Mind the Gap

A project report on the gap between environmentally sustainable travel facilities provided by the University of Oxford and staff and students’ requests for improvements of facilities

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Introduction

This report describes the conditions and facilities for travelling by environmentally sustainable modes as experienced by staff and students at the University of Oxford. The report is based on reviews of data from transport surveys and reports on travel within university sites. The surveys and reports that have formed the basis for further research are The Oxford Transport Survey 2012 Report (2012)\(^1\), Transport Assessment for Park Hospital & Old Road Campus Master Plan (2012), Travel Plan for Radcliffe Observatory Quarter (2013), Business Travel Toolkit (2012) and The Sustainable Travel Plan 2008-2012. In addition, this report is based on further qualitative research on staff and students’ needs and requests for future initiatives to be implemented in order to support and improve environmentally sustainable modes of travel. Based on the data gathered from the research, a number of recommendations on meaningful transport measures to be made by the University of Oxford in the future are given.

Background

This report is compiled on the basis of an internship for the Sustainability Team of the University of Oxford Estates Services. The Sustainability Team is working to reduce the environmental impact of the University’s departments and colleges, and among eight key areas of environmental sustainability, staff and students’ transport behaviour is one.\(^2\) An investigation of current conditions for travelling by environmental sustainable modes as well as which initiatives are sensible to implement in the future, provides an understanding of what can help encourage staff and students to travel by environmentally sustainable modes. An increase in staff and students travelling by environmental sustainable modes can help reduce the environmental impact of the University.

This report is compiled within the context of the targets and the survey mentioned below which form the background of this report. The research prior to this report is conducted with the targets of carbon emission reductions and the University’s aims of improvement of facilities for environmentally sustainable modes of travel in mind.

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\(^1\) Hereafter referred to as the Oxford Transport Survey.

\(^2\) The other key areas of environmental sustainability are energy, water, purchasing, greenhouse gases, sustainable building, waste and biodiversity.
The University of Oxford Carbon Management Strategy (2011)\(^3\) defines the steps that the University has taken and will take in the future to achieve a reduction of its carbons emissions. One of these steps is the target for reduction of scope 3 emissions and is one of the points of departures in this project.\(^4\) In terms of scope 3 emissions, the targets are:

- To reduce the percentage of staff that usually travels to and from work by car from 23% to 18% by 2012
- To increase the percentage of staff that travel to and from work using alternative methods of travel (walking, cycling and public transport) by 5%, by 2012
- To monitor business air travel and develop an air travel reduction strategy

\[(\text{University of Oxford Carbon Management Strategy 2011: 13})\]

The Sustainable Travel Plan for the period 2008-2012 contains a package of measures aimed at reducing the impact of travel on the environment and increasing a number of benefits for the staff. The following objectives of the Sustainable Travel Plan is one of the points of departures in this project:

- To improve the choice of transport options and facilities available to staff travelling to and from the University, and between its sites
- To implement travel initiatives that reduce transport related carbon dioxide emissions

\[(\text{The Sustainable Travel Plan 2008-2012: 4})\]

In addition, comprising answers from 8,777 respondents, the Oxford Transport Survey 2012 constitutes a good point of departure in terms of research in current transport behaviour and transport facilities. It comprises answers from 743 college staff, 3,169 students and 4,865 staff. Especially the comments provided from respondents in this survey have partly formed the research prior to this report.

Finally, suggestions for the content of the IARU-internship transport project provided by the Sustainability Team form the background of the project and report. See Appendix I: Transport Project contents provided by the Sustainability Team.

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\(^3\) Hereafter refered to as the Carbon Management Strategy.
\(^4\) The scope 3 emissions are defines as those emissions that are a consequence of the activities of the organisation, but not occur from sources not owned or controlled by the university – including travel by staff commuting for work.
Scope and purpose

The scope of the project, report and recommendations presented below includes both staff and students of the University of Oxford. The research prior to this report is primarily based on interviews with staff due to the fact that the research has taken place between terms where a limited number of students are accessible. However, the scope of the recommendations presented below are as applicable for students as they are for staff, because the overall demands and wishes for initiatives to be implemented in the future seem to be similar for both categories.

As 90% of the students already either walks or cycles and as the focus of most reports is on increasing the number of staff travelling by environmentally sustainable modes, a predominately number of interviews with staff is not seen as a disadvantage of this project. But as students have only been included in the University’s focus of improvement of transport conditions to a limited extent so far, it makes sense to include them in this project. The purposes of the project research and this report are as follows:

• Assess, supplement and elaborate on data and trends drawn from former quantitative transport surveys by gathering qualitative data

• Investigate which initiatives implemented to improve the conditions for travelling by environmentally sustainable modes have been successful and why

• Examine which measures within (and without) of the University’s control should be introduced/expanded in order to increase the number of staff and students travelling by environmentally sustainable modes

• Make recommendations on where and how it would be sensible to increase awareness of the initiatives of the Sustainability Team

Even though not all necessary measures is within the hands of the University, the purpose of this report is to put attention to which initiatives staff and students would like the University to prioritize in the future in order to support their environmentally sustainable modes of transport. For this reason, and to be as credible as possible to the data gathered, requests for measures without the control of the University has been included.
Methods
The following will account for the methods used in compiling this report, including reviewing, gathering and collating different kinds of data.

