



## Alternatives to Travel in the Public Sector

Guidance Document





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Guidance Document

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# 1 Introduction

## The Alternatives to Travel Support Programme

- 1.1 In 2011, JMP Consultants Ltd was commissioned by the Department for Transport to deliver a grant programme to public sector organisations that would assist these organisations in understanding and maximising the effectiveness of Alternatives to Travel (ATT). For the purposes of the research, ATT measures include; home working and remote working, flexi working and staggered hours, teleconferencing, videoconferencing (including tele-presence) and web conferencing for the purposes of travelling to, and for, work.
- 1.2 A Project Advisory Team was formed comprising of transport planners with expertise in the field of influencing travel behaviour, and psychologists with a specialism in sustainable transport and changing behaviour in working environments. The Project Advisory Team worked with thirteen public sector organisations. Details of these organisations are contained in the supporting 'Case Study Report'.

## Purpose of this Report

- 1.3 This guidance is predominantly aimed at public sector organisations who are keen to understand how to maximise ATT uptake in order to realise transport benefits. It is acknowledged that existing work in ATT is already extensive within the public sector, and is usually managed by the facilities / buildings departments often with involvement from human resources and information technology departments. ATT programmes exist often with the objective of delivering operational efficiencies e.g. office consolidation. Despite this, the transport benefits of ATT are often not monitored. Through working with public sector organisations on the ATT grant support programme it has been demonstrated that transport benefits can be achieved through increasing the use of ATT measures.
- 1.4 In a Local Highway Authority, a transport planner or more specifically, a travel plan officer may use this guidance to engage with and help to implement ATT in their own organisation or in external organisations and evaluate the transport benefits. In other public sector organisations, this guidance can be used by any individual responsible for delivering ATT. Whilst focussed on the public sector, this guidance would also be applicable to the other sectors such as the private and voluntary sectors.
- 1.5 In addition to this report, there is a case study report entitled 'Delivering Alternatives to Travel: Case Study Report'. The case study report supports this guidance document by providing worked examples of the work undertaken by each public sector organisation engaged in the ATT grant programme.

## Structure of the Guidance

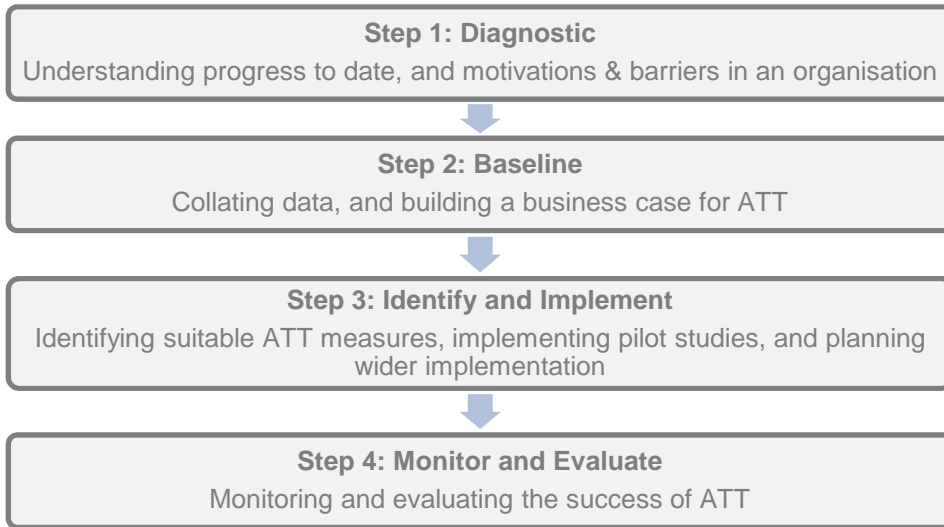
- 1.6 The report includes step-by-step guidance which replicates the approach used during the grant programme:
  - Chapter 2: Step 1: Diagnostic explains how to get started by understanding progress in ATT to date, and objectives for the future;
  - Chapter 3: Step 2: Baseline advises how to set about creating a robust baseline of the current travel of an organisation, so that a business case can be made for ATT based on travel savings;
  - Chapter 4: Step 3: Identify and Implement explains how to identify the most suitable ATT measures to introduce, and provides guidance on introducing ATT through pilot studies, before wider scale implementation; and



- Chapter 5: Step 4: Monitor and Evaluate contains guidance on how to manage the on-going monitoring of the effect that ATT measures are having on travel behaviour, so that the business case for ATT can be continuously improved.

