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Commuter Zero – A Scoping Review

Employer attitudes to reducing emissions
from employees' workplace travel



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Executive summary

Introduction

The Department for Transport (DfT) commissioned the National Centre for Social Research (NatGen) to carry out research to understand employers' attitudes towards encouraging their employees to reduce their commuting and business travel emissions, identify facilitators and barriers to employers doing so, and exploring the support employers needed to help employees towards greener travel choices. The research was conducted between November 2022 and January 2023. It involved a literature review and fifteen qualitative interviews with large employers that had already taken up low carbon travel initiatives for staff, employer membership organisations, and Local Authorities. Findings from this scoping research will inform future research priorities.

Key findings

Employer attitudes to reducing workplace travel emissions

The literature review found that, historically, employers have taken little interest in encouraging employees to reduce their workplace travel emissions unless it contributed to their companies' profitability. However, recent evidence and trends documented in literature and captured via interviews with employers, indicated that business attitudes to workplace travel may have shifted in recent years, with employers taking greater responsibility for their staff's workplace travel. This was due to:

- Increased public profile of environmental issues since COP26 (2021).
- The Government recommendation to report Scope 3 emissions as of April 2019.¹
- Increasing awareness and appetite amongst employees for sustainable commuting and flexible working patterns.

Employer interviewees were supportive of receiving help to introduce sustainable commuting practices and reduce workplace emissions but only as part of a wider decarbonisation strategy. Interviewees felt that:

- There was a risk of employers feeling targeted or singled-out if the help to promote sustainable commuting was not contextualised within wider decarbonisation efforts.
- Information should focus on ways to measure sustainable commuting proportionate to an employer's resources, as well as details of shared, public transport and active travel options for their geographical location, size and sector.
- Information should include potential benefits – such as saving money, gaining competitive advantage, reducing local congestion on roads, and so on.

Barriers and facilitators to more sustainable workplace travel

The employer interviews identified a range of barriers to business uptake of workplace travel initiatives. These included:

- Employers' lack of knowledge of available travel initiatives.

¹ Reporting these emissions is required of 'quoted' businesses and larger unquoted businesses and is encouraged for all other businesses.

- Perceived high upfront costs to introduce initiatives, e.g. to set up shuttle buses, purchase electric vehicles, etc.
- Lack of infrastructure, e.g. electric vehicle charging-infrastructure, public and active transport infrastructure.
- Issues with taxation, e.g. a perceived disparity in tax allowances for electric vehicles relative to subsidies for public transport.
- Perceptions that employees are not sufficiently clustered, or flexi work patterns act against car sharing, lift sharing and carpooling.

It was considered easier for employers and employees to engage with decarbonising workplace travel in regions where public and active travel infrastructure were more developed.

In regions with less developed public and active travel infrastructure, the literature and employer interviewees suggested employers could be encouraged to take up sustainable travel initiatives if it was clear how initiatives led to wider benefits in their local areas, such as reduced road congestion and improved air quality.

Suggested approaches to encouraging employers and staff to reduce workplace travel emissions in regions with less developed public and active travel infrastructure included:

- **Reducing levels of non-sustainable commuting:** through encouraging remote or hybrid working; providing shuttle buses to worksites; increasing awareness of 'guaranteed rides' home; or providing accommodation for employees on site or nearby.
- **Making the use of electric vehicles easier:** by making upfront costs more affordable; speeding up the roll out of workplace electric charging points; and increasing employer understanding of how electric charging points can save or earn them money.
- **Releasing the potential of car-sharing, lift sharing and carpooling:** by more active promotion and facilitation of these options through:
 - Introducing workplace car parking fees or levies and/ or reducing the number of car parking spaces for petrol, diesel or single occupancy cars.
 - Highlighting sectors and working patterns where these options work best.
 - Ensuring trust and safety for car or lift sharers.
 - Clarifying and simplifying rules on driver insurance and tax on any earnings from car sharing or lift sharing that act as barriers to uptake.
 - Employers providing carpooled vehicles that employees can use during the business day so that they do not necessarily have to travel into work by private cars.

In regions with better developed public and active travel infrastructure, the literature and interviewees emphasised promotion of initiatives such as Bike2Work, salary sacrifice for electric vehicles, and subsidisation public transport passes, and consideration of access to public or active travel infrastructure when businesses are locating or relocating.

Setting targets, monitoring, and benchmarking

Employers tended to be at the early stages of working out how to set emissions reduction targets and monitor progress against them:

- Larger businesses interviewed were beginning to get to grips with Scope 3 emissions reporting under the United Nations Greenhouse Gas Protocol.²
- Outside voluntary Scope 3 reporting, the reporting of sustainable travel data was inconsistent. Examples included trial and error attempts to conduct surveys of staff commuting patterns, or to map journeys to facilitate more sustainable commutes.

While employers felt that setting targets and monitoring progress against them was the right way to encourage sustainable travel, they thought it was important to minimise the complexity and administrative burden of doing so. Two approaches were suggested:

- An employer survey using a standard methodology feeding information at the organisational level to Government using online platforms; or
- A nationally representative survey of the public (to be conducted by Government) that monitored the use of individual commuting and workplace travel modes over time.

No existing officially recognised benchmarking or accreditation schemes for monitoring commuting emissions were found in the literature, but organisations interviewed broadly welcomed the idea. Conditions suggested by employer interviewees in relation to such a scheme were that it must:

- Take account of geographical access to, and viability of, public transport or active travel, the sector (especially the amount of work that had to be conducted on-site), and the amount of resources available by size of employer.
- Be implemented in a supportive rather than punitive way, to identify where organisations need help and provide guidance to move forward.

Suggestions for support from government

Interviewees' suggestions for government support for employers revolved around four main themes:

- **Clearer national policies and guidance** to help employers decide how to *facilitate* more sustainable travel, thereby helping managers obtain the permissions they need to put initiatives in place. Interviewees emphasised that the Government should be early adopters and lead by example.
- **Better information sharing, advice, and networking** between stakeholders. This included supporting initiatives to set up 'sustainability hubs' where employers could seek advice on workplace travel planning, effective sustainable travel initiatives, and sources of funding. There was also a desire from employers to know who they should contact in Local Authorities about improving sustainable travel infrastructure, and for better contact between employers and Local Authorities.
- **Continued investment in local sustainable travel infrastructure for public transport and active travel**, while supporting shared or public alternatives to single use of cars and a faster transition to electric vehicles. For public transport, employers advocated much cheaper fares, and improved frequency, reliability and convenience for buses and trains.
- **Funding new initiatives:** Having a national strategy to funding initiatives with joined up-thinking across departments and authorities. There was also a call for successful initiatives to be funded for longer; and reinvestment of any financial charges and disincentives for travelling by car into sustainable and workplace travel initiatives.

² Reporting these emissions is required of 'quoted' businesses and larger unquoted businesses and is encouraged for all other businesses.

1 Aims and Methodology

1.1 Aims of the review

Transport accounted for around [24 percent of carbon emissions in the UK in 2020](#), and [13 percent of all UK trips in 2021 were for commuting purposes](#). Transport therefore plays a key role in leading the United Kingdom's Net Zero transition. The [Decarbonising Transport, A Better Greener Britain](#) plan, published in July 2021 sets out the scale of the challenge and the government's commitments to reducing carbon emissions from travel. An important commitment within the plan is to *'encourage and support UK businesses to lead the way in taking action to reduce emissions from their employees' travel journeys through 'Commute Zero'*.

To meet the UK's obligation to reach net zero emissions by 2050, the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) argues in [Greener Miles](#) that decarbonising commuting as well as a shift in business and employee's behaviour is vital to reduce workplace-related emissions (CBI, 2021). The United Nations-led [Greenhouse Gas \(GHG\) Protocol](#) sets out how companies should measure emissions, set emission reduction targets, and take action to decarbonise. The protocol defines 'Scope 3' as indirect business emissions associated with supply chains, including business travel and commuting. Since April 2019, 'quoted companies' and large unquoted companies in the UK have been recommended by government under the [Environmental Reporting Guidelines: including Streamlined Energy and Carbon Reporting Guidelines](#) to report these emissions. All other companies have also been encouraged to do so.

In view of the limited availability of evidence on employer attitudes and involvement in reducing workplace emissions, the DfT commissioned the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) to address gaps in literature and provide a scoping study of views on possible initiatives to address workplace travel. There were two main strands of research:

- **Literature review** to provide a baseline of the extent of information available.
- **Scoping interviews with employers, employer membership organisations, and Local Authority representatives** to explore their views on reporting carbon emissions, what initiatives are already in place, and views on the prospective roles these organisations may have in moving towards encouraging sustainable commuting.

The key objective of this study was to explore employer attitudes towards encouraging or facilitating a reduction in commuting and workplace travel emissions, and what support they will need to do so. The research explores:

- **Employers' attitudes** towards encouraging employees to reduce commuting and business travel related emissions, including: enablers and barriers for adopting schemes to reduce commuting emissions; monitoring, reporting and setting targets on employees' commuting emissions; what monitoring and reporting tools appeal to employers; incentives to reduce emissions and the impact of employee commuting on air quality and other environmental factors.
- **How employers' attitudes to these issues varied by** type of initiative; employment sector; employer size; by locations with heaviest car use, regarding locations with less access to public and active travel; and by degree of involvement with, and support for, initiatives.

- **Perceived and actual barriers and facilitators for employers taking-up these kinds of initiatives**, including perceived costs and benefits to employers; potential barriers to change; and what support would be required to encourage take-up.

1.2 Methodology

Literature review

A preliminary scoping exercise carried out in preparation for this study revealed that there was not enough high-quality evidence or literature to conduct a systematic review or rapid evidence assessment on the topics. The literature review therefore aimed to assess the extent of existing evidence on employer attitudes to encouraging employees to adopt more sustainable travel. It also aimed to explore the perceived or actual barriers to them doing so, and what support from government and other stakeholders may be needed. A detailed process of the conduct of the literature review is outlined in Appendix A.

The review found very little literature that included primary data collection direct from employers or employees. In total, 22 pieces of literature were short-listed for data extraction and thematically summarised. While there was useful information about initiatives, it was rarely assessed with high levels of rigour. However, the literature review and interviews together provide an important starting point for initiatives and research going forward.

Interviews

The scoping interviews were conducted between November 2022 and January 2023. They involved:

- **Seven employers** who had implemented initiatives to encourage employees to take up more sustainable workplace travel.
- **Two employer membership organisations** who were able to provide insight into employer attitudes and/ or employer engagement with sustainable commuting policy and initiatives more widely.
- **Four Local Authority representatives** involved with sustainable travel initiatives or local travel planning.

The employers sample consisted of larger businesses with more than 250 employees. Employers were selected according to sector, size of workforce, and a variety of initiatives to reduce community or workplace-based emissions. Of the seven employers, six were in the Southeast of England and one in the Southwest. Findings by region therefore need to be interpreted in this context, although the literature review does give a wider national picture.

Two interviews with employer membership organisations were conducted: one representing larger employers and the other smaller to medium sized employers (SMEs). The same regions were targeted for local authority recruitment as for employers. Four Local Authorities took part; two were in the Southwest of England, one in the Southeast and one in the North East. Further details of the sample are included in Appendix B.

Interviews were conducted over Microsoft Teams and lasted between 45 and 60 minutes. A different topic guide was developed and agreed with the DfT for each group of interviewees (Appendix B). Interviews were transcribed verbatim and charted thematically using the Framework approach developed by NatCen (Ritchie et al., 2013).

2 Employer attitudes and perspectives

Key findings:

- Historically, employers have taken little interest in encouraging their employees to reduce travel emissions unless it contributed to their companies' profitability.
- However, business attitudes to workplace travel may have shifted in recent years, with employers taking greater responsibility for their staff's workplace travel.
- There was openness amongst employers to adopt commuting and workplace travel initiatives in future, and support for further assistance from government to help employers reduce emissions, but this should be part of a wider strategy to decarbonise travel.

This section explores what is known about employer attitudes towards encouraging more sustainable workplace travel. It draws on both the literature review and interviews with employers, employer membership organisations, and Local Authorities (in their employer and transport planning roles).

2.1 Employer attitudes

Employers' attitudes towards involvement in encouraging more sustainable commuting and reducing emissions from workplace travel were regarded as important in the literature for several reasons. These were:

- The amount of carbon emissions that come from commuting and workplace-based travel (CBI, 2021).
- The fact that workplaces are clearly defined physical locations, with more easily mappable travel activity (than for example vehicles entering and leaving a Local Authority). Thereby making them good locations to target and change social behaviour (Vanoutrieve, et al., 2012).
- The potential for employer and managerial attitudes to influence workplace travel culture, and to encourage more sustainable travel for employees, clients, and customers (Ding et al, 2014).

There was limited direct or primary evidence of employers' attitudes towards involvement in reducing commuting and workplace travel emissions. What evidence there was on employer attitudes was shaped around the themes of responsibility for choice of travel mode, attitudes to employer or workplace travel plans and strengthening the business case for sustainable travel, which are discussed in turn in this section.