Reviewing current information and material
Prior to the assessment of facilities for travelling by environmentally sustainable modes, information about the initiatives and facilities provided on the University’s website, in the Carbon Management Strategy, The Sustainable Travel Plan and data from the Oxford Transport Survey was reviewed. Additionally, travel reports and plans for respectively Old Road Campus (ORC) and university sites in central Oxford was reviewed. Old Road Campus is considered a non-central campus in contrary to the university sites in central Oxford. Investigating two geographically different university sites creates more varied data and hence more information about how to improve facilities in different places. Reviewing current information and material on current facilities was done in order to gain knowledge of which topics had already been subject to investigation. The topics chosen for further investigation were selected according to which initiatives are at least to some extent practically feasible to implement by the University, and not only within the control of other institutions as the Oxford City Council (OCC). Additionally, topics chosen for further investigation were selected according to the requests and complaints continuously mentioned by the respondents in the comments to the open ended question of: “Is there anything you feel that could be done to further support your travel patterns?” in the Oxford Transport Survey. The suggestions mentioned here seemed to be important to investigate further.

Gathering of qualitative data
The Oxford Transport Survey, Old Road Campus Travel Survey and Travel Plan for Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, Business Travel Toolkit and the Sustainable Travel Plan 2008-2012 are predominantly based on quantitative data. An approach of gathering qualitative data was chosen to address the already existing data and in order to elaborate and gain new and different knowledge to add different perspectives. Quantitative and qualitative methods can be used without one another. However, data collected using the two different methods reinforce each other (Russell Bernard 2011:20). By combining quantitative and representative data on transport behaviour with qualitative and more in-depth data on needs and wishes for improvement of
facilities for travelling by environmentally sustainable modes, the recommendations are based on data that reinforces each other.

**Interviews – giving voice to the informant**

Interview has been used as the main method for data gathering during the research prior to this report. The interviews have been conducted in a semi-structured manner. Semi-structured interviews are open ended, but follow an interview guide, which is a written list of questions and topics that need to be covered in a particular order. By using this kind of interview the conversation is focusing on a topic, while giving the informant room to define the content of the discussion. Using an interview guide during semi-structural interviews secures a certain level of reliable, comparable qualitative data (Russell Bernard 2011:157-158). The requests, complaints and suggestions in the comments in the Oxford Transport Survey created the basis for the interview guide and the topic of the conversation, as they reflect what was important to the respondents and needed to be examined further. Prior to the interviews it was made clear that the informant should mention anything he or her found important. In that way, the interviews were carried out with point of departure in issues defined by staff and students themselves. The interview guides were adjusted and modified according to the informants’ usual mode of transport and whether they were from ORC or a central university site. See Appendix II: Interview guide template.

**PRA-methods – active explanation and elaboration**

The interviews with staff and students were supplemented with the use of PRA-methods (Participatory Rural Appraisal methods). PRA-methods are qualitative data gathering exercises that encourage participants to actively participate in raising and analyzing their knowledge. It is a way of giving the informants an opportunity to elaborate on their answers. Additionally, it is a way for the interviewer to understand the conditions from the point of view of the informant (Chambers 1992: 1437). Using these methods have been helpful in identifying possible barriers for travelling by environmentally sustainable modes in specific places. However, even though the use of PRA methods is a recognition of the experience and knowledge of the informants, this does not mean that they are always right and their suggestions should be followed precisely. Likewise, it is not always possible to solve individual transport problems.
One PRA-method used during the interviews is called Ranking & Scoring. Using Ranking & Scoring the informants were asked to rank those measures, which the University is in direct control over, according to importance, necessity and how they should be prioritized in the future. See Appendix III: Ranking & Scoring exercise. The results of this exercise are described in the analysis and recommendations below. Another PRA-method used during the interviews Mapping. Using Mapping the informants were asked to draw on a map of their university site while identifying problems, suggestions for improvement of facilities for travelling by environmentally sustainable modes.

Collating of different data sets
Collating the results from the Oxford Transport Survey and the qualitative data gathered during interviews form a good basis for a data analysis. Qualitative data analysis is the summarization of larger amounts of data into understandable information. It is the process of reviewing, summarise, looking for trends and drawing well-supported conclusions (Dewalt & Dewalt 2011: 180). In order to reduce data and look for trends to create useful knowledge, the information, requests and suggestions presented in the quantitative and qualitative data respectively has been classified based on similarity of content. Collating quantitative and qualitative data is useful because some points made during the interviews may support and elaborate on the quantitative data results, while some points may be contradictory, but at the same time explain why they are contradictory.

Data analysis and recommendations
The following data analysis describes the findings of the qualitative data gathering including trends of requests, complaints and suggestions mentioned by staff and students as well as the difference and similarities showing when comparing these to the findings in the quantitative data. Each minor analysis forms the basis of the following recommendation. Some of the trends of complaints of lack of sufficient facilities can be seen as barriers to uptake environmentally sustainable modes of travel. Knowledge about these barriers can possibly inspire the University’s prioritization of future initiatives and measures in order to further support environmental sustainable modes of travel. It has been taken into account that not all of the initiatives requested for are within the hands of the University. However, the overview of requests and the recommendations can serve as suggestions for what the University should either improve itself or lobby or corporate with local institutions and the City Council to improve. Hopefully, the analysis
and recommendations will shed light on gaps between demands made by staff and students and current facilities provided by the University.