1.7 The approach adopted for the support programme is illustrated in figure 1.1 below:

**Figure 1.1 Staged Approach adopted for the Support Programme**



## 2 Step 1: Diagnostic

### Introduction

2.1 The first step is to understand how much progress has already been made in an organisation in the area of ATT. The diagnostic step includes the following actions:

- Complete the 'Diagnostic Tool Checklist' to identify ATT achievements and issues to date in an organisation (see Appendix A);
- Engage with, or instigate, an ATT meeting with other key ATT decision makers in an organisation e.g. facilities management, IT, transport planning (if applicable), human resources, and efficiencies/change management;
- Hold focus groups to identify barriers to ATT in the organisation; and
- Develop an outline programme for next steps.

### Diagnostic Tool Checklist

2.2 A Diagnostic Tool Checklist has been developed which seeks answers to key questions regarding ATT. The checklist is available in Appendix A. The checklist performs the following functions:

- Provides a framework to establish progress to date;
- Draws together the objectives for ATT in an organisation; and
- Identifies the data that will be available to work with in order to build the business case for ATT in terms of transport.

2.3 The checklist will require engagement with a range of different departments that have an interest in ATT in order to gather information. In this way, a thorough understanding of ATT within the organisation will be gained as well as engagement with key decision makers in the area. The checklist is divided into four parts.

#### *Part 1: Mobilise*

2.4 The checklist asks if there is an existing governance structure for ATT in the organisation, or a programme of activities led by a particular department. If an existing governance structure is not in place then it is recommended that one is established (see section on ATT Meeting below).

#### *Part 2: Baseline*

2.5 The checklist asks about the data sources available to understand the use of ATT measures in the organisation, the impact of ATT on travel, who owns the data, and how it can be obtained.

#### *Part 3: Identify and implement*

2.6 The checklist asks about ATT measures that have already been implemented, and identifies gaps that may need to be addressed.

#### *Part 4: Monitoring*

2.7 The checklist asks about existing monitoring processes in the organisation that ATT could fit into in order to efficiently monitor and evaluate ATT in the future.

## ATT Steering Group

- 2.8 Depending on the findings of the diagnostic checklist, there may be an existing forum to engage with regarding ATT and its impact on travel. If there is already activity in the area of ATT then it is important that travel is represented in these discussions. Evidence from the Case Study Report demonstrates the transport benefits that can be achieved through ATT.
- 2.9 Alternatively, a new steering group may need to be established with representatives from relevant departments with a role to play in ATT. As mentioned before, likely steering group members will include representatives from any of the following: facilities management, IT, human resources, efficiencies/change. At a first meeting, the diagnostic checklist can provide a structure for the meeting, and help to agree aims and objectives for the future programme of ATT.
- 2.10 It is recommended that the ATT Steering Group meets regularly with the role of overseeing ATT delivery in the organisation e.g. reviewing evidence (Step 2), delivering pilot studies (Step 3) and annually monitoring, evaluating and updating the ATT action plan (Step 4). The regularity of ATT Steering Group meetings depends on the intensity of ATT implementation, but quarterly is recommended as a minimum.

## Focus Groups

- 2.11 In addition, it will be useful to explore barriers to ATT in more detail. Attitudinal and behavioural barriers to ATT may be explored through the use of focus groups. The focus groups will reveal psychological, perceptual and lifestyle barriers to ATT which may influence the propensity of employees to adopt ATT. Focus groups were carried out with groups of managers and their employees in a selection of local authorities involved in the support programme. The focus group discussion guides and the full findings from these can be viewed in Appendix B.

