



If you have comments on the content of this document or have further ideas for it's development, Please contact:

The Travel Planning Officer  
Aberdeenshire Council  
Transportation & Infrastructure  
Woodhill House  
Westburn Road  
Aberdeen  
AB16 5GB

Tel: 01224 664773  
Fax: 01224 662005

[www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

## A Travel Plan for Aberdeenshire



## Foreword

In Aberdeenshire we pride ourselves on the quality of our environment. As an area offering both scenic rural and prosperous urban communities, Aberdeenshire requires a safe, efficient and sustainable transport network so as to avoid the congestion and air quality problems that affect the larger towns and cities of Scotland. We cannot afford to be complacent, as how we choose to travel has an enormous impact on our environment and our quality of life.

Councils have an important role to play in leading by example. By considering our daily travel habits we can play our part in reducing pollution and traffic congestion. Sustainable forms of transport such as cycling, walking and public transport, whether for work or leisure trips can improve personal health, relieve stress and set a positive example for others to follow.

With our Travel Plan, we have highlighted the choices that exist for both Council Employees and Councillors, and the benefits that exist for those who choose to make changes to the way they travel. We have outlined the targets we intend to work towards over the next few years, recognising that the success of this plan depends on our commitment to it.



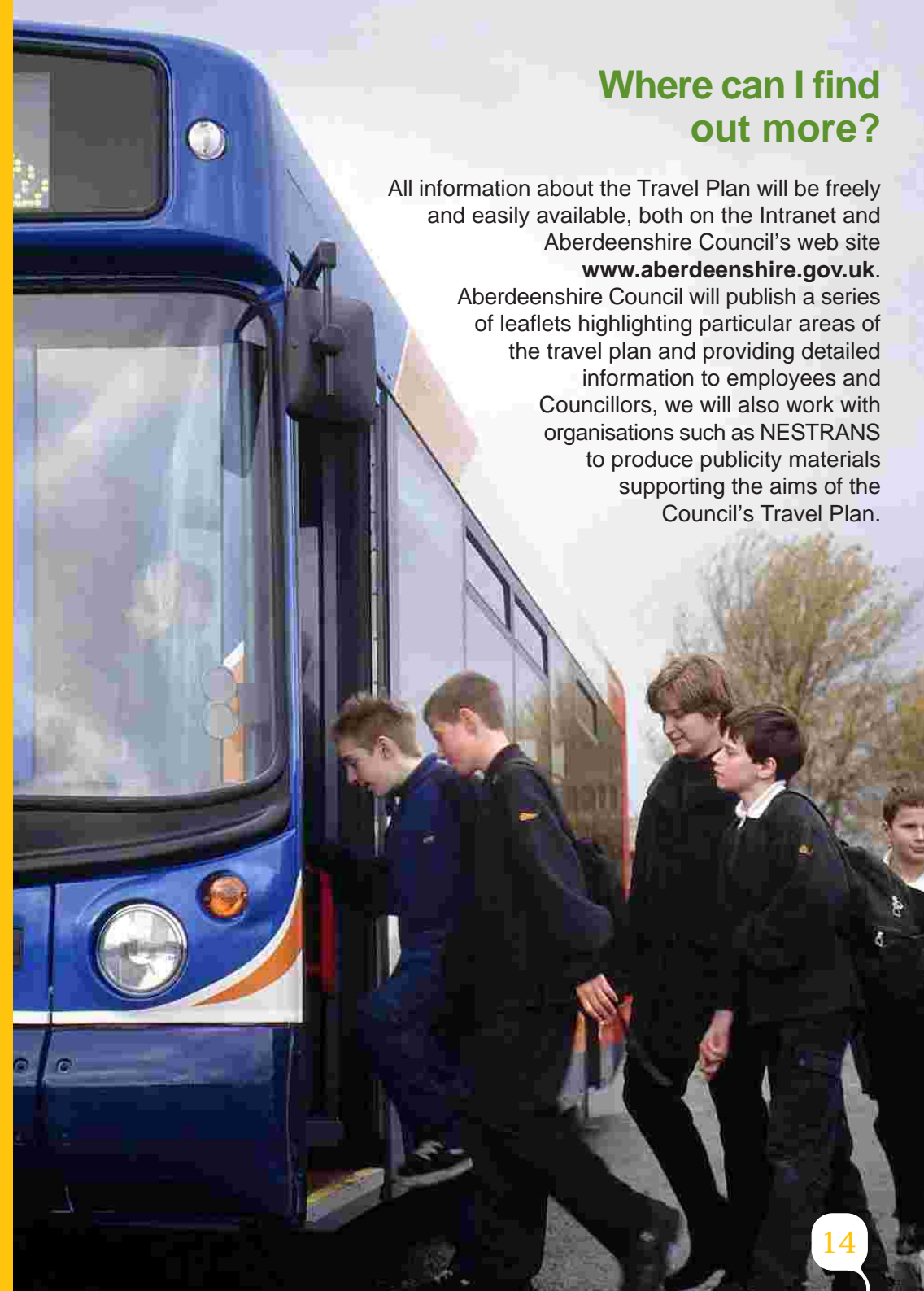
**Councillor Alison McInnes**  
Chair, Infrastructure Services Committee  
Aberdeenshire Council