**Cycling**

**Increased provision of (secure and covered) cycle parking at university sites**

Based on trends showing in both quantitative and qualitative data, an incentive to increase cycling as a primary mode of travel is provision of more cycle parking at university sites. 43% of the respondents would like to see cycle parking to be introduced or expanded and thereby it ranks the highest among potential measures (Oxford Transport Survey 2012). In the comments, parking with space for cycles with a trailer is especially requested and reflects the frequently mentioned challenge of cycling to work and dropping of children at the nursery. The request for more cycle parking especially applies to areas around the John Radcliffe Hospital, near train stations and the Science Area. Especially staff at ORC emphasized the current lack of cycle parking and the need for it, as the number of staff is going to expand in the future. The need for additional cycle parking is also described in the Transport Assessment for Park Hospital & Old Road Campus Master Plan (2012), which provides more concrete numbers of effective provision of cycle parking.

Even though the biggest demand regarding cycle parking is an increased number of them, a wish for covered cycle parking was strongly emphasized in the comments in the survey and in the interviews. According to several staff and students this could encourage them to travel by bike on rainy days. Staff and students at the Science Area suggest something equivalent to the old covered central cycle parking around the Science Area, as the current situation is far less good than it was before the redevelopment work began (Oxford Transport Survey 2012). A specific example of sufficient bicycle parking is the one within The New Earth Sciences building, which suggests using this as an inspiration for future provision of cycle parking, if practically feasible. Results from an on-going Biochemistry Bicycle Parking Survey also support the wish for covered cycle parking. In this survey only three out of 117 respondents answered “no” to the statement: “I would like a new covered bike park near New Biochemistry”. Even though this particular survey only applies to staff and students at The Department of Biochemistry, it is useful in supporting the trend drawn from other sources of data.
Furthermore, as theft of cycles seems to be a big problem, respondents tend to wish for an increased level of safer cycle parking. Frequent suggestions are an increased number of cycle racks, CCTV by cycle parking areas or cycle sheds only available to swipe card holders, as also just parts of cycles are stolen. The Biochemistry Bicycle Parking Survey also supports the wish for secure and covered cycle parking. Nearly all respondents indicate that they “agree” or “strongly” agree to the following statement: “My bike would be more secure in a new covered bike park”. As examples of good and sufficient cycle parking, Osney Mead Offices, The University Club and Oxford University Computer Services at Banbury Road are mentioned. According to interviews with staff and students these are good, because they have a sufficient amount of Sheffield hoops. The cycle parking by the University Offices is described as good, because it is covered and secure, which is why this could be used as an inspiration for future building of cycle parking if possible.

Finally, the general lack of maintenance of cycle parking is a frequently mentioned issue. This especially applies to the John Radcliffe hospital and Old Road Campus. Bicycle parking should be maintained more and abandoned bikes should be removed to help overcome the current lack of cycle parking.

On the basis of descriptions above, it is recommended to increase the number of cycle parking provided at university sites, especially at ORC, and where practically feasible also the number of covered and secure parking with CCTV or the opportunity to lock the cycles away. In addition, it is strongly recommended to increase cycle parking maintenance by removing old bikes. This could partly help encourage staff and students uptake cycling as their usual mode of transport.

More free cycle training and better dissemination of information about it
Throughout the comments in the Oxford Travel Survey, cycle training is mentioned as a major incentive for cycling. Even though the University already does provide free training courses and seminars, a number of respondents mentions this as a measure which might make more people feel safe and serve as an incentive to cycle to work. The fact that 68% of staff and 75% college staff is not aware of the University’s Sustainable Travel Plan, which describes the provision of free cycle training, can partly explain the lack of knowledge about already existing provision of cycle training. However, during the interviews the participants were asked to mark which initiatives they
especially had felt improved within the last couple of years on a list of implemented initiatives.\footnote{Described in the Sustainable Travel Plan 2008-2012.} This was to measure which ones of the initiatives described in the Sustainable Travel Plan 2008-2012 have been implemented especially successful. Almost every informant recognized “Cycle training for staff” on the list and marked it as an initiative that has worked very well, because it gives confidence to cycle and makes new cyclists feel safer. What supports this, is that the informants were also asked to mention which initiatives should be introduced or expanded in order to improve conditions for travelling by sustainable modes and almost none emphasized cycle training. This suggests that what has already been done by the Sustainability Team in terms cycle training provision has been good and sufficient. During the interviews an international student suggested cycle training targeted international students and staff. For many, getting used to driving in the other side of the road can pose a great challenge and barrier to uptake cycling. Even though cycle training has been good, the dissemination of information about it could be better. In the Sustainable Travel Plan 2008-2012, maintenance and update of the comprehensive University sustainable travel website is one thing that should help promote the information about initiatives for sustainable modes of travel. Another thing is to work in partnership with other local employers to help promote sustainable transport (Sustainable Travel Plan 2008-2012). The data from the interviews suggest that this should be done better or differently.