## ATT Outline Programme

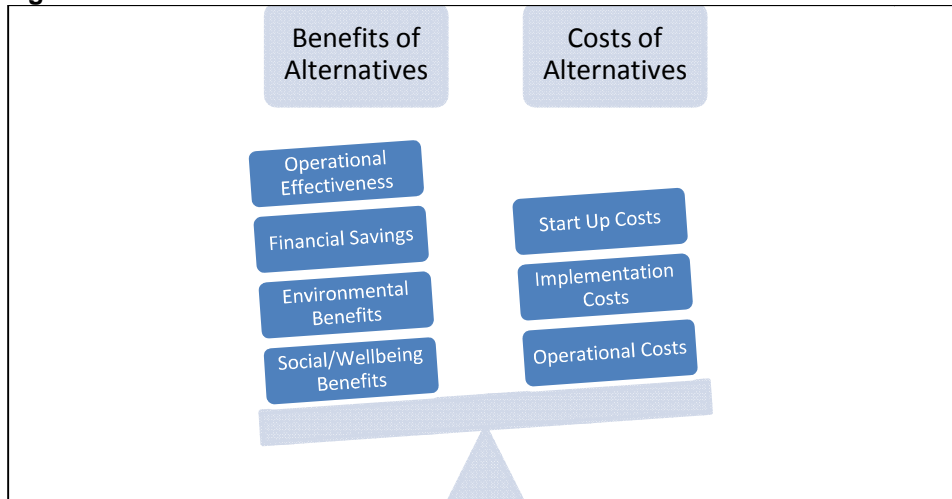
- 2.12 Using the checklist and the results of the liaison carried out, it will then be possible to prepare an outline programme for ATT activities to follow. The programme can follow the steps of the support programme (Diagnostic, Baseline, Identify and Implement, Monitor). A template programme is provided in Appendix C.

## 3 Step 2: Baseline

### Introduction

- 3.1 Quantifying the transport benefits of ATT is an essential step in progressing ATT and building a business case. Figure 3.1 visualises an overview of the costs and benefits model which has been adopted for the ATT support programme:

**Figure 3.1 An Overview of Costs and Benefits**



- 3.2 To assist in quantifying the benefits, an Alternatives to Travel Assessment Tool has been developed (see Appendix D). This section provides information on collecting baseline data and completing the Assessment Tool.

### Collecting Baseline Data for the ATT Assessment Tool

#### *Current Travel Impact*

- 3.3 To be able to understand the cost benefit of the ATT measures in transport terms, the first step is to understand the existing level of travel being carried out by an organisation, and the resulting costs and carbon emissions of this travel.
- 3.4 To understand current travel impact a wide range of data needs to be collected to form a robust baseline. This essential first step in building a business case for ATT will create an understanding of where and how travel is occurring, and then eventually make projections of the impact of changing travel behaviours through ATT.
- 3.5 Travel data is likely to be held in a number of different locations, and the full picture can only be understood by pulling all of this travel information together. However, baseline data collection needs to be pragmatic and take account of available data, and the processes and resources that will be required to collect it.
- 3.6 Information about travel carried out could be obtained from a range of sources including:
- Finance systems;
  - Online booking tools;
  - HR records; or
  - Contractor reports.

- 3.7 Collating travel data will require wide liaison across the organisation, for example, fleet data might be managed by facilities, whereas essential car usage could be administered by HR via staff benefits.

#### *Current Alternatives to Travel Usage*

- 3.8 Information about existing availability of and usage levels of ATT measures will also need to be gathered, to provide a baseline from which to measure progress. For example:
- Number of videoconferencing units;
  - Number of teleconferencing accounts; or
  - Number of staff who have applied for and had flexible working approved.

### **The ATT Assessment Tool**

- 3.9 The ATT Assessment Tool is presented as an excel spreadsheet for collating and recording transport data. The ATT Assessment Tool contains a series of work sheets:
1. Baseline Assessment Tool (a) is for recording the first year of organisation wide baseline data, such as total mileage by rail, pool cars, and lease vehicles, and it calculates the total cost and carbon impact from travel;
  2. Baseline Assessment Tool (b) is for recording data that will help set priorities for ATT, such as the top 50 drivers, or the five most frequent taxi journeys;
  3. Baseline Assessment Tool (c) is for monitoring the pilot projects;
  4. Rapid Assessment Tool (a) is a calculator that can project various scenarios, such as the carbon and cost savings that could be achieved if the same reduction in travel achieved in pilot studies were achieved on a wider scale;
  5. Rapid Assessment Tool (b) is a copy of this calculator for making projections one year later;
  6. Post Assessment Tool (a) is for recording the second year of organisation wide data, so that change can be monitored;
  7. Post Assessment Tool (b) is for recording subsequent years, and can be copied as required for the future.
- 3.10 A copy of the ATT Assessment Tool is provided in Appendix D with detailed user guidance on how and where to obtain data, and how to input data into the tool.