Responsibility for choice of travel mode

Employer attitudes were first discussed in terms of how much responsibility employers should have for reducing workplace travel emissions, and their motivations for doing so. One of the few systematic reviews of employer attitudes to workplace travel behaviours found that, by 2015, workplace travel emissions did not rate among businesses' top strategic considerations (Anable, 2015). At that stage, the authors identified that businesses only tended to adopt sustainable travel practices if they saw them as contributing to their 'bottom line' (viz. their profits), as opposed to a

commitment to environmental protection. To a considerable extent, therefore, employers at that time did not see their employees' travel as their responsibility:

'Commuting and customer travel is typically seen by senior managers (and possibly commuters and shoppers themselves) as almost entirely outside the formal responsibility of the employer or business. Therefore, a sense of responsibility relating to these travel domains could be an important differentiator for businesses' (Anable, 2015 p.11).

Evidence from the employer interviews and literature, however, suggested that a shift has occurred from a sense of individual or employee responsibility for workplace travel to a more employer or a shared employer-employee sense of responsibility; with this shift beginning around the middle of the last decade, and accelerating since the start of this decade. The literature and interviewees emphasised the need for responsibility for commuting emissions, and facilitating sustainable alternatives, to shift much further towards an employer or employer-employee view of responsibility. This included encouraging employees to switch mode of travel *and* play a more *active* role in facilitation of new ways to commute and travel for business (CBI, 2021).

It was observed in the literature that employers in some European countries (e.g. Belgium, the Netherlands) and some US states (e.g. Oregon, California) showed a greater sense of responsibility for sustainable commuting (Dong et al., 2016; Vanoutrive et al, 2021; Kuss and Nicholas, 2022; Bartle and Chatterjee, 2019). The authors pointed to the way in which promoting and facilitating more sustainable travel was incorporated into employees' terms and conditions of employment (e.g. paying for or subsidising public travel passes or contributing to the cost of electric vehicles). There were also examples from the same literature and from the interviews of employers taking greater responsibility for reducing carbon emissions. Cases in point were promotion of tax concessions to help employees buy electric cars, provision of bicycles and rider facilities (e.g. bike sheds, showers), or the adoption of hybrid models of working with associated allowances for the costs of working from home.

The only exception to the view that employers should do more, came from an employer interviewee who argued that they did not currently have to provide petrol for employees travelling to and from work, and therefore did not see why they had to provide electric workplace charging points for staff.

Attitudes to employer or workplace travel plans

A second area where employer attitudes towards sustainable workplace travel was discussed, was in terms of views on employer or workplace travel plans. Both types of plans involved a review of how employees travelled to work, assessment of an organisation's carbon footprint, and putting a plan in place to provide more sustainable alternatives. In some cases, these plans were mandated by central or local government in European countries (other than the UK) and in the USA (Dong et al., 2016; Kuss and Nicholas, 2022; Vanoutrive et al, 2012); while in others (particularly in the UK), they were more voluntary arrangements encouraged in part for the monitoring of fuel use or to demonstrate social, corporate and environmental responsibility.

Where workplace travel plans (WTPs) had been introduced voluntarily by employers in the UK, one study found that this was for four reasons: (a) site-specific road congestion problems; (b) the inability to have enough car parking for all staff; (c) the need to attract highly skilled staff who could choose whether and how to commute to work, or lower paid staff who could not afford a car; and (d) a work culture supportive of more sustainable modes of travel (Bartle and Chatterjee, 2019). Evidence from Belgium (Van Malderen, et al. 2011) showed that, where workplace travel plans were in place, employers were generally favourable towards them. While the reasons for this were not fully explored in the paper, there was a suggestion that positive attitudes to WTPs were

associated with a willingness to have fewer parking spaces, financial advantages from repurposing land use for car parking, and the fact that the plans had been embedded in the organisation for longer.

Strengthening the business case for sustainable travel

The literature and some of the employer interviewees argued that strengthening the 'business case' for sustainable travel would likely encourage more employers to become actively involved in promoting associated initiatives. In strengthening this case, several factors were highlighted. These included how new policies and practices would: (a) contribute to a business' 'bottom line' (viz. by saving or earning them money); (b) increase their competitive advantage, or (c) produce other positive knock-on benefits (e.g. reduced congestion, better air quality, and improved employee well-being) (Anable, et al. 2015).

For instance, Bartle and Chatterjee (2019) refer to three main ways in which the 44 employers they interviewed at 'Board level' in Bristol were persuaded of the business case for promoting more sustainable travel for their employees. These were:

- **Impacts on business performance due to commuting problems** – impacts from local road congestion and loss of time.
- **Savings from not travelling in relation to workplace travel** - higher costs associated with travelling for business rather than not travelling, and the increased costs of fossil fuel.
- **Impacts on employee well-being and productivity** – difficult or unreliable commuting journeys were thought to increase employee stress, lower morale, and reduce productivity.

Other prospective benefits for employers of strengthening the business case for promoting sustainable commuting and workplace travel identified from the literature and employer interviews were:

- **Charging points for electric vehicles** – the ability to share and charge for customers or the public, including making retail and hospitality businesses charging destinations (Bartle and Chatterjee, 2019).
- **Recruitment and retention** – by providing more ways than just single occupancy car use for employees to get to work, which could make commuting easier, lower the cost of commuting, and contribute to employees' wellbeing and environmental goals (Transport the Environment, 2022).

Another benefit identified from employer and Local Authority interviews was:

- **Better, more profitable land use** – for instance, the value of car parking space repurposed for housing, offices, last mile deliveries, etc.

Recruitment and retention were noted especially as areas that would increasingly shape employers' views and attitudes to providing sustainable travel to and from work. This was especially among younger or more environmentally conscious employees. An employer interviewee working in the hospitality sector commented:

'.. when you look at the 18- to 24-year-olds, they want to work for more ethical businesses. It's no longer just about, 'How much are you going to pay me?' It's about, 'Am I working for a company that actually cares?' There's a huge part of that, particularly in the massive issues around staffing and hospitality [...] to become a more attractive employer, you need to show that you're a bit wider than just, 'Here's your pay cheque at the end of the month.'" (Employer 2).

Another employer interviewee based in a rural location had provided free or subsidised minibuses to site from local stations or town centres as an alternative to travel to site by car. They noted that this was essential for the business to be able to compete with other local employers for recruitment of staff. The CBI has also written in its blog [Zero carbon commuting – the business case](#), that while: ‘... the commute may only be one part of the employee experience – [...] it is a ‘make or break’ one for many of us (CBI, 2022)’.

The business case for sustainable travel therefore appears to be gathering pace among employers and their representatives. As Anable et al. (2015) put it:

‘A firm’s relationship to the natural environment is increasingly becoming a source of competitive advantage and the evidence shows increasing acknowledgement of a positive relationship the bottom line and ‘greening’ of business practices’ (Anable, 2015 p.10).

2.2 Employer attitudes going forward

As well as assessing employers’ views and attitudes to date, employers’ receptiveness to encouraging sustainable commuting going forward was explored. In this respect, while employers regarded attempts to achieve Net Zero as the logical and right thing to do, they were still at the starting point of these considerations. They also found it hard to find the information they needed and in the time they had available, to make informed decisions. These issues are discussed in turn below.

Logical and right thing to do

The literature and the employers interviewed saw it as logical that employers should have some role in helping to reduce emissions given the proportion generated from workplace travel. The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) highlighted the growing significance of Scope 3 carbon emissions reporting (CBI, 2021; Carbon Trust, 2021). They argued that reporting on these emissions – which include those from employee commuting – will play an increasingly important role in encouraging employers to take an interest in their employees’ commuting emissions and how to reduce them:

‘... where these make a material contribution to total emissions and where data is available to measure them, there is now a move for company Net Zero strategies to also begin incorporating them... As more of the UK’s economy is covered by these requirements, ... systematic collection and reporting of emissions data will become the business norm’ (CBI, 2021 p.5).

It was also argued in the literature that the workplace is a good place to try to influence behaviour at a social rather than an individual level by shifting responsibility for behaviour from individual employees to also include employers (Vanoutrive et al., 2012). Employers, employer membership organisations, and Local Authorities interviewed also agreed this was the ‘right thing to do’.

The ‘starting point’ of considerations

Employers were, nevertheless, still at the starting point of considering how they could reduce commuting emissions. Where they had begun to put initiatives in place to reduce emissions tended to be ad hoc, piecemeal and perceived as lower cost (e.g. promoting car sharing, lift sharing, carpooling or active travel rather than reducing the number of car-parking spaces; increasing electric charging car parking spaces; subsidising the purchase of electric cars, bikes or micro mobility; or credit towards public transport/ Mobility as a Service (MaaS)). Reinforcing findings from the literature above, employer interviewees suggested other employers would be more likely to

engage with sustainable alternatives going forward if they were provided with information about the ways in which reducing commuting and business carbon emissions could also save them money or generate income.

Employer and employer membership organisation interviewees also acknowledged that they were probably behind where they needed to be. This was especially in relation to the UK Government's [phasing out of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030](#) and the target of achieving ['Net Zero' emissions by 2050](#). Interviewees also indicated that they were waiting for a greater steer from central Government on how to develop consistent, standardised carbon reduction strategies and advice on measures these might include. While some larger employers and Local Authorities had already put sustainability roles or 'green' employee groups in place, the fact that responsibility for employees' travel, energy use and facilities could still be spread across different roles within their organisations meant that there was not always a clear focus for their work.

The information gap

Employer interviewees sometimes found it hard to define their attitudes towards facilitation of sustainable transport for their employees because of what they said was an 'information gap'. This was because they were still at the starting point of working out what they could do, what would be effective, and how much the different options available to them would cost. For example, a report by Transport and the Environment (2022) indicated how difficult it was for employers to work out their attitudes to sustainable travel options, such as installing workplace electric charging points, when they still did not have enough information:

'For businesses that do not have a clear indication of demand, investing in charging infrastructure with only a hypothetical business case or benefits is difficult to justify... [Other] businesses may not understand if or when their employees will transition to EVs and will therefore be nervous of investing in under-utilised assets' (Transport and the Environment, 2022).

Employer interviewees also thought they were limited in what they could do on their own. They indicated that it was difficult to know who to lobby to affect change in local travel infrastructure. For example, one medium-sized employer interviewee described the sheer amount of effort it took to get a pedestrian crossing in place to make it safer for staff and customers to walk to site. Larger employer interviewees with multiple sites found it difficult to know where to target their resources to get more sustainable travel options in place. While Local Authority interviewees felt they could help with transport planning and bringing local employers together, they noted that responsibility for roads and other travel planning was often spread across different authorities. One employer membership organisation described how difficult it was for employers – especially SMEs – to get to grips with all the information they need, and to have the time to work out a coherent workplace travel plan:

'Do you just measure your carbon footprint and switch to an EV or are there other things that I have to consider... Thinking about all these things they appear straightforward for people who are constantly working in this field. If you have to deal with accounting, and employee stuff and energy crises at the moment, you may not have the headspace to look at this and make those, what look like really easy decisions' (Employer Membership Organisation 1).

Employers therefore still found it difficult to express their precise attitudes towards supporting more sustainable travel options for their employees because they lacked sufficiently accessible and understandable knowledge to make informed decisions. They also found it hard to know where to channel their resources to make change.

Providing clearer information on how to develop a Workplace Travel Plan³, and where to find the information needed to develop a coherent and effective plan will be essential.

2.3 What prompted employer interest in sustainable travel?

Although still in the early stages, the employers interviewed had begun to think about sustainable workplace travel and to put initiatives in place. Employer interest in this respect was prompted by an increased profile of environmental issues, a variety of contextual factors and government policies and support. Each is looked at in turn, below.

Increased profile of environmental issues

One factor that prompted employers to become interested in more sustainable travel was the increased profile of environmental issues in the media and society more generally. Interviewees said it was hard not to notice that environmental issues for businesses were much higher up the agenda than in the past. This was particularly since the attention given to the 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP⁴26), especially as it took place in the UK. This was matched by the desire to be an environmentally friendly business and/ or a genuine desire to be 'green'. The increased profile of environmental issues was reflected in discussions about organisational culture, the role of procurement, and competitive advantages from decarbonisation. These are discussed in turn.

The culture of the organisation. Some employer interviewees indicated that the desire to reduce travel emissions came from the culture and values of their organisation. This could be from senior management, from employees, shareholders or customers. For one employer interviewee, who campaigned on health issues where air pollution was a factor, the desire to reduce carbon emissions was fundamental to their organisational aims. The contribution that active travel could make towards reducing congestion and stress and improving staff health and wellbeing were also seen as part of some organisations' culture. Bartle and Chatterjee (2019) found that employers were more likely to be interested in sustainable travel if it was framed in terms of benefits to employers and employees. Pressure from customers or shareholders to reduce emissions also played a role.

Procurement also helped to focus employers' minds on the sustainability of their practices. Some larger employer interviewees made reducing emissions part of their policy when looking at their supply chains. At this stage, however, this was more to do with reducing carbon emissions more broadly, than specifically being applied to emissions from commuting or workplace travel. An employer interviewee in the not-for-profit sector highlighted that reducing emissions had become part of the tendering process when applying for funding for charitable work. They mentioned their funders wanting to know how they were meeting zero carbon targets, and even having provided funding for a specific role in the organisation for someone to promote this.

Competitive advantages from being 'green'. Both the employer interviewees and the literature emphasised that employers were increasingly influenced by the competitive

³ A 'Workplace Travel Plan' is a term used UK-wide to describe measures aimed at encouraging employees to use alternatives to the car for commuting and business travel.