On the basis of the above it is recommended that the University maintain its excellent provision of free cycle training for staff, but at the same time prioritize dissemination of information about it in other ways than mainly through the University sustainable travel website in order to reach potential cyclists. See Raising awareness. Also, it is recommended that the University starts providing cycle training specifically for international staff and students.

Expansion of the Mobile Mechanic cycle repair scheme
Another trend in the quantitative and qualitative data is a minor insufficiency of the University’s Mobile Mechanic cycle repair scheme as well as suggestions on how to improve it. 26% of the total number of respondents would like to see the mobile cycle repair introduced or expanded (The Oxford Transport Survey 2012), and this potential initiative ranks second highest among the respondents. For staff and college staff the number is 21% and 22% respectively, while 37% of the students would like to see this kind of initiative introduced. This suggests letting students be a part
of the scheme, which currently is only for staff. The comments in the survey clearly shows that staff at the Churchill site would also like the Mobile Mechanic to visit there instead of just going to the ORC. The interviews with staff and students from ORC and central university sites respectively provided more details to the numbers. During the interviews it became clear that staff at the ORC is generally satisfied with the Mobile Mechanic scheme. Even though an increased number of Mobile Mechanic visits to ORC could be useful, the system seems to be better since the online slot booking scheme was introduced instead of “first come first served”. This is supported by the fact that most staff at ORC ranked “increased service of the mobile cycle repair” high among initiatives they think have improved within the past couple of years. The staff and student at central university sites, however, who do not have a similar online booking system, described the Mobile Mechanic as nearly sufficient, but complained that they never know if it is waste of time to show up to get their bike fixed, because there might be too many in the queue. Also, when asked to rank initiatives which ought to be implemented in the future, staff at central university sites ranked “mobile cycle repair” relatively high. A suggestion for expansion of this measure, made by staff and students, is more frequent visits by the Mobile Mechanic, extended opening hours at the Oxford Mobile Cycle Repairs Ltd (OMCR) and The Oxford Bicycle Company Ltd (OBC). Staff advocate these measures would make them able to take more advantage of the university maintenance scheme. In some comments in the Oxford Transport Survey, provision of classes in maintenance and bike repair workshops similar to cycle training is proposed as another initiative to promote cycling. This could serve as a good supplement to the current high demand for the University’s mobile bike repair scheme. 

On the basis of the above, it is recommended that the Mobile Mechanic cycle repair scheme visits the ORC and central university sites more often if feasible. Also, it is recommended that an online booking system is introduced to the central university sites, as it has been a success on the ORC. Alternatively, a course in bicycle maintenance provided by the University could help relieve the demand for the Mobile Mechanic.

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6 See http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/estates/travel/cyclingandwalking/mobilemechanic/ for the current Mobile Mechanic scheme.
More financial advantages of cycling

A wish for financial advantages for cycling is emphasized throughout the comments in the Oxford Transport Survey as it is argued that it would serve as an inducement to uptake cycling. The wish for more financial advantages is supported by the data from the interviews during which the informants made it clear that the former Discount Salary Sacrifice scheme was a huge incentive to uptake cycling and that the current scheme offering interest-free loans is not as good. However, when the informants were asked about disadvantages about their mode of travel during the interviews, cyclists generally did not mention financial costs. Instead they tended to emphasize that the free Mobile Mechanic, free cycle training and occasional free breakfast for cyclists are very good initiatives.

On the basis of this, it seems like financial advantages are always good, but more discount for cyclists does not seem like the most important measure to implement in the future in order to increase cycling as a environmentally sustainable mode of transport among staff and students. If something should be done in this regard, the free Mobile Mechanic should be expanded and made even more sufficient. So, if feasible, more discount when buying bicycles and more subsidies for cycle safety equipment for staff are recommended.

Lobby for better and safer cycle lanes

In order to increase cycling as a sustainable mode of travel better and safer cycling lanes in and around university sites are strongly requested for by staff and students. In a noticeable amount of the comments in the Oxford Transport Survey, it is expressed how people generally feel unsafe cycling and “dangerous” is often mentioned when describing current cycle lane conditions. This is supported by the results from Old Road Campus Travel Survey, which shows that safety concerns is stopping 17% of the respondents in cycling to the ORC (Old Road Campus Travel Survey 2013). The respondents advocate a general expanding of cycling lanes, a clear demarcation of lanes for cycles and pavement for pedestrians and road signs telling drivers to be aware of cyclists. An example of an ideal cycle lane mentioned by staff and students is the one on Marston Road, because it is clearly demarcated and separated from pedestrians’ pavement and car driving lane. See Appendix IV. Where as less good ones, but yet better than most, are the ones where the lanes for cyclists are just clearly demarcated. More specifically, in the Oxford Transport Survey, the following places are frequently mentioned as lacking sufficiently good cycling lanes: around
central Oxford, Osney, along St. Clements street, around the railway station, the University Park, LMH, Linacre, the Science Areas, Jack Straw’s lane and South Park. See Appendix V for example.