## 4 Step 3: Identify and Implement

### Identifying Suitable ATT Measures

4.1 The next stage is to use the baseline data in the ATT Assessment Tool to identify which ATT measures would deliver the most transport benefits to the organisation. Depending on how much data has been collated, it may be possible to see how particular ATT measures will realise efficiencies. For example:

- There may be one particular journey (for example between two offices) that could be addressed via ATT solutions e.g. through teleconferencing; or
- There may be one particular department that has high business mileage that could be investigated further e.g. through remote working.

### The Rapid Assessment Tool

4.2 To identify which ATT measures will deliver the most benefits for an organisation, a Rapid Assessment Tool has been prepared to assess the potential return on investment from implementing ATT measures. The Rapid Assessment Tool is provided as a worksheet in the ATT Assessment Tool. This tool will enable current performance to be assessed against potential future scenarios and the projected benefits to be quantified.

### Making Projections

4.3 The Rapid Assessment Tool can be used to make projections of the impacts of various ATT measures at an organisation. For example, if one department uses teleconferencing frequently, the Rapid Assessment Tool can tell what the impact would be if the whole organisation used the service at similar levels in terms of mileage avoided, costs saved and reduced emissions.

### Example Projection

4.4 If an organisation has approximately 10,000 employees, and spends £5,117,904 per year on 15,844,131 business car miles travelled, their cost per mile (total car expenditure / total car mileage), is 32.3p.

4.5 The potential savings based on a percentage reduction in total car mileage across the whole organisation would be:

- 1% mileage reduction = £50k savings
- 3% mileage reduction = £150k savings
- 5% mileage reduction = £250k savings
- 10% mileage reduction = £500k savings

### Future Scenarios

4.6 Using the data in the ATT Assessment Tool, and the calculations in the Rapid Assessment Tool, think about which ATT measures could be applied and where, and put together some possible scenarios, for example:

- If 50% of staff in building (a) replaced 10% of their internal meetings held at building (b) with teleconferencing, the organisation would save (b) miles per year, which equates to £(c) or (d) tonnes of carbon.

## Implementing ATT Measures

### Carrying out a Pilot Study

#### *Understanding Barriers*

- 4.7 Even with some knowledge, estimations of this nature can be quite arbitrary in that they do not consider the various barriers that may exist to wide scale uptake. Carrying out a pilot study will help to understand the barriers in more detail, and improve knowledge and understanding of the role ATT can play in an organisation.

#### *Improving the Evidence*

- 4.8 Carrying out a pilot study will help gather real evidence of the efficiencies and benefits that could be realised across an organisation. For example, a pilot study can demonstrate if a reduction in travel can be achieved on the small scale, and add more evidence to the projections being made for wider scale uptake, adding weight to the ATT business case. In the ATT support programme two types of pilot studies were implemented:

1. Introducing a pilot study for a new ATT measure; and
2. Introducing a pilot study to promote an existing ATT measure.

#### **How to introduce a pilot study for a new ATT Measure**

- 4.9 A pilot study provides the opportunity to understand how a new measure might work in practice. For example, by working with a small group of staff, the issues and opportunities surrounding a new ATT measure can be understood in more detail, for example:

- Is any informal use of ATT already occurring?
- How much propensity is there for staff to adopt ATT
- What usage levels can be achieved when new facilities are provided?

#### **Introducing new IT Facilities at Cheshire West and Chester Council**

At Cheshire West and Chester Council, a pilot study was carried out to understand what effect new IT and communications technology could have on home and remote working, before a large scale investment in new facilities could be committed to.

The Regulatory Services team were selected for the pilot study because they wanted to reduce the amount of time and money spent travelling for business. Firstly the team were engaged in a workshop to discuss their travel requirements and suitable IT solutions that would reduce their need to travel.

An online survey was then issued to the team to understand their travel needs and allocate them with one or more of the following;

- Laptop;
- 3G card;
- Blackberry;
- PC on a stick;
- Remote access to the council network;
- Microsoft Lync Two factor authentication tokens.

Monitoring of the pilot study revealed that business travel reduced by 12 miles from 27 miles per day to 15 miles per day per person. On average participants reported to be working at home nearly one day a week (0.7 of a day) in the after survey which was an increase of 0.5 days from the before survey.

### How to introduce a pilot study to promote existing ATT measures

4.10 The support programme revealed that in many public sector organisations policies and technologies to support ATT measures are already in place but ATT usage levels are low. In this case, a pilot study can be introduced to understand how usage levels might be increased, for example:

- What are the best promotion techniques for a particular ATT measure? or
- Will training improve usage levels, and what type of training would be most effective?

