Doctor Bike sessions and cycle training contributed to road safety.

### Quality of life

In Peterborough, the travel plan team quoted examples where company travel plans had improved the working environment for employees, for example, because cycle parking and showers had been installed and were well used. There were also examples of employees saving money, including two people who commuted to Peterborough from Rugby and had each saved £4,000 a year by car sharing. At Worcestershire County Council, the travel plan included the introduction of flexi-time, which, officers argued, was positive for work-life balance.

### Perceptions of the council and other organisations involved in the initiative

In Darlington, interviewees emphasised the value of the dialogue between the council and businesses and said the travel planning programme was helping in a wider drive to improve public consultation. In Worcester, interviewees said that many of their schemes had been well received by both employers and the wider public, and had acted as a PR exercise for the council, helping it to establish a more positive reputation and leading businesses to see a benefit in working with the authority to solve their car parking problems. In Peterborough, officers said that for individual businesses, having a travel plan was increasingly seen as necessary in the context of corporate social responsibility and being a good neighbour, for example, by preventing overspill parking.

### Other benefits

In Peterborough, other benefits mentioned in relation to travel planning were financial savings for businesses through reduced business mileage and facilitating expansion without the cost of building parking. In addition, officers said that securing travel plans through the planning process had provided funding for sustainable transport throughout the city.

## 4.5    Synergies between workplace travel planning and other policies and programmes

Interviewees identified many aspects of local transport conditions and policies that were supportive of workplace travel planning.

In Darlington, these included infrastructure improvements such as cycle lanes; speed management schemes within the town centre; town centre pedestrianisation; the installation of bus lanes as part of road space reallocation projects (although more of this could be done); and other improvements to cycling and walking facilities. In relation to parking policy, officers pointed to the steady increase in long-term parking charges and the development of residential parking zones around the periphery of the town centre, which acted to discourage long-term parking. In addition, travel planning had been complemented by negotiations between the planning authorities and developers to limit site parking allocations and to establish the principle of charging for workplace parking, which had already been implemented at a hospital and a college.

In Peterborough, interviewees mentioned the town's excellent network of cycle routes, many of which were off-road and therefore suitable for less confident cyclists. A city cycling map had proved a popular resource for local businesses. The city had recently succeeded in ending overspill parking at a college, through the introduction of a controlled parking zone that prevented parking until after 11am.

In Worcester ongoing improvements to cycle routes, speed management and pedestrian infrastructure, together with public transport improvements were all considered critical to the work on travel planning.

There was also synergy between workplace travel planning and other smart initiatives. This was partly because branding and town-wide marketing had helped in raising travel awareness, so that, in approaching organisations, officers were not 'cold calling'. This created a more integrated approach, which built recognition so that employers were both more likely to be receptive and more likely to seek out information about travel issues for themselves. In Darlington, officers said the existence of the Sustainable Travel Town website, which provided travel advice, was a useful resource for employers and helped to demonstrate that the council had a wide range of knowledge and expertise with which to assist them in their travel needs.

Interviewees also pointed to a positive relationship between workplace travel planning and personal travel planning. In Peterborough, for example, there were two cases where employers had become active in travel planning because of an initial contact through the personal travel planning programme.

It was also apparent that schemes that had been developed through the wider Sustainable Travel Town initiative often dovetailed with work on travel planning. For example, in Worcester, promotional materials were routinely sent out to a wide distribution list that included employers.

Interviewees in Worcester also pointed out the mutually-reinforcing relationship between smart initiatives and political support for sustainable transport infrastructure, in so far as any increase in bus patronage and cycle use made it feasible to provide more buses and safe cycle routes.

## 4.6    Potential and plans for the future

Interviewees were asked to what extent the potential of workplace travel planning would have been fully exploited by the end of the Sustainable Travel Town period. They were also asked to say to what extent they could expand coverage or improve the impact of their programmes in the next five years if funding were unconstrained, and to indicate the staffing and budgets that would be necessary for this. Finally they were asked what they would *actually* be able to do in terms of workplace travel planning over this period.

In all three towns, officers saw substantial unrealised potential and could envisage a more comprehensive programme if funding permitted. These proposals were most extensive in Peterborough where the existing programme had the highest level of staff resource. In Worcester, officers argued that with unconstrained funding it would be worthwhile to dedicate a substantial sum to financial incentives for employers. In Darlington, officers clearly felt that they were at an early stage in their programme, but now ready to reap the benefits of the initial work invested in establishing it. The future funding position appeared most precarious in Worcester, where funding for the newly appointed travel plan officer was secure for just 12 months. All three towns were looking to support their future programmes with the help of developer funding. The responses in each town are outlined below.