⁴ NB the 'COP' means of conference of parties which is often used for conferences involving international parties. However, it has become especially associated with the annual United Nations Climate Change conference. The most recent being COP27, held in Egypt.

advantages that being sustainable gave them. This was either in terms of cutting fuel or other costs, recruitment and retention of employees, or gaining and keeping customers. One employer mentioned that they were considering having a few hybrid or electric cars on site that would be available to staff to use for business travel. They noted that not having these sustainable 'pool' cars in place fast enough was becoming a barrier to recruitment for roles requiring a lot of driving, as employees did not want to gain extra wear and tear to their own vehicles. When it came to keeping customers, an employer membership organisation interviewee also mentioned that the businesses they were representing were often choosing more sustainable options when considering where to spend their money.

Contextual factors

Sometimes employers were prompted to consider sustainable travel through contextual events (e.g. the COVID-19 pandemic), economic circumstances or historical ideas about the best modes of travel. These were sometimes beyond their control or arose because of different historical factors and trends (e.g. that businesses had been located in the area with travel by car in mind).

The COVID-19 pandemic. The stay-at-home instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic was one of the most influential factors in changing travel behaviours. One employer interviewee noted that carbon emissions had reduced since the pandemic due to the shift to remote or hybrid working facilitated by online working and video communications. While another said that the change to hybrid working – with less time travelling to the office or to sites – was prompted by the pandemic more than by environmental policy. The literature also reflected on this change. A briefing paper from Transport and the Environment (2022), discussed the way in which the pandemic upturned long-held ideas about business travel, and how quickly businesses were able to adapt the way they worked. The paper also emphasised how these changes should be quickly acted upon to reinforce the reduction of emissions before pre-pandemic 'bad habits' return. The CBI (2021) also encouraged employers to assess how they can now support employees to make greener choices when it comes to commuting by building on the engagement with work travel patterns arising from the pandemic.

Economic circumstances. The pandemic and rise in the cost of fossil fuels due to the war in Ukraine had focused employers' minds on ways to reduce fuel costs and be more sustainable. The sharp increase in the cost of gas and oil made moving to sustainable transport much more economic. Again, this was seen by some employer and membership organisation interviewees as a prime time for businesses to move to more sustainable fuels and many felt government support for them to do so would add momentum.

Remote or peri-urban locations. For those in more remote areas, using public or active transport was a challenge, and they relied more heavily on cars or vans. In research carried out by the Federation of Small Businesses (2016), high value was placed on the road network by 89% of small businesses, with rural and remote businesses being even more likely to value access to the road network. This was especially the case where employers were in peri-urban locations, or near motorways, where access by car had been part of the reasoning for location in the past. Larger employer interviewees and those based in business or retail parks on the edges of towns or cities tried to make use of local sustainable transport infrastructure when choosing a remote site. Alternatively, they had begun working with other employers in the same location to try to introduce it. In rural locations some employer interviewees had introduced minibus shuttle services between key locations (e.g. railways stations and town centres) so employees and customers could get to site. This was essential to be competitive as well as being environmentally friendly.

Government policies, funding and support

Employer and Local Authority interviewees, and the literature review all mentioned examples where the [Local Sustainable Transport Fund](#) had led to better public and active travel infrastructure as alternatives to commuting by car in their localities. The literature showed that some of the most significant mode switches from cars to more sustainable forms of transport were where national or Local Government as employers led by example, or where the number of car parking spaces were restricted through Local Government planning regulations (Bartle & Chatterjee, 2019). Recommendations of reporting on carbon emissions and business mileage also focused employers' minds on switching to electric vehicles.

Although there was a good deal of online information about sustainable travel options for businesses (e.g. Campaign for Better Transport, 2022; CoMoUK, 2021; Department for Transport, 2022), employer interviewees did not show a great awareness of this information, or were aware of it but had not used it to any great extent (the exception from our sample was awareness and some use of the [Liftshare](#) scheme). Local Authority interviewees had gone some way to try to involve employers in various schemes but take up was not always good. This was believed to be because some rural employers argued there was not the transport infrastructure in place to promote sustainable travel options, while smaller businesses tend to be in survival mode and so sustainability is not high on their agendas. Government will therefore have a key role to play in promoting better awareness of the help and support that various organisations that encourage more sustainable travel options can provide.

3 Barriers and facilitators to more sustainable travel

Key findings:

- It was easier for employers and employees to engage with decarbonising commuting in regions where public and active travel infrastructure were more developed.
- In regions with less developed public and active travel infrastructure, the literature and employer interviewees suggested road congestion and poor air quality could encourage employers to consider taking up sustainable travel initiatives.
- Approaches to reducing commuting emissions in regions with less developed public and active travel infrastructure included: reducing levels of non-sustainable commuting; making the use of electric vehicles easier; and releasing the potential of car sharing, lift sharing and carpooling.
- In regions with better developed public and active travel infrastructure, the literature and interviewees emphasised promotion of initiatives such as Bike2Work and salary sacrifice for electric vehicles, and consideration of access to public or active travel infrastructure when businesses are locating or relocating.

This chapter explores the types of initiatives that employers already had in place to try to encourage their employees to adopt more sustainable commuting and workplace travel. Barriers and facilitators to these initiatives or those being tried out are discussed, including factors that influenced their effectiveness.

3.1 Geographical areas with little or no access to public transport

Moving to more sustainable commuting and workplace travel will be more challenging in areas where there is little or no access to public transport. In the literature and the interviews, there was a view that the use of cars and vans in more rural or remote locations or for smaller businesses was, to some extent, inevitable given current alternatives (e.g. CBI, 2021; Federation of Small Businesses, 2016).

Employer interviewees with employees working in remote locations thought that smaller, more rural roads simply were not safe to promote active travel. This was because the roads had no footpaths, were narrow, and were dangerous for people on foot or cycling at night. Nonetheless, the literature and interviewees emphasised there were still ways to convince employers to reduce carbon emissions, and promote more sustainable travel, in these types of locations.

Congestion and air quality as catalysts for change

Traffic congestion at peak travel times and its associated impacts on air quality, delays for business travel, and the stress it creates for employees, were all highlighted as catalysts for employers and employees to start thinking about changing their travel behaviours (Bartle and Chatterjee, 2019). An employer membership organisation interviewee and the Campaign for Better Transport (2022) emphasised that some form of road charging may be necessary to reduce journeys at peak times, but explained that the pricing structure was likely to need to be complex to be fair to areas with less

choice to travel except by car. From their systematic review of different initiatives to reduce car use, Kuss and Nicholas (2022) observed that the biggest reductions were linked with congestion charging like the Ultra-Low Emissions Charing Zone (ULEV) in London. However, no studies were found that explored the effectiveness of charging away from city or town centre locations. Instead, Vanoutrive et al. (2012) argued that reducing single occupancy of vehicles through car sharing, lift sharing, or carpooling should be given greater priority in areas of high congestion where public or active travel were unlikely to become available alternatives.

Reducing the number of commuting and workplace travel journeys

An effective way to reduce commuting and workplace travel emissions, in areas where alternative modes were less available, was for employers to consider whether employees could travel less frequently. Four ways were highlighted for how employers had tried to reduce the amount of non-sustainable commuting and workplace travel:

Increase in remote or hybrid working since the COVID-19 pandemic. Some employer interviewees had embraced remote or hybrid working to reduce their carbon emissions, but also as an attractive way to recruit and retain staff who did not want to commute or who welcomed more flexibility. One of the largest employers interviewed, however, indicated that this move was more of a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic than deliberate policy to reduce carbon emissions. One Local Authority interviewee also observed a reduction in the frequency of buses in their area because of the decrease in the number of commuters. This in turn impacted people who had no choice but to commute by bus because they had to work on site and were on lower wages.

On-site or nearby accommodation in rural or remote locations. This was particularly linked to the hotel and hospitality sector. Employer interviewees shared that, by being housed nearby or at the workplace, their employees were able to walk or cycle to work.

Providing buses or minibuses to site. Private shuttle buses to site were mentioned in the literature to help reduce commuting emissions by avoiding journeys by car in more rural or remote locations (Kuss and Nicolas, 2022). For instance, one employer interviewee in the education sector in a rural location provided shuttle minibuses from the nearest train station and other locations to site so that staff and students had an alternative to get there other than by car. The minibuses were offered at a discounted rate for staff to make them more attractive. Over several years they had also increased the number of minibuses and routes to site from six to 15, with plans to add two more. In the longer term, they hoped to replace petrol minibuses with electric ones. However, another employer interviewee had considered providing a bus to site but decided against it because they were unsure what the level of take up would be.

Guaranteed ride home. The level of non-sustainable commuting was also reduced through the so-called 'guaranteed ride home' (Bartle and Chatterjee, 2019), like the type offered by [Rideshare](#) in the USA. This reduces the need for people to commute by car because they are guaranteed a free or low-cost car share, lift share or carpool journey if they travelled into work using a sustainable form of transport. Such rides were even more important when employees were travelling at times when they felt less safe, or public transport was not available.

Moving to electric vehicles

The literature and several employers interviewed emphasised the need to move to electric cars and vans as soon as possible in locations where few sustainable

alternatives were available. Employees highlighted a need to access electric vehicles, and to access the necessary infrastructure, which are discussed in turn.

Facilitating a transition to electric vehicles. Two employer interviewees had promoted the UK Government's salary sacrifice scheme⁵ as a way for employees to afford the purchase of an electric vehicle (e.g. [The Electric Car Scheme](#)). Nevertheless, the cost of purchasing an electric car was still regarded as the most significant barrier to purchasing one. One employer interviewee believed that employees needed to earn at least £30,000 per annum to make the purchase of an electric car viable, even with salary sacrifice. For this reason, the business had so far targeted the scheme at regional managers who travelled most between sites based in rural locations. A major retailer had also begun planning transition of its delivery vans and lorries to electric. One Local Authority had interest among some parish councils in having carpooled electric vehicles available in harder to reach locations or communities.

The roll out of electric workplace charging points. By far the biggest area of discussion in the literature was the view that there needed to be a much faster roll out of electric vehicle charging points at workplaces and more widely. In their paper, Transport & Environment (2022) stated that feedback from suppliers of electric charging points told them that interest was increasing rapidly. They reported that the number of sockets installed using the [Workplace Charging Scheme](#) had increased year on year despite a £150 reduction in grant funding in April 2020. However, the majority (75%) of businesses were using the scheme to install just one (38.1%) or two (36.9%) sockets per location. They also noted that there was considerable variation between the number of workplace charging points per car in different regions and the adoption of electric cars, with London, the South East and South West performing worst (see Transport & Environment, 2022 p.17-19).

Other evidence touched on potential facilitators and barriers to the roll out of workplace charging points. Facilitators highlighted by the literature were: introducing a mandatory number of electric charging points for new or refurbished car parks; reserved parking spaces for electric vehicles and exemption from any future workplace car park charges or levies; and contribution to a reduction of workplace carbon emissions when reporting them according to statutory requirements (Campaign for Better Transport, 2022; Transport & Environment, 2022; Greener Vision, 2017). Additionally, one employer interviewee also highlighted advertising charging points on [Zap-Map](#) to make retail, hospitality or office sites a destination for electric vehicles, thereby helping to recoup costs of installing them and making money from them when not being used by staff. The barriers highlighted in the literature were around what employers can do to install electric workplace charging points where they lease rather than own premises, and a lack of understanding of how employers could charge for charging points.

Car sharing, lift sharing and carpooling as sustainable alternatives

Key initiatives in the move to more sustainable commuting identified in the literature and the interviewees, were car sharing, lift sharing or carpooling, with these being especially important in areas with little or no available public or safe active travel options. Car sharing, lift sharing, or carpooling can reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles on the roads, thereby decreasing travel emissions whilst also reducing congestion.

The terminology used in the literature was not consistent, and there was no single definition of the terms 'car sharing' 'lift sharing' or 'carpooling' (Vanoutrive et al., 2012). The terms were often used interchangeably, and term 'ride sharing' was also used. For

⁵ Salary sacrifice schemes work on the basis that tax or National Insurance contributions are reduced in order that money which would have been paid can be put towards a social good, such as the purchase of an electric vehicle.

the purposes of this report, 'car sharing' is the short-term rental of vehicles (including car clubs) and can include the term 'carpooling'. Both involve a vehicle being made available to a group of employees or a local community, leading to less individual need to own or use a car. 'Lift sharing' is when two or more people share a vehicle, thereby reducing the number of single occupancy trips by car. Where car sharing, carpooling or lift sharing use electric vehicles this further increases the sustainability of these options.

The interviews and literature review gave insight into what can be done to further encourage these options, as well as highlighting some of the facilitators and barriers to their effectiveness as more sustainable travel alternatives. Facilitators and barriers to car sharing, lift sharing and carpooling were clustered around five themes, which are addressed in turn.

Extent of employer promotion, management and involvement in the initiatives.

One reason that employers were thought to embrace car sharing, lift sharing, and carpooling was that the measures were perceived as low effort and low cost to them. However, evidence from the literature review suggested that uptake of these options was more successful when employers moved beyond simple promotion of them as initiatives to a more active role in their promotion, organisation and management. Two aspects of promotion were emphasised. Firstly, the degree to which employers were involved in the promotion and organisation of these modes; and, secondly, whether promotion happened alongside active management of car parking (e.g. charging for workplace parking, reducing the number of available car parking spaces).