October 2005

## Where can I find out more?

All information about the Travel Plan will be freely and easily available, both on the Intranet and Aberdeenshire Council's web site [www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk).

Aberdeenshire Council will publish a series of leaflets highlighting particular areas of the travel plan and providing detailed information to employees and Councillors, we will also work with organisations such as NESTRANS to produce publicity materials supporting the aims of the Council's Travel Plan.



## Visitor travel

The travel choices that visitors to Aberdeenshire make are not directly under the Council's control. However Aberdeenshire Council aims to promote public transport as an option for visitors to Council offices. Visitors will be provided with information on transport links, Aberdeen Airport, train and bus stations, to give them the option of using the sustainable transport choices the Council would like to encourage. This will be provided on the Council's web site and intranet, and produced in leaflet form to be sent out when meetings are arranged.

## How are we doing?

A Travel Plan is not simply a document, but a declaration of aims that will develop and evolve with the changing circumstances of the Council. The Council will look at each initiative to assess its relative effectiveness and make available additional resources or alter initiatives as required. Specific monitoring will be carried out measuring car parking demand, using staff travel surveys and measuring the popularity of particular initiatives or facilities and based on feedback provided by Area Management Teams or dedicated Travel Plan Groups.

## What is a Travel Plan?

A Travel Plan is a package of measures that allow an organisation to manage its travel needs in an environmentally sustainable manner. Through a mixture of advice, information and incentives a Travel Plan reduces the need to travel and encourages alternatives to single occupancy car use, such as car sharing, public transport, cycling and walking.

## Why a Travel Plan?

Aberdeenshire Council is keen to promote Travel Plans, and as the largest employer in the Council area, it has an important role to play in leading by example. The Government has set an agenda in respect of sustainable transport objectives and is actively encouraging the development of Travel Plans and the use of alternatives to single occupancy car trips.

A journey may not always be necessary and there are usually choices, both whilst travelling to and from the workplace, and for travel during normal working hours. This Travel Plan will help to promote greater travel awareness amongst the workforce and community and give benefit, both financial and health based to those who choose to make a change.



## Overview

Aberdeenshire Council's Local Transport Strategy states that a Travel Plan will be developed as part of the strategy for encouraging and promoting more sustainable travel choices and behaviour. The development of Travel Plans and travel awareness is also a key part of the NESTRANS Modern Transport System integrated transport strategy for the northeast.

*NESTRANS is the North East Scotland Transport Partnership and is made up of Aberdeenshire Council, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce and Scottish Enterprise Grampian.*

## Objectives

### Our overall aim is:

- To promote informed travel choice and raise awareness of the economic, environmental and social impacts of increasing car use
- To reduce the need for car travel by working with relevant partners to develop a safe, sustainable and user-friendly transport system
- To continually develop and improve Aberdeenshire Council's Travel Plan
- To work with local organisations in developing their own Travel Plans and encourage their staff to use sustainable transport

## Business travel

Using a car for business is often accepted as normal practice and alternatives such as public transport are seldom considered. Aberdeenshire Council recognises that sometimes there is no alternative to using a car for business travel. Where this is not the case however, the Council aims to encourage employees to use sustainable forms of transport.