In Darlington, interviewees considered that with a significant increase in staff resources they would be able to engage the majority of businesses, reaching around half of all employees in the next five years, though there was some debate about the optimum number of staff required. They emphasised the importance of improved data and evidence collection to quantify benefits. To this end they were interested in requiring companies to input monitoring information into a database, the use of car park sensors and other forms of car and cycle parking survey. They were also considering the inclusion of questions about benefits to health and quality of life in staff travel surveys. There was a general feeling that much of the time to date had been spent on setting up and establishing the programme and that it was only now that they were in a position to record its impacts. Consequently, they considered that, in the next five years, with continued funding at the same level, they would see more progress than had been achieved in the previous five years. The travel plan officer was confident that, if they could show positive results from the programme in the next 6-12 months then this would justify further resources. He was also optimistic that the programme would gain critical mass momentum and that the compact nature of the town would help in facilitating this.

Further steps were being considered to ensure that travel plans were implemented through the planning process – for example, the use of financial bonds, lodged on the basis that if a company failed to put the promised travel plan in place the money could be drawn down by the council and used to implement the travel plan measures itself. However, there was also caution about such mechanisms, which were thought likely to

meet political opposition as a possible deterrent to new companies locating in Darlington.

In Peterborough, officers considered that if funding and staffing were no constraint to their workplace travel programme, they would be able to engage more companies and work with their existing companies more closely, whilst also increasing the range of services on offer. The team envisaged that it would be possible to expand their work in many ways, and to introduce a number of innovations. To improve recruitment to the programme, they suggested 'hit squads' or 'travel rangers' providing constant visibility in companies and running more events and stands, together with a marketing campaign aimed at senior managers using the business press. Another proposal was the development of a section of the *Travelchoice* website for each of the companies in the programme, giving information on the travel options available to their staff. There was a proposal to produce business-specific area guides and information packs for new employees and for the authority to directly contact staff on changing jobs. This expanded programme would also include a grant scheme for companies to invest in sustainable infrastructure.

In practice, under Peterborough's *actual* business plan for the next five years, officers were hoping to expand from two staff members to a team of 3.5, who could cover residential travel plans as well as workplace ones. Under this scenario they envisaged:

- a full-time workplace travel planner responsible for securing workplace travel plans through the planning system, with a small budget of £5,000 a year. Businesses would be charged for services provided by this officer;
- a full-time workplace travel planner responsible for voluntary travel plans;
- a full-time residential travel planner responsible for planning applications for new housing, with a small revenue budget of £5,000 a year. Developers would be charged for the services provided by this officer;
- a part-time officer, responsible for the Peterborough City Council travel plan, covering 6,000 staff, with a budget of £15,000 to pay for infrastructure measures;
- capital funding of £10,000 for a business grants scheme for sustainable transport infrastructure.

In Worcester, the team considered that there was much potential to expand the initiative further – reinitiating projects, driving forward new projects to support infrastructure and extending the scope of the work to the rest of the county, including large industrial sites outside Worcester which could be 'easy wins'.

With unconstrained resources for the next five years, officers said they would return to extant travel plans to review them, upgrade existing plans and get all plans online to facilitate proper monitoring, whilst providing comprehensive support to employers.

To meet this challenge, the team argued that they would need two full-time travel planners providing both direct contact with employers and data collation and analysis. In addition, they said that this would require a budget for incentives and grants in the region of £0.25m over five years or £50,000/annum.

In practice, the county currently had 12 months funding for one full-time travel coordinator covering the whole of Worcestershire and was likely to struggle to find additional money for incentives. Officers thought that, if the travel coordinator role could be justified, it would be continued. Section 106 money was seen as the key to making the post self-funding but clarity was required as to whether this funding could legitimately be used for incentives for companies. The lack of funding for such incentives was seen as the main barrier to the programme. Other key factors in determining whether expansion took place were the public's understanding about climate change and leadership from Government.

## 4.7    References

Cairns S, Davies A, Newson C and Swiderska C (2002) *Making travel plans work: Research report* Report to the Department for Transport, London