Another aspect of employer involvement in lift sharing was the 'guaranteed ride home'. Vanoutrive et al. (2012) found in their review of contemporary research into car sharing, lift sharing and carpooling, that this type of lift sharing was an effective way of promoting more sustainable travel. This was at least partly to do with the fact that an employer was recommending it, and in some cases organising the lift, rather than the employees doing it on their own. Without these more active approaches, the initiatives tended not to take off, or stopped being used after a short while. This was also confirmed by employer interviewees who had trialled these approaches. The literature and interviewees suggested that carpooling, car sharing or lift sharing could be a joint venture between employers in the same location (for example, in retail or business park) as part of wider pool. This might also help employers with the initial cost of investing in shared or pooled vehicles that could be used by staff belonging to more than one employer.

Car sharing, lift sharing, and carpooling were less effective where their promotion was not accompanied by other more active car use management strategies. Marketing or promotion of these services or apps were less effective when unaccompanied by other measures to discourage commuting by car. The literature emphasised that some employees were unlikely to switch from travel by car to more sustainable alternatives unless there was active car parking management (Ding et al, 2014), and proactive workplace travel planning (Bartle and Chatterjee, 2019). Charges for workplace parking, reduction in the number of car parking spaces, or priority parking for car sharers or car poolers were also important.

Multiple studies found that employers charging for car parking was an effective way to discourage staff from driving alone (Hess, 2001; Peng, Dueker & Strathman, 1996; Zhou, 2012). In addition to this, Su and Zhou (2012) found that, alongside the higher parking fees, providing reserved parking for vehicles with multiple people also made employees less likely to drive alone to work. This suggests that a combination of softer encouragement and harder force to change (sometimes referred to as carrot and stick (Vanoutrive et al., 2012)) may be effective when employers are looking to encourage car sharing and carpooling. Some literature and interviewees suggested that there needed to be more 'stick' and less 'carrot', encapsulated in the view of the need among

some employer and Local Authority interviewees for a stricter or more determined approach.

Extent of shared work and commuting patterns. The literature and some interviewees' accounts indicated that car sharing and lift sharing worked better for some types of work and commuting patterns than others. Where it worked well, this was for a several reasons: (i) people lived in the same household which built trust between them; (ii) they were on low incomes making sharing financially sensible; (iii) or they worked in sectors where employees often travelled to the same site and the same times (e.g. construction, manufacturing, utilities and warehousing). Notably, small professional architectural, legal and engineering businesses in urban settings were also early converts to car sharing, lift sharing and carpooling (Vanoutrive et al., 2012); possibly because they were often urban-based with access to alternatives for commuting to and from work, but reliant during the day on a car to travel to many different sites to meet clients.

Car sharing and lift sharing were found to work less well among universities, postal workers, public transport companies and in the health sector (Vanoutrive et al., 2012). Whilst universities were one of the sectors found to do the most to promote carsharing and lift sharing, barriers to employees taking it up were that they had highly flexible working patterns and travelled longer distances to get to work. Community health services had the need to make multiple site visits within a specified time period, which made sharing rides to dispersed locations in the time available more difficult.

One way to encourage greater car sharing where employees did not necessarily know each other, or work in the same locations, was by so-called lift or ride sharing apps and organisations promoting more sustainable travel (e.g. [Liftshare](#), [Zeelo](#), [RideTandem](#)). However, interviewees tended not to have heard of these, or had heard of them but were not promoting them. Although a couple of employer interviewees had used or engaged with *Liftshare*, this was not actively promoted by the companies and employees only found out through word of mouth. One Local Authority interviewee was aware of apps to manage and organise ride sharing but was unable to implement them due to perceived cost. It was not clear from their account whether this was a misunderstanding about the cost of using lift sharing apps for individuals, or due to business subscriptions to car sharing or carpooling apps.

Perceptions of trust and safety with other riders. Feeling unsafe with unknown riders and wanting one's own space remained much bigger barriers to carsharing and lift sharing than socio-demographic (e.g. gender, age) or cost factors (Vanoutrive et al., 2012). One employer interviewee who had been interested in implementing *Liftshare* had concerns around safety and the vetting process on behalf of their staff. Small worksites tend to have higher rates of car sharing and lift sharing, which might reflect that people know and trust the people they are travelling with. Building a sense of trust in others who are riding or sharing their car, for example through lift share app *membership*, will therefore be important if this mode of commuting is to gain popularity.

Tax and insurance issues. Drivers may have uncertainty around being insured when making a detour to pick somebody up or when using a company car, or be unsure if they need to declare any fees they may charge other passengers (money for fuel, for example) for taxation purposes (Vanoutrive et al., 2012). Additionally, at an employer level, even if a business has invested in a pool of vehicles, these can sometimes only be used for business travel, excluding the commute, due to current rules limiting the mileage businesses can claim tax relief on (CBI, 2021).

The potential of business-to-business (B2B) car pooling

Finally, one area that was highlighted as having even more potential than commuter car sharing or lift sharing for individuals was pooling of cars or vans for business to

business (B2B) travel. In this case, staff are provided access to a carsharing organisation's fleet through their employer rather than business to consumer where the individual is a member of the car sharing organisation. The B2B model also reduced the number of employees using their own cars to get into work. A survey carried out by Clark et al. (2015) found that 68 percent of B2B carsharing members reported carsharing as their main mode of business travel, and 51 percent previously used their own personal car for such travel. This indicates that employees may be less likely to use their own car to commute to and from work where they can use carpool vehicles during their working day to go out to visit customers or clients.

3.2 Geographical areas with more opportunity to use public or active travel

This section explores sustainable workplace travel options that work better in more built up urban areas where there are more opportunities to use public transport or active transport. For example, Dong et al. (2016) found that commuters are more likely to use active transport in high density-built environments with better walkability and bikeability, and where public transport options are more likely to be available. Mitchell et al. (2021) have previously reviewed evidence of what facilitates mode switch from cars to public and active transport, so the focus here is specifically on the role of employers and workplaces in facilitating that shift.

Discouraging travel by car

As with car sharing, lift sharing and carpooling, Van Malderen (2011) found that a mode shift in commuting by car to public or active travel was less likely to happen unless car parking on site was made less attractive or impossible. This could be by charging for workplace parking, reducing the number of parking spaces, or incentivising the use of other more sustainable modes of commuting. In some papers, a distinction between carrot (softer encouragement) and stick (harder force to change) was drawn. Bartle and Chatterjee (2019) found in their literature review that harder measures were more effective at reducing single occupancy commutes by car than softer ones:

'Experimental research designs show that 'hard' measures such as car parking charges to discourage car use were more effective in reducing the number of single occupancy commutes by car. By comparison 'softer' measures such as provision of improved transport information and discounted bus tickets had no discernible effect' (Bartle and Chatterjee, 2019 p.6).

They also noted that reducing car parking spaces was an emotive issue. However, an NHS Trust and a University in their study had found that maintaining a firm stance alongside facilitating alternatives eventually increased levels of sustainable commuting.

Public transport as an alternative

Across the literature and interviews, there was a view that changes and improvements to public transport are needed. Employer membership organisation interviewees, employer interviewees and the literature emphasised that public transport in the UK needs to be much cheaper and more reliable to use relative to the car for more people to choose it as an option. The Department for Transport (2021) also noted the need for cheaper, more flexible season tickets to reflect the greater amount of hybrid working since the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Campaign for Better Transport (2022) suggested that credit could be given for not using a car and to subsidise public transport or travel using MaaS apps. In one case study, [Wirral Transport Solutions](#) used public health funding to give new job starters in

the area free travel for the first month or a bike to cycle to work. People unfamiliar or anxious about using public transport could receive personalised travel planning and be accompanied the first few times. Although the scheme was regarded as successful, it was not properly evaluated.

It was also suggested that reliability of bus and train services needs to be improved and that services should run on bank holidays. Furthermore, it was deemed important to further align services across the public transport system so that multi-mode journeys are smoother and quicker (e.g. coordinating bus and train timetables). Finally, there was a recommendation to provide better routing of transport to better accommodate businesses.

Active travel and Micro mobility as an alternative

Regarding active travel, employer interviewees said they had promoted the [Bike2Work Scheme](#) among their employees and that some staff had taken it up. In another example, Greener Vision (2017) reported a project supported by a local Chamber of Commerce for smaller companies to provide bikes to employees (with 27 bikes issued across five employers). One employer interviewee also pointed to the installation of bike storage and shower facilities at the workplace to further encourage take up. An employer membership interviewee said they had worked with the [Cyclists Alliance](#) to encourage employers to promote active travel. However, the extent to which these options were taken up appeared to be rarely considered as a percentage of staff travelling to work in that way. Although, one employer interviewee who had monitored take-up said that of approximately 500 staff only three employees had taken advantage of the scheme.

E-scooters were also seen as a potential way to encourage sustainable commuting. Several interviewees and the literature said that the UK Government should make a swift decision about whether e-scooters will be legalised across the country, and the regulations that will govern their use (Campaign for Better Transport, 2022). However, the [National evaluation of e-scooter trials](#) (Department for Transport, 2022) report suggests a degree of regulation, better and safer instruction, and routes that separate e-scooters from other traffic will be required.

Locating or relocating a business

Another consideration mentioned by interviewees was locating or relocating their business to take advantage of available public or active travel options. For instance, one employer interviewee with large distribution centres said they had specifically located on the edge of a city where they knew they would be close to a bus route and a cycleway. Another employer interviewee had chosen city centre locations for their offices because of better access to public and active travel. Where this is not feasible, however, other options discussed in section 3.1 will be a better fit for employers and employees.

3.3 Summary of facilitators and barriers

There were multiple barriers and facilitators to encouraging sustainable commuting. These are discussed where relevant above. Table 1 provides a summary of these barriers and facilitators across the chapter.

Table 1: Barriers and facilitators to encouraging sustainable commuting

Issue	Barriers	Facilitators
Knowledge and access to information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers lack knowledge about sustainable travel options or headspace to think about them • Not knowing where to look for information/advice or where to start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A central place to signpost employers to information (e.g. Sustainability Hub) • Local Authorities offering travel planning advice
Planning and lobbying for change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National employers with dispersed workforces would have to lobby multiple Local Authorities • Employers have limited resources to influence transport infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowing who is responsible for travel planning and infrastructure in the locality • Gathering information about employee commuting plans, and working out sustainable alternatives
Out of town, remote or rural sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Out of town business parks are sometimes built with car use in mind, and can create congestion • Smaller employers don't have enough influence to put in place public and active travel infrastructure • Travelling by active transport often takes too long because of the distance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employers working together, and with Local Authorities, to explore active, public, car sharing, lift sharing and carpooling options • Considering access to public, active and car sharing options when locating a business or relocating to where these options are available
Upfront costs and investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of investment in transport infrastructure and EV charging facilities • Providing employer funded shuttle buses or minibus services to site depends on uptake and money upfront to fund them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New investment like the Local Sustainable Transport Fund • Using car parking charges to invest in sustainable alternatives • Employer-funded shuttle buses –public funding to seed services until viable
Electric vehicles and charging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upfront cost of electric vehicles remains a barrier to employees on lower pay • Charging infrastructure is not yet established enough for a substantial move from petrol and diesel to electric vehicles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking at charging facilities as a source of income, or creating a destination for customers • Planning EV charging and reserved parking into new car parks, and increasing uptake of the Workplace Charging Scheme
Car sharing, lift sharing and carpooling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees are not sufficiently clustered, or flexi work patterns act against, car sharing, lift sharing and carpooling • Trust and safety when considering other riders • Marketing/ promotion of these options are not enough in themselves 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introducing car parking charges and parking restrictions at the same time as introducing carsharing, lift sharing and carpooling or other options • Consider carpooling for business travel by locality rather than by employer • Guaranteed rides for shift workers working early or late • Exploring business to business vehicle pooling and sharing options
Taxation and government schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived disparity in tax allowances for electric vehicles relative to subsidies for public transport and mobility credits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salary sacrifice for EV company cars/ fleet vehicles • Expand Bike2Work Scheme to sole traders

Issue	Barriers	Facilitators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No access to Bike2Work Scheme for sole traders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider subsidy for public transport costs, mobility credits⁶ for MaaS⁷ or salary sacrifice instead
Public transport, Micro mobility and MaaS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The cost of public transport was thought by interviewees to be prohibitive relative to using the car to commute in most cases Frequent public transport isn't always a feasible option in less densely populated areas Some micro mobility is still not legal to use on roads or pavements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing investment in public transport, and bringing down the cost of fares relative to travel by car Employers subsidising public transport costs as part of pay and conditions MaaS with mobility credits Legalisation and expansion of the e-scooter trials

⁶ Mobility credits are an amount of credit given in place of using a single occupancy vehicle or car that can be used on a range of sustainable travel options. For instance, given the cost or a discount for taking a bus rather than driving to work.

⁷ A Mobility as a Service (MaaS) platform is a smartphone app that provides a one-stop shop for a range of sustainable transport modes, either on a pay-as-you-go basis or subscription.

4 Setting targets, monitoring, and benchmarking

Key findings:

- Employers tended to be at the early stages of setting emission reduction targets and monitoring progress against them.
- Outside voluntary Scope 3 reporting, the overall picture was of inconsistency of approaches, with trial and error around attempts to survey staff commuting patterns or to map journeys to try to facilitate more sustainable commutes.
- While employer interviewees felt that setting targets and monitoring progress were the right thing to do, they also thought it was important to minimise the complexity and administrative burden.
- Organisations interviewed broadly welcomed the idea of benchmarking or accreditation, provided it was tailored to geographical location, and the amount of work that necessarily had to be conducted on site, and was proportionate to organisational size and resources.
- They also thought benchmarking and accreditation should be implemented in a supportive rather than punitive way.