Some cycle lanes have been painted and demarcated from car driving lanes, which is described as an improvement, but not as good an actual separation with differentiating levels of pavement. The request for proper cycle lanes was supported during the interviews. Most staff and students emphasized how a separation of car driving lanes and cycle lanes would be a huge incentive to uptake cycling as a usual mode of travel, because it would make them feel a lot safer. In addition, the lack of signs telling car drivers to watch out for cyclists and signage of recommended cycle routes would seem to make current cyclists feel safer and potential cyclists feel safe enough to cycle. Staff working on ORC particularly emphasized a scheme more considering of cyclists and pedestrians in the loading area next to the Henry Welcome Building as the chaos created by trucks loading of and people cycling or walking by at the same time in the morning leads them to call it the “Quad of Death”. There seems to be a kind of conflict in that car drivers complain about cyclists’ bad behaviour, because they drive in their lanes, while pedestrians complain that cyclists cycle on their pavements. The cyclists, however, expressed during the interviews that the facilities for cycling and being safe at the same time are so bad that they must compromise with the high way code. They cycle in the car driving lanes to avoid holes in the cycling lanes and use the pedestrians’ pavement where demarcations for cycling lanes are not obvious enough to the cars. And some cyclists even advise others to do the same.

Even though the problem of insufficient cycle roads is a measure not within the control of the University, it is recommended that the University lobby or corporate with the City Council and relevant local partners to increase road repair and signage on and off university sites. Also, it is recommended to make clearer demarcations or separation of cycle lanes and car driving lanes on and off university sites in order to overcome the current lack of proper cycle infrastructure and the barrier of uptake cycling as a primary mode of travel.

Public transport

Discount on public transport

“If public transport was made more financial advantageous and frequent, I would loose the car”. This quote is from one of the comments in the Oxford Transport Survey and is very saying for the
general wish for more discount on public transport expressed throughout the comments in survey. The biggest disadvantage of public transport, according to staff especially, is that it is too expensive and the fact that public transport is not financial advantageous enough compared to driving by car seems to pose a great barrier in terms of making car drivers have public transport as usual mode of travel. In the comments in the survey, staff and students advocate subsidised bus passes and refer to the Oyster system in London and the OUH NHS Bus Season Ticket scheme, as they give a higher discount than the University scheme does. The request of getting more discount on public transport comes especially from staff, like researchers on short-term contracts and students who are staying in Oxford for less than a year, as they can currently only obtain discount by getting a scheme for a whole year, which is not financially advantageous. Also, this request for discount on public transport is made by part-time workers, as they are not able to get a bus pass with discount and the weekly pass are not worth it, and other cheap modes of transport, like car-sharing, is not possible for staff with flexible and atypical working hours. Even though many students seem to request discount on public transport in the comments in the survey, during an interview, a student expressed satisfaction with the current prices on public transport. And the informants generally ranked “an introduction of the Oxford Bus Company “key” card” very high when asked to rank successful measures implemented by the University during the interviews. They describe it as fair and as good and easy, that the payment is deducted from their salary. Furthermore, “expansion of the University Season Ticket Loan, Bus and Train schemes, by 5%” ranked high as one of those initiatives the University has implemented and is considered a positive change.

It has of been considered that discount on public transport is one of those initiatives that the university is not in direct control over. However, as it seems to be of big importance to some staff, the University should prioritize lobbying and corporation with the City Council and local bus companies in order for staff working at the University to get more discount on public transport.

Lobby to expand public transport or a University operated minibus service
In extension to the above, respondents from the Oxford Transport Survey and informants participating in the interviews would like to see an expansion of the provision of public transport in and around central Oxford. From the comments in the survey it appears that people advocate a more public transport in rural areas, and encourage bus service providers to improve frequency of
buses at peak hours, as many get delayed taking public transport in mornings and in the afternoon. Regarding this, a respondent writes: “I drive because I think it is cheaper than public transport and if I used public transport my working hours would be extended” (Oxford Transport Survey 2012). The lack of frequent buses is also emphasized during the interviews. When asked about advantages and disadvantages by having public transport as usual mode of transport, informants tended to mention the infrequency of buses as the first thing. Also, staff and students cycling or walking seemed to emphasize the flexibility as an advantage of cycling and walking compared to taking the bus. This shows that people seem to prioritize the flexibility. Staff driving to P&R’s and taking the bus to central Oxford emphasize, that there is only a bus going towards central Oxford and not the other way. When combining the infrequency of busses and the fact that staff and students seem to appreciate the flexibility by cycling or taking the car, the lack of frequent busses poses a barrier in terms of increasing the number of staff and students loosing the car and hop on the bus.7

A way of encouraging staff and students to take public transport could be an expansion of the university operated minibus service between university sites. 21% of the total number of respondents would like the university operated minibus service to be expanded (Oxford Transport Survey 2012), and data from the interviews shows that this especially applies to staff working at ORC and not so much to staff working at central university sites. Several informants working at ORC said that the lack of frequent bus service to central university sites makes them feel excluded and rather neglected, as a lot of work related events and meetings seem to take place in central Oxford. And some ORC staff give up attending some of these work related events, because it is too time consuming for them to attend. Therefore, it seems like a university operated minibus service

