

Travel Plans for Tourism and Leisure Sites

As the aim of tourism and leisure sites is to attract visitors, they can become major generators of traffic within an area. A visitor Travel Plan has a different emphasis than one designed for employees. Although staff will be included in the Travel Plan, the main aim will be to actively encourage visitors to travel to your site by the more sustainable modes of public transport, cycling, walking and car share. An effective plan will help to reduce the amount of car travel generated by visits to your site. In turn, this will decrease congestion and pollution, as well as improving accessibility and help towards addressing social exclusion.

One of the priority areas of the Local Transport Plan for Merseyside is to support ongoing area regeneration and the continuing development of tourism. This assists with the national objectives to improve access to countryside leisure and exercise opportunities, and to increase participation in culture and sport. A new Sustainable Leisure Travel Network's for people interested in leisure travel has been launched by the Institute of Transport and Tourism (ITT) at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan) and Natural England. Their website www.vistrav.org.uk provides a guide for practitioners seeking advice on sustainable leisure travel projects.

Benefits of a Travel Plan for visitors

- Achieves a more attractive environment - reduced need for car parking frees up land for other uses
- Creates good PR and improves relationships with your neighbours
- Improves accessibility for all
- Taps into a new visitor market - 1 in 5 households in the UK do not have access to a car
- Car park charges can provide an additional income as well as being a disincentive to drive
- Promotes your organisation as environmentally and socially responsible
- promotional strategies can easily be used to publicise sustainable travel for little or no extra cost

In addition to measures outlined in the TravelWise pack, some initiatives to encourage visitors away from car use could include:

- Information on public transport, walking and cycle routes can be included with membership information, leaflets and website
- Include your site in other visitor information.
- "How to get there" information should begin with walking and end with driving, rather than highlighting the nearest motorway junction



- Establish travel information point at main entrance
- Include travel information with advertising and promotions
- Add links to public transport information on your website
- Site maps should include walking and cycling routes, and connections to the public transport network
- Clearly signpost walking and cycle routes to and within your site
- Have a pedestrian friendly environment - pedestrian only access points, well lit direct routes and keep vehicles at walking speed on site
- Promote access through cycle networks, such as local routes and the National Cycle Network
- Publicise that cycles can be taken free on Merseyside trains and ferries
- Offer discounted admission for non-car users or for events
- Consider charges for car parking
- Provide your own dedicated bus service direct to your site
- Liaise with other tourist sites in your area to work on access problems jointly
- Link with other wider events, such as walking weeks, health promotion, cycle rides, etc
- Include questions on travel within your visitor surveys

Example

The National Wildflower Centre, Knowsley, (pictured below) adopted its Travel Plan in 2005. The Centre recently featured in the Merseyside Bike Time ride programme. Cycle stands have been installed for visitors to use and the annual event leaflet has information on accessing the site by all modes of travel through a site specific how to get to guide, produced for the Wildflower Centre by TravelWise.



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