Aberdeenshire Council aims to encourage the use of sustainable forms of transport such as cycling, walking, public transport and car sharing for business travel. It is Council policy that travel outside Aberdeenshire should employ public transport. The Council will investigate provision of travel passes for public transport journeys between Council offices, Aberdeen rail and bus stations, and Aberdeen Airport and other appropriate locations. The Council will also investigate and if appropriate provide a shuttle service between major council offices and also investigate, and if appropriate pilot, the use of pool cars by the Council in order to reduce the need for staff, who require access to a vehicle for work purposes, to take their cars to work.



## Reducing the need to travel

*Aberdeenshire Council has invested in video conferencing facilities at a number of Council sites across Aberdeenshire. These facilities consist of either a room specially equipped for video conferencing or portable equipment that can be set up when required. Video conferencing facilities can be booked in advance and user notes are available in each room and on the Council's Intranet.*

In addition to encouraging changes in the way employees travel, it is also important to reduce the number of trips that employees are actually required to make. Cutting down on unnecessary journeys at work can have a substantial effect on overall travel patterns.

Aberdeenshire Council aims to reduce the need to travel by seeking to improve facilities or practices that provide staff with an alternative to travel. The Council has, will continue to investigate, and where appropriate implement and promote, schemes aimed at reducing the need for staff to travel, such as; teleworking (staff working from home), video conferencing, hot desking, teleconferencing and flexible-working hours.

To this end Aberdeenshire Council has set a number of targets in order to measure the success of the Travel Plan.

## Targets

### For Aberdeenshire Council

- To achieve a 10% reduction in drive-alone car commuting by Aberdeenshire Council employees by 2007;
- To cut the business mileage of Council staff by 1% by 2006/2007;

### For Aberdeenshire as a whole

- To increase public transport's share of the total travel market by 10% within 10 years;
- To achieve a 1% modal shift of users from road to bus and rail by 2007, from the 1998 baseline;
- To increase cycle use by 50% by 2008 and 100% by 2013;
- To increase car occupancy rates by 5% by 2008;
- To increase by 10% bus passenger miles by 2008;
- To reduce the growth in traffic flows on cross-country routes by 1% by 2008, based on 1999 levels;
- To reduce the variance of peak and off-peak journey times by 30% and 20% respectively by 2008.

**A number of these targets are under review as part of the LTS review for Spring 2006.**



## Our current travel patterns

*There are over 500 centres of employment within Aberdeenshire Council, 29 of which have over 100 employees. In addition, there are settlements that have a school and a number of small offices, which could, together, develop a Travel Plan Group for lift sharing, or the installation of cycle or walking facilities.*

In April 2003, a survey of Aberdeenshire Council employees was carried out in order to ascertain current employee travel patterns and identify opportunities for change.

## Where are we now?

- Only 8% of staff who live within 1 mile of work currently walk to work on a regular basis.
- 16% of staff live within 3 miles of work but only 1% cycle to work on a regular basis. A further 17% said that they would consider cycling if there were improved cycle paths on the way to work. An additional 19% said that they would cycle if there were improved changing/locker/parking facilities at their place of work.
- 23% of staff would consider car sharing if their car were unavailable.
- Only 3% of staff currently use public transport to travel to work. However, 23% said that they would consider using public transport if the bus service was more frequent and reliable and 20% said they would use public transport if there were more direct bus routes.

## Car sharing

Aberdeenshire Council funds a car share scheme that was launched in March 2004, and is freely available to all Aberdeenshire employees and residents. Simply log on to [www.carshareaberdeenshire.com](http://www.carshareaberdeenshire.com) to access the scheme. The Council aims to encourage car sharing and will promote car share schemes and raise awareness of the benefits of using such schemes.

## Driver training

The Council will consider the provision of driver training that may improve safety and promote more economical driving techniques.

## Car park management

Aberdeenshire Council currently provides car-parking facilities at most Council sites. The Council will investigate how car-parking facilities are used by staff and if appropriate make changes in the way the Council manages car-parking to further the objectives of the Travel Plan. The Council will also investigate the provision of dedicated parking spaces for employees car sharing and employees who use motorcycles and scooters.