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7 A comment from the Oxford Transport Survey 2012 thoroughly describing a suggestion for bus road:
“The University Science Park on South Parks Road does not have any public transport and university members using bus need to walk for about 15 minutes from either the High Street, St Aldates or bus stops near St Giles. An option for a University operated minibus service would be to have a minibus that goes from the High Street ---> Longwall Street ---> South Parks Road ---> Parks Rd ---> Banbury Road ---> Beaumont St ---> Hythe Bridge St ---> Thames St ---> St Aldates ---> back to High St. This would be useful for not only people working in the Science Area, but also for staff and students at St Catherines college, Linacre College, Mansfield College, Keble College, St Annes College, Worcester college, Pembroke college, Christ Church and all the colleges on the High Street since the minibus would pass these colleges and many of these colleges (such as St Catherines college, Linacre College, Mansfield College etc) do not have any public transport to them.”
would be very welcomed by the staff at ORC. The fact that the journey time is too long is the reason why 23% of the total number of respondents in the Old Road Campus Travel Survey is not travelling to the ORC by bus more often (Old Road Campus Travel Survey 2013). Places most often requested in relation to a minibus service apart from the ORC are the train station, Churchill, JR, South Park, St. Cross Road, Headington, Kidlington and between nurseries and the P&R’s. As the need of dropping of kids at the nursery is a repeated argument for travelling by car, an introduction of a minibus service between the nursery and university sights might be a good suggestion. In the Transport Assessment for Park Hospital & Old Road Campus Master Plan, it says that the bus strategy for ORC relies on on-going discussions with bus operators to resolve operational issues of existing bus services and to pressure for new services, and that the bus strategy is seeking to improve the quality of service and attractiveness of buses by promoting good passenger connectivity within the ORC site bus stops on Old Road and Roosevelt Drive (Transport Assessment for Park Hospital & Old Road Campus Master Plan 2012: 59). However, it seems like these measures have not yet been implemented to a sufficient extend. The results from the research prior to this report are very similar to what is proposed in the Transport Assessment for Park Hospital & Old Road Campus Master Plan in regards to the need for improvement of bus services around ORC. As mentioned, interviews showed that the Oxford Bus Company “key” card seems to have been a success among staff and students. Now, more collaboration between all the different bus companies operating in and around Oxford to join the scheme is advocated. A point made in a paper reporting on barriers that members of the UK public perceive to engaging with climate change and environmental sustainable alternatives supports this argument. In the paper it says that perceptions of limited action by local and national governments were found to be a significant barrier to engagement among many of the participants in the comprising survey. In addition, that some participants, when willing to take action, maintained that their behaviour was constrained by the lack of enabling infrastructures and point to lack of affordable and reliable public transport in their locality (Lorenzoni et al. 2007: 453).

It has been taken into account that the issue of public transport is yet another issue that is not within the control of the University. However, in order to encourage staff and students to uptake public transport instead of using the car, it is recommended that the University prioritize lobbying local bus companies to improve bus services in rural areas as well as the frequency of buses at peak hours and collaboration between different bus companies. As the flexibility is
highly prioritized, and sometimes determining for work related events for staff at ORC, this is an important issue. Furthermore, a way to support work related travel between university sites is to expand the University operated minibus service.

More advantages for using Park & Rides

“They make it difficult to get around with a car, but they do not make it easier to get around without it” (Oxford Transport Survey 2012). This quote sums up very well what most car-driving staff complained about during the interviews. The main complaints concerns the insufficient number of parking slots at Thornhill P&R, the high cost of parking at P&R’s which seems to create reluctant cyclists, and the infrequent busses driving between P&R’s and city center. Also, in the comments in the Oxford Transport Survey is was regularly mentioned, that blue badge holders and disabled staff should get some kind of advantages in the P&R’s.

On the basis of this, it is recommended that the University lobby the Oxford City Council in order to decrease the costs of using P&R’s at least to some extent. This is due to the fact that it for some staff is more financial advantageous to drive all the way to work instead of using the P&R’s, which then has the reverse effect on encouraging staff to travel by environmentally sustainable modes.

Walking

In order to increase walking as a sustainable mode of transport among staff and students, staff and students request better walking facilities in form of clear demarcation of lanes for cycles and pavement for pedestrians. The complaints and suggestions for improvements mentioned most frequent by walking staff and students are very similar to the ones mentioned by cyclists. See Lobby for better and safer cycle lanes.

Other facilities

More showers, lockers and drying rooms

According to staff and students, expansion of the provision of showers and lockers ranks the fourth highest of measures that can improve travel support, and 23% of the total number of respondents in the Oxford Transport Survey would like to see more of them (Oxford Transport
Survey 2012). This trend is supported by the data gathered during the interviews, as many ranked “showers and lockers” high when asked about which facilities should be prioritized by the University. Even though staff at ORC mentioned showers and lockers as one of the positive changes they had noticed within the last couple of years, they also stated that the lack of rooms for drying wet clothes is a disadvantage of cycling. Staff at central university sites emphasized, that the only showers that seem to be available to them, are the ones in The University Club. According to them, this poses a major inconvenience and is time consuming and discouraging for people working far from the club. In relation to this, the new Bodleian Library would have been an ideal location to make more showers available to staff working around central Oxford.