#### Kent County Council

At Kent County Council a pilot study was introduced to understand why usage of their existing teleconferencing service was low.

The study involved an initial research stage with the managers of two teams to understand why they did or didn't already use the service. The results of the interviews were used to design communications that would overcome common barriers that were raised.

A series of weekly email bulletins were issued.

- Many staff hadn't had the time to register for the service, so in the first week a one minute guide to setting up a telephone based meeting was issued
- Some managers mentioned that the types of meetings they held weren't suitable for teleconferencing, so in week two a bulletin was issued outlining which types of meetings work best with BT Meet Me?
- Some uncertainties were revealed about how to manage a complex meeting without eye contact and body language, so in the third week, some hints and tips on how to make a telephone based meeting successful were provided.

4.11 The ATT support programme also revealed that many organisations felt that when ATT measures are already in place, there is little more potential to increase usage, for example,

- When many staff already work from home informally, would formalising this process have an impact on travel?
- When all staff are entitled to apply for flexible working, is everyone who could be working flexibly already doing so?

#### Dorset County Council

At Dorset County Council flexible working and home and remote working is already in place on an informal basis, and there was a perception that those who could reduce the amount of travel they were doing by using these measures were already doing so. In addition, senior managers felt that service delivery might be compromised if ATT was pushed to higher than existing levels.

However the need to reduce local traffic over the 2012 Games period created the need to gain a better understanding of the real potential of ATT to affect travel carried out by the authority, for example, exactly how much informal home working is currently happening, and could more be achieved?

A pilot study was designed to investigate whether the ambition to reduce congestion during the 2012 Games could be achieved through a combination of different ATT measures. Two teams were selected to be involved in a one month trial to avoid travel for two days per week:

- Each team leader was engaged via a telephone interview, where the suitability of options being set



were discussed, in terms of their potential impact on service delivery.

- An initial survey was carried out to understand the current level of home and remote working and travel carried out by the pilot staff. Staff views on home working were also collected.
- At the end of the survey, each member of staff selected an option from the following:

Work from home or a remote office two days per week

Work from home one day per week and from another location one day per week

Compress your week into 4 longer days, and work one day from home or another office

Travel outside of peak time (8-11am, and 4-7pm) 4 days per week

Carry out one in every two meetings (that require travel) by telephone

- At the end of each week, staff completed a travel diary;
- At the end of the trial period, the initial survey was repeated to understand changes in travel, and also changes in attitudes
- There was a 16% reduction in the number of days that staff travelled to their usual place of work. Based on the average commuting distance revealed in the online survey of 17.2 miles per employee per day, this represents a reduction in travel of 42 miles per day among all of 23 participants<sup>1</sup>.

*1. The national average modal split (Department for Transport National Travel Survey) has been applied to account for not all commuter journeys being made by car.*

- 4.12 Full Case studies of the pilot studies carried out through the support programme can be found in the 'Case Studies Report', and resources prepared for the pilot studies, e.g. promotional emails, are provided in Appendix E of this report.

## The Online Survey

### Understanding Attitudes to ATT

- 4.13 An online survey (Appendix F) has been prepared through the grant support programme that has been used to monitor each individual pilot study that was implemented. The online survey covers:
- Commuting to work;
  - Business Travel;
  - Type and frequency of meetings; and
  - Attitudes towards ATT.
- 4.14 The survey should be issued immediately before and immediately after the pilot studies to understand any localised impact that has been achieved.
- 4.15 The findings of the survey in terms of attitudes and behaviours will also aid understanding of the audience receiving the measure and plan how the barriers revealed may need to be addressed within the organisation.
- 4.16 The online survey collects 'self-reported' travel data to provide evidence of the potential impact that ATT can have on travel patterns, and can be used in combination with the other data collected in the

ATT Assessment Tool. The sample size for the survey is, however, likely to be too small to draw robust conclusions, and should only be referred to as a tool for showing possible scenarios.

## Planning Wider Scale Implementation of ATT

- 4.17 To gradually introduce ATT on the wider scale, it might be necessary to repeat pilot studies, team by team. The rate at which ATT is rolled out will depend on the varying roles and ATT requirements of different parts of the organisation.
- 4.18 By repeating Step 3 (the identify and implement step) in different parts of the organisation it will be possible to build up a picture of different ATT needs and requirements, and gradually gain more knowledge and experience of what works where and for whom. Once knowledge and understanding is improved, it will be possible to introduce ATT measures for whole departments or directorates.
- 4.19 The more evidence that is collected through the baseline exercise and pilot studies, the easier it will be to gain buy in from new departments in the organisation. Therefore, it is essential to maintain the monitoring and evaluation work after each pilot study, and also to update the organisation-wide data in the ATT Assessment Tool annually (more information on this is contained in Step 4).