## Travel by car

*The average cost of fuel is 10p per mile...*

*It is recommended that passengers pay 10p per mile each. Therefore as a driver...*

*...giving one person a lift will cover your fuel costs!*

*...giving 2 people a lift will start to repay some of the additional costs of running your car!*

*And as a passenger...*

*...paying 10p per mile you can travel 100 miles for only £10!*

*For the real cost of running your car, check out [www.theaa.com](http://www.theaa.com) or look out for the leaflet 'Add up your car costs' and the booklet 'Cutting Your Car Use'.*

The Council's Travel Plan is not 'anti-car' but is a means of raising awareness and offering employees, and others, alternative ways of accessing Council workplaces, premises and personnel. Aberdeenshire Council recognises that the car is often a convenient mode of transport, and in many rural areas there may be few convenient alternatives to car use.

## Managing local travel issues

*If every commuter gave up their car on one day a week, congestion would be reduced to school holiday levels.*

Area Management Teams and Travel Plan Groups are working to develop local Travel Plans to encourage sustainable travel options for both the journey to work and business travel. These local travel plans will be tailored to reflect both local needs and circumstances while at the same time working towards the common objectives outlined in this document.

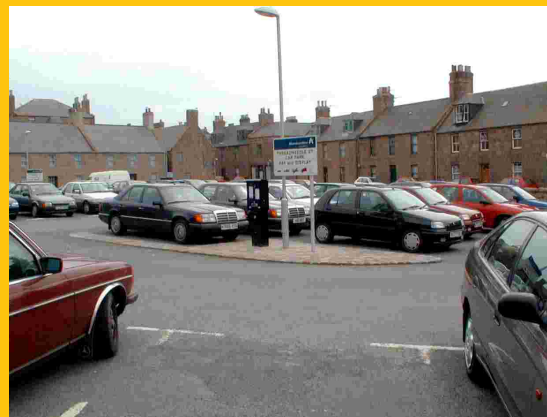


## Walking

*A 15-minute walk at 4 miles per hour helps improve heart and lung condition and increase stamina - it uses 90 calories too!*

Walking is the most reliable and rewarding way to get around. Regularly walking even a fairly short distance can have significant health benefits. A number of employees live close to work and choose to walk. Walkers enjoy the benefit of a good workout each day that will improve their health, increase their energy level, and improve their morale.

The Council aims to encourage walking by seeking to provide improved signage, adequate lighting, more rigorous cleansing and maintenance of pedestrian routes especially during winter and where there may be conflict with vehicular traffic.





## Cycling

*There are national initiatives for employers to provide cycles for commuting, offering reduced tax and National Insurance Contributions.*

Cycling is often overlooked as a way of commuting to work. Cycling is relatively inexpensive and a great way to improve health and reduce stress.

Since many Aberdeenshire Council employees live within five miles of their worksite, they can, and perhaps already do, bike to work.

The Council aims to encourage cycling by seeking to improve or install facilities for cyclists at all major centres of employment, and identified by Area Management Teams or the local Travel Plan Group. These may include covered cycle parking provision, cycle lockers, clothes lockers, showers, changing rooms, drying rooms and safe, possibly segregated, signed routes. The Council will also investigate the feasibility of a cycle lease back scheme involving local cycle retailers.

## Travel by public transport

*Aberdeenshire Council funds and supports a large number of bus services as well as developing demand-response bus services. In addition the Council regularly meets with the public transport operators to discuss improvements in bus and train services. All Aberdeenshire bus timetables are available on [www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk) with links to Stagecoach Bluebird, First Bus, Moray Council, Traveline and Postbus*

Public Transport can provide an alternative to the car for many commuter and business related journeys. Despite common perceptions, the cost of using public transport is often less than the real cost of the same journey by car. Using public transport also removes the need to find and, where necessary, pay for a parking space, and can give you the chance to relax, read, work or even socialise.

The Council aims to encourage the use of public transport by seeking to raise awareness amongst employees of the public transport options available. This will include ensuring that up to date bus and train timetable information is available in all centres of employment, so that employees and visitors have easy access to relevant public transport information. The Council will investigate the practicality of providing employees with discounted season tickets for public transport.