This chapter explores what employers had done in terms of setting targets to reduce carbon emissions in general, and in relation to commuting and workplace travel emissions specifically. It also examines their preferred ways of monitoring carbon emissions reductions against targets, and whether they supported the idea of being benchmarked against other organisations.

4.1 Setting targets and monitoring

Setting targets and monitoring

While some larger employers interviewed had already put in place sustainability roles to develop employer or workplace travel plans, there was a sense from the interviews that employers were not experts in understanding how to measure or report carbon emissions. This reflected the perceived information gap that the literature and interviewees highlighted in Chapter 2. Employer interviewees consistently reported that when it came to commuting and workplace travel emissions they were still at the starting point of thinking about these issues.

Sutcliffe (2022), in an article on 'Decarbonising the commute' for the Smart Transport website, noted that the United Nations-led [Greenhouse Gas \(GHG\) Protocols](#) will be increasingly important for organisations in how they measure their emissions, set targets, and put in place initiatives to reduce them. The GHG Protocols set out three 'scopes' of emissions. Scope 1 covers direct emissions from manufacturing and includes company vehicles; Scope 2 includes indirect emissions from the energy it buys, for example, to heat offices or buildings; whereas, Scope 3 covers indirect emissions associated with its supply chain and includes business travel and

commuting. Since April 2022, so-called 'quoted'⁸ companies in the UK have been recommended by Government to report their different Scope 3 emissions. Some of the employers interviewed had been directly reporting these emissions, although the reporting was variously discussed as estimating their 'carbon footprint' or reporting on 'fuel usage' or 'business mileage'.

However, not all interviewees were familiar with Scope 3 reporting, with their focus to date being on a variety of different targets or schemes, or on achieving net zero emissions more broadly. For example, one employer interviewee in the health sector said they set targets before Scope 3 reporting recommendations were introduced, to reduce their carbon emissions by 80 percent compared to 1990 levels by 2035. Emphasis on setting broader Net Zero targets was especially the case for Local Authority travel planning interviewees who were less aware of the role of commuting specifically. One employer membership organisation interviewee also said it was unlikely that such targets or reporting would be at the top of smaller businesses' agendas. Instead, their focus was on demonstrating local sourcing of goods or services, or that they had put in place specific initiatives to encourage more sustainable commuting and workplace travel (e.g. reducing business mileage, supporting the government's Bike2Work Scheme).

There was also reference among some employer interviewees to other standards on environmental protection and management, such as ISO14001 (Environmental Management). However, it was regarded by one employer interviewee as being more suitable for process-led businesses such as manufacturing rather than others with more diverse or responsive business practices such as hospitality. One interviewee working in the third sector said they tried to use ISO14001 but found they could not give the standards enough attention and stopped using it. Another employer interviewee said he thought the standard had too much of a heavy auditing burden, which took away resources from being able to implement and support more sustainable commuting and workplace initiatives. He said he would be particularly averse to resources being re-directed in that way.

Consequently, the overall picture was that employers were beginning to get to grips with setting targets and monitoring carbon emissions. But there was still a need to improve awareness of existing standards, and for clearer and more consistent guidance on how to set targets; what to monitor against them; and the most efficient ways to do this. Employers interviewed also felt that, in these early stages of trying to understand targets and making plans to achieve them, the 'information gap' meant the emphasis should be on support for how to do better, rather than on punishments for not achieving them.

Employer attempts at surveying or mapping staff commuting

The literature and interviewees emphasised it was vital that employers, especially larger ones, obtained a better understanding of how their employees travelled to and from work and what sustainable alternatives would be. Kuss and Nicolas (2022) report that personalised travel planning reduced commuting by car across 20 UK cities by 18 percent. However, Anable et al. (2015) emphasised that most data were: *'collected at the level of the individual employee or at an aggregated level, but not at the level of the workplace'* (p.14).

There was discussion in some employer interviews about the difficulties of trying to gather standardised and accurate employee travel data that could potentially be fed back to Government as part of a broader monitoring of progress towards sustainable commuting, including what was working in which sectors and which locations. One

⁸ A quoted company is one that has its equity share capital officially listed on a stock exchange while an unquoted company is one that does not.

employer interviewee emphasised how important it would be to have guidance on how to measure carbon emissions, what to measure, and what works to reduce them going forward:

A consistent way to measure commuting would be really useful, so we've done our own survey, we've tried to make it as user-friendly as possible so that people filled it in, but that meant... We've asked people how long it takes them to do a journey by a particular mode of transport and not mileage. So yes, if ... we're all measuring this in the same way', that would be really useful, knowing that there's some consistency behind methodologies and that we're all calculating it in the same way (Employer 3).

Two main approaches had been tried to gather information about staff commuting, which had led to different challenges:

- **Surveys of staff commuting patterns.** Some employers had already tried staff surveys or planned to do so soon. One large multinational employer interviewee said the biggest problem they had found was that it was voluntary for staff to provide information, which led to low response rates. He noted his organisation was also looking into other ways to obtain such information that might be easier for staff (e.g. by having a commuting mode option for staff to tick when filling in daily timesheets); although changing information systems to do this had proved particularly challenging. As above, an employer interviewee working in the charity sector said that a barrier to gathering data of this kind was lack of an appropriate, standardised and agreed methodology for gathering it and how to use it to achieve progress. Yet, despite these difficulties, the employers recognised the importance of gathering staff commuting mode data if they were to be able to think about what suitable sustainable alternatives would be. One employer membership organisation interviewed felt membership organisations would have a key role to play in agreeing, disseminating and supporting employers in surveying their employees' commuting patterns.
- **Mapping staff home locations to try to implement car sharing, lift sharing or carpooling initiatives.** The CBI (2021) notes that '*employers can play a proactive role in promoting shared travel through examining employees' journeys to work and providing matching services where similar commutes occur*' (p.17). Two employer interviewees had used this approach, one in the education sector based in a rural location and the other, in the retail and distribution sector based on the edge of a city. The latter employer had used platforms like [Zeelo](#) and [Ridetandem](#), which use postcode data and other information to make bus routes or shuttle buses from key locations to site smarter and more possible. The biggest barrier to this approach was regarded as the [General Data Protection Regulations \(2020\)](#), which meant that the employers had to ask all their employees for permission to use their full address to conduct the mapping, rather than the first part of their postcode. However, even where some mapping had been conducted, car sharing and shuttle buses had been difficult to introduce where the need for flexible working patterns meant not enough staff were travelling at the same time to share transport, or there was uncertainty about levels of demand.

Preferred approaches to monitoring

When asked whether employers wanted to be involved in monitoring and reporting information on progress to do with sustainable commuting, there were consistencies and differences in response. The consistencies reflected that, for larger businesses, Scope 3 reporting was important to address climate change and they thought it was the 'right thing to do'. There was broad agreement that reporting needed to be kept as simple as possible so that it could be understood by a lay person, or that employers could be directed to accredited experts who could easily compile information for them.

Another consistency of view was that either reporting should be kept 'admin light', or responsibility for it should be removed as far as possible from the employer with greater responsibility for gathering data being shouldered by Government.

The differences in views were reflected in the two paths for data gathering for government that were put forward. These were:

- **An employer survey of employees using a standard methodology fed back online at the organisational level.** In this approach, employers would survey their staff and feedback aggregate information direct to the Department for Transport or via a research agency acting on behalf of the Department.
- **A national representative survey of the public monitoring commuting and workplace travel modes over time.** This approach was seen by one larger employer as reducing the burden on businesses. However, this may represent a challenge in terms of achieving a large enough sample to give regional or local authority prevalence of uptake of different modes.

It is possible that both approaches will be needed, especially when monitoring progress among smaller and medium-sized employers who will have less resources to devote to surveying and reporting on staff commuting and workplace travel.

4.2 Views on benchmarking and accreditation

Interviewees involved in the review were specifically asked about their views on benchmarking of organisations. This involves organisations being ranked against each other on the progress towards achieving specific targets or receiving an accreditation mark for reaching a specific standard. Significantly, both employer and employer membership organisation interviewees broadly supported the idea of benchmarking as a 'recognition' of an employer's efforts and achievements in reducing carbon emissions, and as an 'incentive' towards achieving them. For instance, one employer membership organisations said:

If [benchmarking] is recognition that you'll be standing out and also ... government recognition that this is not just a sign of approval, but this is like, "Okay I can demonstrate that to my supply chain, to my suppliers even if you don't necessarily measure your carbon footprint but have that sign of approval". Yes, it could be a way of another incentive for them (Employer Membership Organisation 1).

Nonetheless, employers interviewed said they would need to know more about such a scheme before they could fully commit to it. They were also concerned that businesses would not necessarily be competing on an even playing field, and that several factors needed to be considered for benchmarking of commuting and workplace travel to be fair. These were:

- **Location.** Especially the availability of more sustainable public and active travel alternatives in the area, and whether the organisation was in a city or town-centre, on the urban fringe, or in a rural area.
- **Sector and amount of necessary on-site work.** For instance, interviewees noted that certain sectors, such as manufacturing, warehouse distribution, and healthcare often had little option but to travel to site to work, whereas other sectors had more ability to adapt to hybrid or remote working.
- **Size of employer and resources available.** An employer membership organisation noted that SMEs were less likely to be able to have a dedicated person to develop a workplace travel plan and investigate or commit to more sustainable travel options. However, employer interviewees also observed that it

would be easier for smaller or micro organisations to know their staff commuting patterns, whereas larger employers may have multiple sites with different issues on providing sustainable travel alternatives across each one.

No existing benchmarking or accreditation for reducing carbon emissions from employee commuting or workplace travel specifically were found. However, one approach was provided by Transport and Environment (2022) for assessing the amount of aviation business travel for employers in Europe and the USA, which offered some insight. Under this approach, indicators used to score companies included: (i) level of commitment to reducing carbon emissions; (ii) target adoption; (iii) type of target; (iv) percentage reduction commitment; (iv) timeline to target; (v) whether they report progress publicly (vi) air travel emissions in a particular year, (vii) number of years the organisation had been reporting emissions. Although this approach was still in development.

Another area of discussion on benchmarking and accreditation was the view that it should be used by organisations to identify where they needed support, and to be signposted to where they could receive it. Employer membership organisation and Local Authority interviewees both said they saw a role for themselves in supporting employers in these respects (e.g. by setting up a web hub or portal for resources, organising forums and webinars on key issues, bringing employers together in specific localities to discuss travel options and local infrastructure development). Employer interviewees said they were currently struggling to find information and that they came across it in a haphazard way.

5 Future support needed from Government

Key findings:

Interviewees' suggestions for Government support for employers revolved around four main themes:

- Providing clearer national policies and guidance to help employers decide what they can do to facilitate sustainable travel.
- Facilitating better information sharing, advice and networking between stakeholders, including supporting initiatives to develop sustainability hubs for information and advice.
- Supporting Local Government to continue to invest in sustainable travel infrastructure for sustainable travel options, while also supporting group, shared or public alternatives to single use of cars and a faster transition to electric vehicles.
- Having a national strategy to funding initiatives with joined up-thinking across departments and authorities.

A final part of the scoping review was to explore what help and support employers needed to move towards more sustainable commuting and workplace travel, and to meet the aims of Commute Zero. This chapter builds on the facilitators to decarbonising commuting that were discussed in Chapter 3, and explicitly focusses on suggestions in the literature and interviews for future Government support.

5.1 A national focus for policy and culture change

Whilst interviewees were aware of Government calls to reduce carbon emissions from commuting and workplace travel, they also felt that policy in this area had been slow to get off the ground. It was therefore recommended that the Government increase awareness of the policy and develop a national strategy and narrative by providing clear guidance on ways to facilitate sustainable commuting and by encouraging a nation-wide culture change in travel habits.

Clear national policies and guidance

An employer membership organisation interviewee highlighted that lack of Government policy had hampered businesses from encouraging sustainable commuting. Local Authority interviewees asked for the Government to provide clearer policies and guidelines for them to refer to, which they felt would also give them more authority when encouraging business owners and managers to engage with initiatives. For employer interviewees, central Government needed to provide guidance or a checklist of how to establish what is possible for their employees and how to put effective initiatives in place. They felt this would make it easier to get initiatives underway, as they said managers were currently discouraged from doing so by having to seek permission to put initiatives in place. Furthermore, employers and Local Authority interviewees suggested that central and Local Government should lead by example by implementing sustainable commuting and workplace travel initiatives themselves.

Encouraging culture change

For Commute Zero to be successful, interviewees said that a national cultural and behavioural change is required. In order to achieve this change, there were calls for Government to promote sustainable travel in a holistic way, and to encourage the creation of dedicated sustainability roles in workplaces. These are discussed in turn.

Promoting sustainable travel holistically

Interviewees felt that without a comprehensive culture change in travel habits across society, employers and commuters may feel singled out if Commute Zero is presented as standalone policy. It was therefore suggested that the Government should promote sustainable commuting in the context of other (existing and new) initiatives that help to enable changes in behaviours in other parts of life as well. Examples included: (a) promoting the use of active and public transport for leisure, which was thought might also encourage their adoption when commuting; (b) work with schools to promote cultural and behavioural change in travelling at an early age; and (c) introducing stronger disincentives for car use, such as supporting the expansion of ULEZ in London or broadening emission-based parking charges across the country.