## 5 Step 4: Monitor and Evaluate

### Monitoring ATT

- 5.1 By carrying out thorough monitoring of the impact of ATT on travel patterns, the success of an ATT programme can be evaluated, building the business case for wider scale implementation across an organisation.
- 5.2 The following monitoring should be undertaken of ATT:
- Complete the ATT Assessment Tool annually, covering the same time period each year (e.g. using the organisation's financial year is recommended). A copy of each year's data should be stored in the separate worksheet called Post Assessment Sheet (a) and subsequent years in Post Assessment Sheet (b);
  - Carry out before and after monitoring of each new pilot study, and record new information in the worksheet Baseline Assessment Tool (c) making additional copies as required; and
  - Continue to make projections using the results of pilot studies using the Rapid Assessment Tool in the worksheet Rapid Assessment Tool (a) and subsequent years in Rapid Assessment Sheet (b).

### Improving the Quality of Data

- 5.3 It is likely that there will be some gaps in data collection, and the quality will vary. Therefore, a range of data types should be used to help build a robust understanding of travel and ATT.
- 5.4 Data collected from sources such as official sources e.g. booking systems or finance departments, or 'clean data' is the most accurate source of information. However, because this is not always available or complete, self-reported data can also be used to supplement monitoring. Self-reported data (such as surveys) should not be solely relied upon because it is affected by the views of individuals, and their circumstances.
- 5.5 It might be possible to improve the availability and quality of clean data available by working with the departments responsible for collecting and storing the data required, so that the reliance on self-reported data for the ATT programme can be gradually reduced over time.

### Evaluating ATT

#### Evaluating Return on Objective

- 5.6 Over time a fuller picture of the potential of ATT to address specific transport objectives will be gathered. The data set can be utilised to investigate specific issues, and to track change over an extended time period.
- 5.7 Some examples of specific areas that can be evaluated are provided below, although these will depend on the transport policies and the priorities within the organisation.
- Has there been an increase in ATT usage levels?
  - Has there been a change in the overall number of business miles, as a result of new ATT measures being introduced?
  - Have any particular journeys been affected, such as travel between key offices?
  - Have commuter travel patterns been affected by ATT?

## Evaluating Return on Investment

- 5.8 At this point it may also be possible to evaluate the financial benefit of any increase in ATT. Returning to the guidance on preparing benefit to cost ratios in chapter 3, investigate the data collected and evaluate any financial benefits that are possible at this stage. For example:
- What have the cost savings been of a reduction in business miles?
  - What were the costs of providing ATT?
- 5.9 If gaps remain in the data available so that a thorough evaluation cannot yet be carried out, think about if the data set can be improved by making small changes to the way data is collected, and liaise with the appropriate departments.

## Maintaining the ATT Programme

### Update ATT Action Plan

- 5.10 Using the findings from any pilot studies, and the organisation wide data recorded in the Post Assessment Sheet for subsequent years, the Steering Group (see Step 1) should decide on the best way to take the ATT programme forward.
- 5.11 The ATT action plan will need to be updated annually in light of the findings and the emerging business case. For example new activities for subsequent years that may need to be included in the annual update of the ATT Action Plan are:
- Extending pilot studies that have been successful in changing travel behaviour from teams to whole departments;
  - Repeating pilot studies with new teams or departments that have different travel requirements; and/or
  - Introducing new pilot studies to understand different ATT measures.
- 5.12 By maintaining an ongoing programme of ATT activity, and maintaining the monitoring and evaluation activities, ATT measures can gradually become more widely adopted across the organisation.

Diagnostic Tool Checklist

# Appendix A

## Diagnostic Tool Checklist

Focus Group Findings

# Appendix B

## Focus Group Findings



ATT Outline Programme Template

**Alternatives to Travel Assessment Tool and User Guidance**

# Appendix D

## Alternatives to Travel Assessment Tool and User Guidance

## Pilot Study Resources

# Appendix E

## Pilot Study Resources

# Appendix F

## On-line Survey

# Appendix F

## On-line Survey