In order to take into account staff and students need for looking presentable for work after cycling, it is recommended that an increased number of showers and lockers is introduced in departments around central Oxford, as the provision in The University Club is not sufficient to the demand. In addition, an increased number of places to hang wet clothes should be provided, especially at the ORC.

**Raising awareness**

A general trend showing from the comments in the Oxford Transport Survey and the interviews conducted prior to this report is that staff and students are generally not aware of all initiatives and work of the Sustainability Team. When asked about knowledge and awareness of the University’s Business Travel Toolkit and the Sustainable Travel Plan, which include important carbon saving initiatives as provision of videoconference facilities and the free online car-sharing scheme, informants tended to know little or nothing of this. This is supported by the Oxford Transport Survey showing that 79% of the total number of staff and students was not aware of the University’s Sustainable Travel Plan (Oxford Transport Survey 2012). In the following, it will be described which suggestions for dissemination of information staff and students made as well as which specific measures regarding environmentally sustainable modes of travel, that staff and students currently tend to lack awareness of.

**Suggestions for routes for dissemination of information**

Many informants expressed that the current information about measures to support environmental sustainable modes of transport is drowning at the University website, as it is too
complex to find any information, if one does not know exactly what to search for. This led some informants at ORC and the Bodleian Library to suggest making a website specifically for their campus or department, with information targeted to staff working there. Other informants advocated letting the HR-division within the different departments spread the word about measures regarding environmentally sustainable modes of transport to the PA’s in the department. Because HR-departments and the PA’s, who are the ones booking trips for the directors travelling, are closer to the staff than the Sustainability Team is, this would be a good way to reach staff and disseminate information. This is supported by the Carbon Management Strategy. It says: “...a critical success factor ... is that the example and message of good practice comes from a source that the target group trusts and respects” (University of Oxford Carbon Management Strategy 2011: 60). Even though the quote concerns behaviour change in the University’s laboratories, the point can still be said to apply here, as the HR-departments are closer to the target group, the staff, than the Sustainability Team is. Additionally, the informants generally did not seem to be aware of The Business Travel Toolkit. To a lot of them, the content of the toolkit is not really relevant, as they do not travel to conferences or meetings that require much carbon emission. However, information about it is important and ought to be targeting the relevant people. In this regard it could be useful to aim more for the financial divisions when informing about this measure, as using video conference facilities are cheaper than less air travel and long distance train travel. A proposed way of disseminate information regarding car-sharing scheme and encouragement for cycling is social media as Facebook and Twitter. Some informants expressed that they do not follow the University’s page on either Facebook or Twitter, but several made it clear that they check it often and easily could be informed that way. Individual engagement in environmental sustainability is of course a complex matter and it is possible that the staff and students who wanted to participate in the interviews are examples of few that would like to be involved further. However, it was proposed during the interviews, that the Sustainability Team could make seminars or short presentation at different departments informing about the sustainable modes of travel measures and initiatives. Some staff seemed to think that it could make information and awareness reach people. Finally, informants suggested the more old school way of sending out emails in order to disseminate information about sustainable modes of transport. Even though some consider it spam and would block mails informing about sustainable transport, several informants mentioned how they do not block mails like that and got to know about measures as cycle-to-work-breakfast and free cycle training through emails.
An example of an initiative that staff and students seem to lack awareness of is the car-sharing scheme. A respondent wrote the following to the question of whether anything could be done to further support the respondent’s travel pattern: “Free online car share services is an excellent idea. If such an option existed, I’m sure many employees would consider selling their cars. I certainly would” (Oxford Transport Survey 2012). The quote expresses the general trend showing in the data that the awareness of the car-sharing scheme is not very prevalent. During the interviews, many informants similarly expressed that they had very little or no knowledge of the car-sharing scheme provided by the University. However, contrary to the quote, when elaborating on the idea of joining the car-sharing scheme during the interviews, staff tended to be unwilling to use it, as they assume it is too complicated to sign up, or that they did not want to, because their safety could not be guaranteed. On the basis of this, one could say that some staff might want to join the car-sharing scheme if they knew about it, while others would might like to join it if they were more familiar with the concept. In the paper reporting on barriers that members of the UK public perceive to engaging with climate change and environmental sustainable alternatives, it says that perceived barriers to limit engagement, among others, is the lack of knowledge, reluctance to change lifestyle and to the assumption of mitigation as a threat to standard of living (Lorenzoni et al. 2007: 450). If more staff, who have similar working hours and live in the same areas, knew that sharing a car to work does not necessarily have to change their standard of living and travelling time, and were better informed about all the advantages by car-sharing, more staff might like to join the scheme. This is why a prioritization of increasing awareness of the car-sharing scheme is suggested. Raising awareness and provide information about the car-sharing scheme could be done either by email, in the busses to and from the P&R’s or in group rooms in the different departments.

From the comments in the Oxford Transport Survey it appears, that some respondents would like to get more information about bus time schedules. However, when asked if they take advantage of the information about bus time schedules at the University website, informants generally answered that it was irrelevant, either because they do not check time tables as buses are not punctual anyway, or because they usual get that information elsewhere. Hence, based on this, it does not seem like the Sustainability Team should prioritize dissemination of information about bus time schedules. Contrary, the comments in the transport survey showed that information
about planned travel disruptions, such as St Giles fair, should be advertised a lot better than what is currently the case.