Creating sustainability roles in workplaces

There was also a call for culture change within workplaces, through the introduction of dedicated sustainability roles or champions, and commuting-related roles within businesses. Interviewees thought that having an identifiable person or persons responsible for carbon emission reduction plans would help promote the sustainable commuting agenda and develop expertise in what to do, making it easier for businesses and councils to work together on the issues involved. Notably some large employers interviewed had already begun to put such roles in place, and one of the employer membership organisation interviewees said they were developing a network of sustainability champions within businesses. Focusing specifically on electric vehicle charging, the literature also emphasised the need for dedicated roles to put workplace charging points in place. It was argued that, without them, accountability and decision-making often fell through the gaps, making implementation of initiatives more difficult (Transport and Environment, 2022).

5.2 Information, advice and networking

Employers interviewed expressed finding it difficult to know where and how to find government information about reducing workplace travel emissions, stating that they often found things out accidentally or in a piecemeal way. Three possible ways were suggested for improving access to information and advice on assessing employee needs, what could be done, and what initiatives were likely to be successful.

Bringing together information on initiatives

Employer, employer membership organisation and Local Authority interviewees all expressed the need for a central place where they could find information about sustainable travel options and/ or be signposted to advice on best options for them. They argued that a central hub with this information would be a good start. In particular, they wanted advice on developing sustainable business practices, implementing a workplace travel plan, and information about grants or loans to help put new initiatives in place. One employer membership organisation interviewee had identified this need for smaller and medium-sized businesses and planned to set up a sustainability hub for SMEs to help them become net zero carbon businesses.

Local transport planning advice

In addition to a centralised hub, employer interviewees also expressed the need for guidance on where to access *local* travel planning advice that would be more tailored

and specific for businesses and staff in their locality. In terms of where to obtain such guidance, a study looking into effective interventions to reduce car use in European cities found that Local Government was best at bringing together the most important stakeholders when leading effective city-level interventions to reduce car use (Kuss and Nicholas, 2022). Additionally, one of the Local Authority representatives interviewed mentioned delivering tailored transport plans for businesses. This involved assessing businesses' and employees' commuting needs, understanding their local travel circumstances and developing a plan to encourage more sustainable travel. They stated that employers were receptive to this scheme and it had worked well. However, it was resource-intensive, and the funding used to support the initiative had run out, meaning the scheme had to be discontinued.

Fostering stronger relationships between businesses and Local Authorities

Linked to the need for support and leadership from Local Authorities, was a call across interviews and the literature for stronger relationships between businesses and Local Authorities, and between businesses themselves. A study looking into effective interventions to reduce car use in European cities found that collaborations between different stakeholders, such as government, private sector, and civil society, were important for the planning and decision-making of most city-level interventions to reduce car use in Europe (Kuss and Nicholas, 2022). Employers interviewed also said that it would help to know who was responsible for local travel infrastructure and delivery to make planning of public and active travel options easier, as well as providing private shuttle buses or car sharing options to out of town or business/ retail park sites.

Through better communication and collaboration, employer interviewees thought that Local Authorities would learn about the local transport network from an employer's perspective and be able to provide them with better support. Meanwhile, stronger networking with other employers in the area would help facilitate sharing of knowledge on what works well and less well in their area, thereby also enabling businesses to organise employee transport together rather than doing it by themselves. However, it was emphasised that sharing good practice needed to be tailored to the location, size of employer and, to some degree, their sector (although lessons were sometimes transferrable across sectors). An employer membership organisation interviewee suggested that regional forums or online webinars were good ways to share information.

5.3 Promoting and supporting viable alternatives to the car

There was consensus across the literature and interviews that single occupancy car use was still a more attractive commuting option relative to the affordability and provision of other travel modes. There was therefore a call to support and promote viable alternatives to single car use. Interviewees also emphasised the need to have viable alternatives in place before disincentives to commute by car were put in place if mode switch from car to alternatives was to be effective.

Improving affordability, reliability and convenience of public transport

A Local Authority encompassing a large rural area highlighted that most carbon emissions in their area come from journeys of greater than ten miles. Therefore, to make a real difference, the greatest focus needed to be on encouraging the use of buses as well as trains as alternatives to the car over these distances. However, public transport, particularly outside of urban centres, was regarded by interviewees to be unreliable and inconvenient to use, especially when compared to travel by car.

Interviewees across the sample wanted public transport to be much more affordable, including having more flexible and subsidised season tickets. Additionally, salary sacrifice for season tickets or MaaS mobility credits were highlighted in one case study of [*Greener Vision: Wirral Travel Solutions*](#) as an alternative to similar tax advantages promoting electric cars.

Promoting active travel

As mentioned above, there was a suggestion for the promotion of active travel for both commuting and leisure. For commuting, one employer membership organisation interviewee thought that the Bike2Work scheme should be extended to sole traders. The other employer membership organisation, and a paper by the Campaign for Better Transport (2022), suggested that the Government needed to decide on whether to legalise private e-scooters, with the latter arguing against the introduction of regulations, such as requiring a driving license, to make them as attractive to use as possible.

Alongside this, there was consensus across interviews that the way roads were used needed to be reassessed to provide adequate infrastructure that will enable safe and increased use of active travel options (Department for Transport, 2022). This included providing more, safer and better-connected cycle routes, particularly in very rural areas with fast country roads that lack pavements and streetlights. Linked to this, there was a call for more joined-up thinking when conducting local road planning and integrating active travel infrastructure. For example, considering active travel when making changes to speed limits or adapting roads, with the Local Authorities taking the lead on this matter.

Supporting group, shared or public travel alternatives to the car

Where there was a lack of public transport in their locality, employer interviewees had to look at introducing privately hired buses or minibuses to transfer employees. However, this often had to be paid for upfront without knowing if it would be used or economically viable, which was a barrier for some to starting up such initiatives. There was therefore a request for the Government to support businesses trying to establish such services, whether as an individual employer or a group of employees creating a bus or carsharing service together. One employer interviewee also suggested the Government could relax licensing laws on drivers of larger vehicles. The interviewee thought that currently only those who passed their driving test before 1997 could drive vehicles that weigh over three-and-a-half tonnes. This was considered particularly problematic because the weight of electric batteries tended to tip electric vehicles into the higher weight categories that needed a different licence. Allowing more people to drive slightly heavier electric vehicles may therefore make it easier for companies to provide more sustainable shuttle buses and ease the problem of finding drivers to drive them.

Promoting the transition to electric vehicles in areas where there is no viable alternative to the car

As discussed in Chapter 3, interviewees also advised that decarbonisation of commuting would be difficult to implement in areas with few alternatives to commuting or workplace travel by car or van unless transition to electric vehicles is prioritised. It was therefore suggested that, in addition to salary sacrifice schemes for electric vehicles, an increase in taxable mileage allowance for electric cars was needed to help encourage take-up of electric car schemes:

'If you're doing business mileage in a private car, we can pay [employees] 45 pence tax-wise. In an electric car, it's five pence, and this is some of the pushback we're getting... The government really needs to consider should the mileage rate increase so that businesses can pay a higher rate for electric

vehicles, which would encourage more staff to take up schemes like the electric car schemes' (Employer 2).

However, for a push to electrical vehicles to be successful, the infrastructure for charging electric vehicles also needs to be in place. A report by the Campaign for Better Transport (2022) called for a wider and faster roll-out of this charging infrastructure. The report argues that, for smaller businesses which can't invest in their own depots, Local Authorities should be given grants to invest in charging hubs and on-street schemes.

In terms of EV charging in workplace car parks, the literature suggested that Local Authorities could implement policies such as exemptions to workplace parking levies (where they are in place) to encourage use of electric vehicles. It also recommended car parking policies that mandate the installation of EV charging in existing, new or refurbished non-residential car parks (Transport and Environment, 2022).

5.4 More strategic, continuous and dispersed funding

Across interviews and literature, insufficient funding for workplace travel initiatives and necessary infrastructure changes emerged as one of the main barriers to encouraging sustainable commuting. To improve funding provision, there was a call for a review into how funding is provided to small businesses and Local Authorities.

Grants for small businesses

Currently, many grants provided by government are for relatively big investments of £25K to £100K and do not cater for the needs of small businesses. An employer membership organisation interviewee therefore called for smaller sized grants to be made available for SMEs of up to 250 employees and sole traders to help adopt sustainable business travel across all businesses and sectors (e.g. to buy cargo bikes). Furthermore, in an article the Federation for Small Businesses proposed a grant scheme called 'Help to Green', which is based on a similar approach to [Help to Grow-Digital](#), which would offer businesses a £5,000 voucher to put towards qualifying environmental products or services (e.g. purchasing or replacing equipment to become more energy-efficient) (Federation of Small Businesses, 2021).

Funding provided to Local Authorities

Local Authority interviewees expressed difficulty funding larger initiatives and the types of infrastructure changes needed to provide viable sustainable commuting alternatives. To help improve this, they suggested that Government look at funding in three ways:

Holistic funding. This meant ensuring that funds provided cover all types of initiatives required for successful roll-out of the policy. For example, a Local Authority interviewee stated that they had many small funds which allow them to focus on improving certain roads. However, the funding was not enough to provide adequate infrastructure across the whole of their authority, meaning that initiatives were developed in a stand-alone and piecemeal way rather than strategically.

Continuous funding. Local Authority interviewees also said that short-term funding meant that good work to support more sustainable travel was sometimes undone. One interviewee explained that time-limited funding acted as a barrier to setting up initiatives, because its 'stop/start' nature made it difficult to keep the momentum going and to see policy aims and initiatives through to the end.

Reinvesting money from discouraging travel by car. Both the literature and interviewees suggested that the money raised by congestion charging, car parking charges, or workplace levies should be ring fenced to improve more sustainable commuting and workplace travel infrastructure and initiatives. It was argued that without such reinvestment, these disincentives for single occupancy car use tended to be seen as punishing motorists and were therefore likely to be counterproductive (Mitchell et al. 2021).

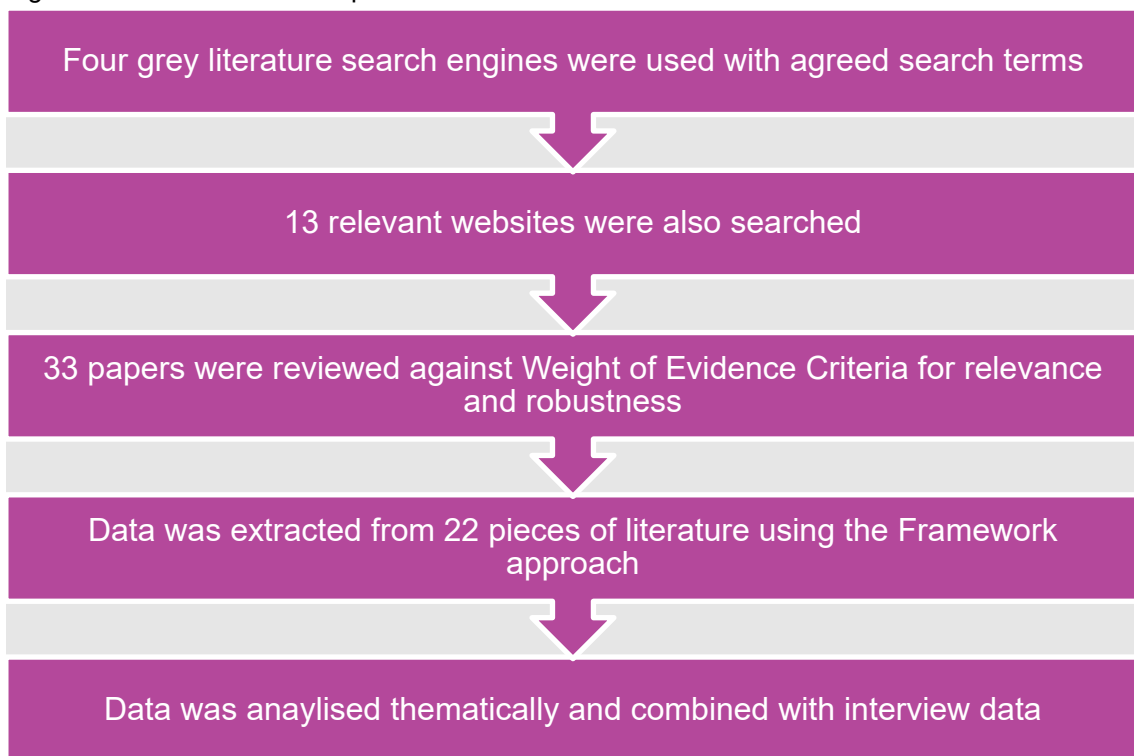
Appendix A. Literature Review

The Literature Review process

The searching process for a literature review uses an iterative process. Information is extracted from an initial set of documents, key gaps are identified, and more documents are searched for to fill those gaps.

In summary, literature was searched for using four selected grey literature and web search engines, with search terms agreed with the Department for Transport (DfT) reflecting the study aims. We used the same approach with 13 more websites selected because of their focus on transport, the environment or reducing businesses' carbon emissions. Weight of Evidence criteria (WoE) were used to prioritise the evidence for relevance, quality and robustness. In total, we reviewed 22 pieces of literature for data extraction and thematically summarised the data. We found very little literature that included primary data collection direct from employers or employees rather than secondary analysis of existing data sets. While there was useful information about initiatives, it was rarely assessed with high levels of rigour. However, the literature review and interviews together provide an important starting point for initiatives and research going forward.

Figure B.1 Literature Review process



List of academic databases and websites searched

Table 2 Grey literature search engines searched

Grey Literature Search Engines
Google Scholar
Open Grey – grey literature across Europe
Grey Net International – grey literature worldwide
APA Psychextra – conference materials, fact sheets and other

Table 3 Websites/repositories searched

Websites/ repositories to search
Business in the Community BITC
Campaign for Better Transport
Centre for Transport and Society UWE Bristol – University of the West of England, Bristol
About CIHT – Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation
Collaborative Mobility UK
Community Transport Association
Department for Transport (DfT) – Department for Transport
Greener Vision
Sustrans
Transport and the Environment
Transport Focus
The future of transport TRL – Transport Research Laboratory
Transport Studies Unit University of Oxford – University of Oxford

Search Terms

A combination of the following search terms was used when conducting a search of the academic databases and websites.

Table 4 List of search terms

Audience/population	Topic	Evidence
Employer	Sustainable travel	Evidence
Employer attitudes	Active travel	Evaluation
Employer perceptions	Green travel initiatives	Review
Employees	Green travel plans	Report
Business	Sustainable travel to work schemes	Paper
Company	Carpool programs	Research
Organisations	Lift/car sharing programs	
	Public transport policy	
	Bike/cycle to work scheme	
	Electric cars	
	Low emission	
	Disabled/disability	
	Inclusive travel	
	Barriers	
	Facilitators	
	Cost	
	Benefit	
	Commute	
	Workplace	
	Travel	
	Transport	

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion and exclusion criteria were developed to set parameters around what articles should be included as most relevant and appropriate for this subject, as well as forming the search strings.

Table 5 Inclusion and exclusion criteria used in screening

Screening Criterion	Description
Language	Only literature in English was included; literature written in other languages was excluded.
Publication status	Mainly 'grey' literature and published articles that included robust evidence.
Date of publication	Literature published in or after 2012 was included; literature published before this date was excluded.
Country contexts	The proposal recommended G7 countries (viz. Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, UK, USA). Additionally, the EU, EFTA, Australia and New Zealand).
Population	Included literature relating to transport authorities, transport regulators, Local Authorities, employers and employer representative organisations, and organisations supporting or delivering initiatives that will encourage sustainable commuting.
Study design	Quantitative, qualitative and mixed method designs that include robust samples, data collection, analysis and reporting
Topic	Any study that reports <i>evidence</i> on (a) employer attitudes to achieving and monitoring progress towards sustainable commuting; (b) how employer attitudes vary by type of initiative to encourage sustainable commuting, sector, employer size and location; (c) perceived and actual costs and benefits to employers, and (d) support needed for employers to adopt initiatives.

Weight of Evidence Criteria

Weight of Evidence Criteria was applied, with three categories used to prioritise the pieces of evidence.

Table 6 Weight of Evidence Criteria

	Relevancy to aims score	Objective unfilled otherwise	Robustness of evidence or literature	Academic, grey or other	WoE score
Range	0-5	0-3	0-3	0-3	0-14

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Appendix B. Scoping Interviews

A commercial list of employers from Experian was used as the sample frame. Regions were selected and targeted for recruitment based on high car usage and/or low availability of public transport, including parts of the East Midlands, West Midlands, North East, South West and South East (excluding London). The sample included larger businesses with more than 250 employees. Employers were also selected according to sector, size of workforce, and a variety of initiatives to reduce community or workplace-based emissions, although this proved challenging (see below).

This resulted in a sample frame of 923 employers, all of whom were contacted by email and then followed up by NatCen's Telephone Unit at least once. All of those with whom we made contact were screened for inclusion to check if they have put in place at least one initiative aimed at reducing emissions. There was a financial incentive of £100 which participants had the option of donating to a charity of their choice. Nonetheless, recruitment proved particularly challenging.

Over a two-month recruitment period, six employers agreed to take part by this route. One additional employer was identified as a good practice case illustration in the literature review and contacted via the organisation's website and contact email. Of the seven employers, six were in the South East of England and one in the South West. Findings by region therefore need to be interpreted in this context, although the literature review does give a wider national picture.

For both the employer membership organisations and Local Authorities, the core research team carried out recruitment. Two interviews with employer membership organisations were conducted: one representing larger employers and the other smaller to medium sized employers (SMEs). The same regions were targeted for local authority recruitment as for employers. Four Local Authorities took part; two were in the South West of England, one in the South East and one in the North East.

Table A.1 Sample

Employer	Overview
Employer 1	E1 works in the education sector at a school/college in a rural location that isn't accessible by footpath. They are the transport manager responsible for 500 staff and all the students getting to site.
Employer 2	E2 works in the hospitality, accommodation and food services sector with around 4,800 staff; they are based at a rural site for the region they cover. They are the director of sustainability who assesses and tries to reduce the carbon footprint.
Employer 3	E3 works in the education, healthcare and admin sector at a national charity supporting an illness. They are the sustainability manager who takes responsibility for developing a plan to reduce the charity's impact on the environment.
Employer 4	E4 works in the education, healthcare and admin sector at a local healthcare provider. They operate in an urban location and deal with employee relations and advising on policies and procedures.
Employer 5	E5 works in the retail sector in a peri-urban location. They are the operations manager who looks after the staff, planning and training.
Employer 6	E6 works in the education, healthcare and admin sector at a mental health partnership in a mixed rural and urban location. They are the energy and environment manager who focuses on developing plans, reporting carbon emissions and reviewing transport policies.
Employer 7	E7 works in the business admin and services sector at a provider of engineering technical consultancy which operates globally. They are part of the global corporate sustainability team who is involved with various initiatives trying to reach net zero targets.
Employer membership organisation 1	EM1 works for a UK business organisation which represents small and medium-sized businesses with up to 250 employees.
Employer membership organisation 2	EM2 is a transport policy lead for a non-profit organisation that lobbies on behalf of larger businesses in the United Kingdom on national and international issues.
Local Authority 1	LA1 works for the Local Authority in the highway and transport team as well as the sustainable transport group. The Local Authority is in the South West of England.
Local Authority 2	LA2 works in the strategic transport team within economy and regeneration. The Local Authority is in the North East of England.
Local Authority 3	LA3 works for their city council as the service lead for next zero and businesses. The Local Authority is in the South West of England.
Local Authority 4	LA4 works in transport policy where they promote sustainable travel, work with schools, new housing, residential developments and workplaces to form travel plans. The Local Authority is in the South East of England.

Employer Topic Guide

Introduction

- **Introduction to researcher.** Thank you for agreeing to take part
- **Introduction to NatCen** - independent research organisation, commissioned by **Department for Transport (DfT)** to carry out this study
- **Explanation of research:**
 - Carrying out 9 in-depth scoping interviews with employers, alongside interviews with other stakeholders and a literature review
 - Interviews explore how employers are adopting ways to reduce business and commuting emissions, and what can be done to encourage more employers to do so
 - The findings will be used to inform policy development and further research with employers in the field
- **Participation is voluntary** - there are no right or wrong answers, you can choose not to discuss any issue
- **What you say is confidential and your participation is anonymous.** This is unless you want to be named when identifying good practice
- We will write a report of our findings, but no names or personal details will be included. You will not be identifiable to anyone else in the report
- **We will be recording the interview**, so we have an accurate record of what is said

- Recorder is encrypted and files stored securely on NatCen's computer system in line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018
- Only the research team will have access to the recordings
- Data will be deleted at the end of the project
- **The interview will last up to 60 minutes**
- At the end of the interview we will confirm some details to allow us to pay **£100 as a thank you payment, which we can give to a named charity**
- **Any questions?**

Ask for permission to start recording

Introductions and contextual information (10-15 minutes)

Aims: To understand the type of business, the role/s of the participant/s, and relevant local factors that affect business travel and travel of employees to and from the workplace or workplaces.

Information about the employer/ business

- Type of employer/ business
- Fixed sites, or remote/ hybrid working
- Single or multiple sites
 - If a branch, refer to the company and the branch
- Number of and type of employees
- Types of working arrangements
 - Shift work/ regular hours
 - Degree of flexibility

- Ways employees get to and from work
 - In the past
 - Any recent changes
- Other workplace-related travel
 - Type of (e.g. any wider business travel, including transport needed for industry, fleets etc.)
 - Any changes over time (e.g. post-COVID, cost of living, environmental concerns, change in the business etc.)

Role at organisation

- Role within the organisation
- In setting policy on workplace emissions
- HQ or specific site/ branch

Involvement in initiatives to reduce workplace emissions

- Policy and/ or implementation

Local context

- Where the employer is based OR information about location of the site/ branch
- Location
 - Urban/ rural/ suburban/ mixed
 - Extent of local public/ active travel infrastructure
 - Types of vehicles used for business
 - Size of fleet and composition/ split (e.g. car/ van/ bike, Electric vehicles vs petrol/ diesel etc.)
 - Ability of employees to travel without using cars/ motorised transport when...?
 - commuting

- undertaking wider business travel (e.g. travelling for meetings/ site visits/ conferences etc.)
- Ability of employees to commute/ undertake wider business travel using:
 - Public transport
 - Cycling/ walking
 - Integrated transport network
- Ability of employees to use sustainable workplace travel
 - Bikes/ micro mobility
 - Electric vehicles
 - 'Last mile' deliveries
- Local built environment
 - Amount of car parking available (free and charged)
 - Extent it promotes sustainable transport
 - Effects on car use/ single person car use
 - Appearance/ safety
 - Other factors
- Local air pollution/ quality
 - Views on/ knowledge of
 - Company/ employer view
 - Employee views
 - Sources of knowledge
 - Information collected

Initiatives and plans to reduce workplace emissions (20 minutes)

Aims: to explore what the participant and employers have done/ intend to do to reduce workplace emissions, including what works or doesn't work.

Initiatives AND/ OR plans to reduce workplace emissions

- Type/s of initiatives or plans
 - Replacing fleet vehicles with electric or other low emission vehicles
 - Car/ vehicle pooling, sharing, including low emission vehicles (prompt for any involvement with Mobilityways/ Liftshare)
 - Discouraging car use (e.g. car park charges, reducing number of car park spaces)
 - Encouraging electric vehicle use (e.g. installing electric vehicle charge points for employees, reserved electric vehicle parking spaces)
 - Encouraging use of micro mobility (e.g. e-scooters) public or active transport
 - Better integration into local transport structures
 - Changes to local built environment
 - Workplace travel plan(s) for the long-term strategy for safe, healthy and sustainable travel options.
 - Incentives for sustainable travel (e.g. cycle to work scheme, season tickets, provided bus or subsidised travel, payments for not using a car, salary sacrifice for EVs)
 - Other
- Length of time initiative/s in place OR when intend to implement
- Have they worked with/ intend to work with any other organisations to implement the initiatives?

- Other employers
- Local authorities/ transport authorities
- Organisations promoting sustainable travel initiatives
- Work associations/ trade unions
- Other employer representative/ membership organisations
- Anyone else

○ What prompted action?

- HR
- General media
- Employer/ employee lead
- Business-based initiative (e.g. employers getting together, CBI, CIPD)
- Post-COVID/ cost of living increases
- Encouraged by other organisations (Probe which ones and how encouraged)
- Tool kits (Probe which ones used and perceptions of them, BITC)
- Business providing travel services or planning/ journey planning apps

What has worked well/ less well?

- How assessed or measured
- Toolkits/ initiative support or guidance

What challenges did they face?

- How did they overcome them?

Anything would do differently if starting again?

Any support that would help...?

- from government, local authority or membership organisations etc.?

Attitudes to initiatives and monitoring (20 minutes)

Aims: to explore attitudes of the employer/ organisation to further reducing workplace travel and commuting emissions. To understand willingness to set targets and monitor progress, and the factors that may act as barriers or facilitators to doing so, including actual or perceived costs/ benefits.

What more could be done to move towards net zero workplace travel emissions?

- Views on employer role in encouraging this
 - Work associated travel
 - Travelling to/ from work
 - Whether sustainable transport options help/ hinder recruitment and retention of staff
 - Adding information on travel options to induction
- Awareness of initiatives/ good practice examples
 - What factors make it a success?
- Willingness/ ability to do more?
 - By them
 - By employers locally/ nationally
 - Other role players in achieving this

Facilitators/ barriers to doing more?

- Views on incentives/ disincentives, including financial

- To purchase/ use low emission vehicles/ micro mobility (e.g. e-scooters)
- Reducing parking spaces
- Charging for parking spaces
- Providing/ pooling/ sharing vehicles
- Subsidising public or active travel
- Providing facilities to enable active travel (e.g. space for bikes. showers)
- Other

- Perceptions of effects/ impacts on employees

- Reluctance/ willingness to adopt
- Reasons for reluctance/ willingness
- Impacts on recruitment/ retention of employees
- Health and well-being benefits
- Other costs/ benefits

Views on setting workplace/ commuting targets, and monitoring/ reporting emissions?

- What done to date in terms of:
 - Setting targets
 - Monitoring/ measuring effects on emissions
 - Reporting the data
- Nationally/ locally (e.g. specific sites/ branches)
- What help they need/needed?
- Preferred ways of collecting
 - Type of data (self-reported, smart technology)

- Mode of travel
- Distance travelled
- Amount of emissions
- App based
- Any other
- Ability to collect/ process (prompt specially about issues to do with **GDPR** and how they were overcome)
- Perceived costs/ benefits

Thoughts on joining a scheme that promotes shift to sustainable travel/ monitors emissions

- Idea of index/ benchmarking
- Feelings based on initiatives already undertaken
- National/ local/ regional?
- Awareness of/ use of **Mobilityways, Liftshare**
- Benefits of doing so
- Perceived/ actual costs of doing so?
- How would they design such a scheme, or design it differently?
 - What would they like to see offered by such a scheme?
 - Key elements a service should offer to make it a success

Support suggestions and recommendations (5-10 minutes)

Aims: to gather suggestions on the way in which employers can support the move to carbon zero, and how the government can support them to do so. This includes ways to promote the benefits of sustainable workplace travel, and to avoid or mitigate perceived and actual costs.

Ways DfT/ the government could support/ further support employers

- Improve knowledge about ways to reduce emissions
- Signposting/ portal of information
- Support employees to reduce emissions
- Monitor work-related/ employee
 - Mode of travel
 - Emissions
- Work with others
 - Other local employers
 - Employer representative organisations
 - Organisations supporting the delivery of mode shift
 - Local authorities
 - Anyone else

Anything else important to add?

STOP RECORDING

Check if they/ their organisation is happy to be named as a good practice example (NB it isn't a condition of participating that they should be, but it may be helpful for other employers)

Check if participant would like notification when report is published

Check which charity £100 donation should be sent to

- Campaign for Better Transport
- Sustrans
- Wheels for All

Local Authorities Topic Guide

Introduction

Introduction to researcher. Thank you for agreeing to take part

Introduction to NatCen - independent research organisation, commissioned by
Department for Transport (DfT) to carry out this study

Explanation of research:

Carrying out four interviews with Local Authorities/Transport Authorities. We will also be conducting interviews with employers and organisations that represent the business community

Interviews explore how employers are adopting ways to reduce business and commuting emissions, and what can be done to encourage more employers to do so

The findings will be used to inform policy development and further research with employers in the field

Participation is voluntary - there are no right or wrong answers, you can choose not to discuss any issue

What you say is confidential and your participation is anonymous, unless you give your permission otherwise to be named as an example of good practice.

We will write a report of our findings, but no names or personal details will be included without your express consent.

You will not be identifiable to anyone else in the report

We will be recording the interview, so we have an accurate record of what is said

Recorder is encrypted and files stored securely on NatCen's computer system in line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018

Only the research team will have access to the recordings

Data will be deleted at the end of the project

The interview will last up to 60 minutes

Questions?

Ask for permission to start recording

Introductions and contextual information

Aims: To provide a background and contextual understanding.

Information about the organisation/ participant

Name/s, job title/s

Background/ introduction to the organisation

Nature of role within organisation

- In terms of planning local travel
- Encouraging more sustainable travel as an employer/ more widely
- Extent of knowledge of/ involvement with 'Commute Zero

Transport landscape

Aims: To examine what the transport network is like for the region.

What is the transport network like in the region?

- What is the transport network like for the region/ your location?
 - What works well/ not so well on the transport network?
PROBE:
 - i. Road
 - ii. Public transport

- iii. Active travel (walking, cycling etc.)
- What is the inter connectivity of the region like?
 - How does it fare in terms of integration?
 - How developed are alternatives to sole use of cars?
- Where are the congestion hotspots within the region/location?
 - What sectors/types of employers are most reliant on vehicles?
- Has the transport landscape of the region/ local area changed at all?
- Are there any future changes planned?
- What/where are the main local opportunities to support sustainable travel?

Perceptions of ‘Commute Zero’

Aims: To examine their overall perceptions of commute zero and reaction amongst local employers in their region.

- **Attitudes towards ‘Commute Zero’ and the decarbonising transport plan**
 - Views on encouraging employers to reduce emissions generated through
 - employee commuting
 - business travel
 - Views on setting targets to reduce employees’ commuting emissions

Current Local Authority/ Transport Authority initiatives

- Local initiatives implemented by Local Authority/ Transport Authority to encourage sustainable travel options?
 - Any specifically targeted at encouraging employers to take up more sustainable travel options amongst their employees?
 - What has worked well/ not so well?
 - Any challenges to implementation? How overcome?
 - Examples of best/ good practice
 - Things that have worked well/ useful lessons learnt?
 - If they were to start again, what would they do differently?
- **From what they have seen/ heard...**
 - Willingness of employers in their region to reduce emissions generated through employee commuting / wider business travel?
 - How does this vary by sector, company size, etc.?
 - Which sectors/ types of employers are most reluctant/ favourable?
 - Any changes in willingness recently (e.g. post-COVID, cost of living, environmental concerns etc.)?
 - Barriers to taking up initiatives amongst employers
 - How can these be overcome?
 - Drivers/ enablers of take up?
 - How can employers be nudged?

Examples of initiatives undertaken

Aims: To understand what initiatives are currently in place and how they are working.

What sort of initiatives are they aware of employers adopting?

- Awareness of local initiatives implemented by employers/ employer membership organisations (CBI, CSB, CIPD) or others?
- Any data/ information on types of initiatives?
- Aware of any research conducted on the subject (by their organisation or others)? Happy to share findings/contacts to feed into our literature review?
- As a large employer themselves, what sort of initiatives have they implemented for staff?
- Type/s of initiatives or plans
 - Replacing fleet vehicles with electric or other low emission vehicles
 - Car/ vehicle pooling, sharing, including low emission vehicles (prompt for any involvement with Mobilityways/ Liftshare)
 - Discouraging car use (e.g. car park charges, reducing number of car park spaces)
 - Encouraging electric vehicle use (e.g. installing electric vehicle charge points for employees, reserved electric vehicle parking spaces)
 - Encouraging use of micro mobility (e.g. e-scooters) public or active transport
 - Better integration into local transport structures
 - Changes to local built environment

- Workplace travel plan(s) for the long-term strategy for safe, healthy and sustainable travel options.
- Incentives for sustainable travel (e.g. cycle to work scheme, season tickets, provided bus or subsidised travel, payments for not using a car, salary sacrifice for EVs)
- Other

○ Receptiveness of staff/ employees

- within their organisation
- other employers

○ What's working well/ not so well?

- Challenges and how have they been overcome/ could they be overcome in the future
- Costs/ benefits of implementation (perceived and actual)?
- Good practice examples
- Useful lessons learnt

Encouraging 'Commute Zero'

Aims: To understand how employers can be encouraged to implement initiatives and the kinds of support required to enable this.

How can employers be encouraged to take-up initiatives?

- Sustainable travel initiatives the Local Authority/ Transport Authority have planned for the future?
 - Timelines/ plans for implementation?
 - Expected reactions or challenges to initiatives?
 - Barriers/ facilitators to successful implementation?
 - What would help support this initiative?

- **Ways to encourage the adoption of such initiatives amongst employers**
 - What can be done to encourage the adoption of such initiatives amongst the business community?
 - Encourage adoption amongst those most reluctant employers?
 - Nudge employers warming to the idea, but not yet there
- Future support needed for employers to encourage take-up?
- Support wanted as a Local Authority/ Transport Authority promoting 'Commute Zero'?
- **What final piece of advice/ suggestions would you give to the DfT?**
 - If you worked at the DfT and were responsible for 'Commute Zero', what would you do?

Check if anything else to add, thank and close

Any final comments/ suggestions for the DfT?

Questions

Stop recording

Check if they are happy to be named where they are an example of good practice

Thank you and close

Organisations topic guide

Introduction

Introduction to researcher. Thank you for agreeing to take part

- Introduction to NatCen - independent research organisation, commissioned by **Department for Transport (DfT)** to carry out this study

Explanation of research:

Carrying out two interviews with organisations who represent the business community. We will also be conducting interviews with Local Authorities/ Transport Authorities, as well as with employers themselves

Interviews explore how employers are adopting ways to reduce business and commuting emissions, and what can be done to encourage more employers to do so

The findings will be used to inform policy development and further research with employers in the field

Participation is voluntary - there are no right or wrong answers, you can choose not to discuss any issue

What you say is confidential and your participation is anonymous, unless you give your permission otherwise.

We will write a report of our findings, but no names or personal details will be included without your express consent.

You will not be identifiable to anyone else in the report

We will be recording the interview, so we have an accurate record of what is said

Recorder is encrypted and files stored securely on NatCen's computer system in line with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018

Only the research team will have access to the recordings

Data will be deleted at the end of the project

The interview will last up to 60 minutes

Questions?

Ask for permission to start recording

Introductions and contextual information

Aims: To provide a background and contextual understanding.

Information about the organisation/ participant

Name, job title, role

Nature of role within organisation

Organisation, knowledge/ role related to Commute Zero, reducing emissions, sustainability

Extent of knowledge/ involvement about

- 'Commute Zero'
- Other initiatives to reduce emissions from community/ business travel

What's the transport landscape like for the business community?

- Dependency on car/ van travel
- Congestion/ air pollution
- Support for car sharing, car pooling
- Ability to use/ access public/ active travel

What initiatives are they aware of OR have they been involved with to date?

Any plans/ initiatives?

Perceptions of 'Commute Zero'

Aims: To examine overall perceptions of commute zero for them as a representative organisation and amongst employers.

Attitudes towards 'Commute Zero' and the decarbonising transport plan

- What are their attitudes towards 'Commute Zero'/ the decarbonising transport plan? IF NECESSARY – PROVIDE EXPLANATION
 - Thoughts of encouraging employers to reduce commuting and workplace emissions?
 - Thoughts about
 - setting targets to reduce employees' commuting emissions,
 - monitoring progress against them?

From what they have seen/ heard...

- How willing are employers to reduce emissions generated through employee commuting AND/ OR wider business travel?
 - Variation by type of initiative, sector, company size, region etc.?
 - Sectors/ types of employers are most reliant on employees commuting by car?
 - Sectors/ types of employers are most reluctant to undertake such initiatives, and which are most favourable?
 - Any changes in willingness recently (e.g. post-COVID, cost of living, environmental concerns etc.)?
 - Which sectors/ types of employers are most willing to change?

Barriers to taking up initiatives amongst employers.

- How can these be overcome?

Drivers/ enablers of take up?

What are the benefits AND drawbacks of 'Commute Zero'..?

- ...for the business community
- ...for the wider community

How do or can they assist in overcoming perceived or actual drawbacks?

Examples of initiatives undertaken

Aims: To understand what initiatives are currently in place and how they are working.

What sort of initiatives are they aware of employers adopting?

- What sort of initiatives are they aware of being implemented?
Type/s of initiatives

Type/s of initiatives or plans

- Replacing fleet vehicles with electric or other low emission vehicles
- Car/ vehicle pooling, sharing, including low emission vehicles (prompt for any involvement with Mobilityways/ Liftshare)
- Discouraging car use (e.g. car park charges, reducing number of car park spaces)
- Encouraging electric vehicle use (e.g. installing electric vehicle charge points for employees, reserved electric vehicle parking spaces)
- Encouraging use of micro mobility (e.g. e-scooters) public or active transport
- Better integration into local transport structures
- Changes to local built environment
- Workplace travel plan(s) for the long-term strategy for safe, healthy and sustainable travel options.

- Incentives for sustainable travel (e.g. cycle to work scheme, season tickets, provided bus or subsidised travel, payments for not using a car, salary sacrifice for EVs)
- Other

What types of organisations have implemented these?

- Probe for differences by sector, region, company size etc.

How are they working in practice?

- Are employers working in partnership...?
 - With other employers
 - With local authorities/ transport authorities
 - Organisations promoting sustainable travel initiatives
 - Other employer representative/ membership organisations
 - Anyone else
- What has employer and staff receptiveness and take up been like?
- How is monitoring and reporting conducted (if at all)?
 - What kind of data is being collected?
 - Preference for types of data collection?
 - Do employers experience difficulties with GDPR?
- What's working well/ not so well?
- What have been/ are the challenges?
 - How have they been overcome, if at all?
- Associated costs for implementation and running of initiatives for the business community?

- Benefits for the business/ employees?
- Has their organisation been involved in any initiatives/ done anything to encourage employers to promote more sustainable workplace travel?
 - What and how has it been working in practice?
 - What's worked well/ not so well? What are the learnings?
- What support would they like to see provided to employers...?
 - Who are aiming to reduce emissions generated through employee commuting
 - Wider business travel
- Any good practice examples within the business community which we can learn from?
 - What factors make it a success?

Encouraging 'Commute Zero'

Aims: To understand how employers can be encouraged to implement initiatives and the kinds of support required to enable this.

What is the business case for commute zero?

How can employers be encouraged to take-up initiatives?

- What can be done to encourage the adoption of such initiatives amongst the business community?
 - Encourage adoption amongst those most reluctant employers?
 - Nudge employers warming to the idea, but not yet there

- What monitoring and reporting tools would have appeal to employers?
- What sort of future support would be required to encourage take-up?

What role would they be willing to take?

- What role could/ would your organisation be prepared to play?
- What sort of support would you need to enable you to do this?

What final piece of advice/ suggestions would you give to the DfT?

- If you worked at the DfT and were responsible for 'Commute Zero', what would you do?

Check if anything else to add, thank and close

Any final comments/ suggestions for the DfT?

Questions

Stop recording

Thank you and close