Most staff seem to be aware of the free cycle-to-work breakfast events and the free Mobile Mechanic, which suggest that dissemination of information about this has been done well. However, not everybody seemed be aware of the fact that the University offers free cycle training and courses in cycling. As many cyclists expressed how the lack of confidence posed a big barrier and challenge to uptake cycling, it seems to be important to prioritize information of the courses that aim at giving potential cyclists the necessary confidence to uptake cycling. Information sheets currently provided by the University on the website seems to be very detailed and good. However, it does not seem to be enough to make insecure cyclist hop on the bike. To reach potential cycling staff it was suggested by the informants that the University set up a “cycle buddy” scheme similar to the car-sharing scheme. According to some informants, cycling along with a more experienced cyclist who knows the cycle routes to work might help potential cyclists overcome their insecurity. Also, during the interviews, informants did not seem to know a lot about the University’s provision of cycle maps and routes and the opportunity to report problems with cycle paths.\(^8\) In order to increase the awareness of this, informants suggested the initiatives targeted cyclists could be advertised either by colourful posters or notice boards by the cycle parking and emphasized that it ought to be short and effective campaigns. According to the text concerning barriers perceived to engaging with environmentally sustainable alternatives, basic information provision to overcome lack of knowledge is essential. “For those willing to mitigate climate change this will encourage them to channel their energies into appropriate activities” (Lorenzoni et al. 2007: 454). Also, it is emphasized that communication should be sustained on a regular basis. However, during the interviews the informants stressed that campaigns regarding environmental sustainable travel modes ought to be short and effective. This is to say that provision of information of facilities for environmental friendly travel modes should be easy accessible at all times, whereas as campaigns for new initiatives should be short in order to be effective and avoid overload of information.

\(^8\) For measures and links to information provided by the University: http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/estates/travel/cyclingandwalking/
Validity, credibility and usefulness

In order to ensure valid and credible information and to provide useful recommendations, the research and data analysis have been conducted in a systemic and reflexive manner. Problems regarding validity are often related to unobservable and abstract phenomenons and issues, because there can be insecurity of what is being investigated and measured (Andersen & Hansen 2009: 149). As the invitation for interviews sent to the informants on email was relatively elaborated, as an introduction prior to every interview was done thoroughly and as the topic of transport behavior and facilities is not an abstract and sensitive topic and fairly easy to investigate, the data gathered is considered valid. In order to ensure that information presented in this report is as credible to the information provided by staff and students, nearly all findings and trends of complaints and suggestions have been mentioned to some extend. Individual travel problems is of course a complex matter, but because an aim of the research has been to give voice to staff and students and let them define the problems of current facilities for travelling by environmental sustainable modes, most is included in this report. The data gathered during the research is not as comprising as a major questionnaire survey would have been. However, the usefulness of this report is that it presents other and more in-depth results than a quantitative survey could have, as the results are based on the staff and students’ requirements and wishes rather than predetermined answer options. Thereby it can shed light on possible gaps between staff and students’ requirements and the facilities provided by the University.
Literature

Reports and surveys
Business Travel Toolkit, 2012

http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/media/global/wwwadminoxacuk/localsites/estatesdirectorate/documents/travel/business_travel_toolkit_FINAL.pdf

Old Road Campus Travel Survey 2013

Transport Assessment for Park Hospital & Old Road Campus Master Plan, 2012


The Sustainable Travel Plan 2008-2012
http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/media/global/wwwadminoxacuk/localsites/estatesdirectorate/documents/travel/stafftravelplan.pdf


Travel Plan for Radcliffe Observatory Quarter, 2013

Academic readings


Appendix I: Transport Project contents provided by the Sustainability Team

Review current information given on transport (through travel plans and websites etc)

Collate transport data and document methodology for collection of each set of data

Investigate scope 3 emissions data already collected and identify improvements

Review qualitative data from transport survey, classifying and drawing out trends

Make recommendations for further information to be supplied on transport

Make recommendations for meaningful transport measures
Appendix II: Interview guide template

Introduction
- Studying anthropology at the UNCPH, doing an internship for the Sustainability Team
- Working on a transport project to improve conditions for travel by sustainable modes
- This is an attempt to let staff and students have a say in what is important and which initiatives should be expanded in order to help increase sustainable modes of transport
- I have prepared questions based on transport surveys and reports, but if there is anything you think is important to talk about, let me know, because a big part of this is to listen to the requests of the people experiencing conditions for sustainable travel every day.
- Please help me elaborate your answers using these maps, it will help me to understand your answers and requests better
- Interviews are completely anonymous and confidential

Question guide
1. Where are you working?

2. What is your usual mode of transport from home to work? Several?

3. Can you mention some advantages and disadvantages by this mode of transport when working at ORC/in central Oxford?

4. Which measures would you like to see introduced or expanded in order for you to start to take public transport/what would make it more beneficial for you to leave the car at home?

5. How big a discount on public transport is necessary to make it more advantageous compared to driving a car to work?

6. Which facilities are particularly good/bad for using your mode of transport on around this university site? Where specifically? Mapping: where is there a problem? Where is it necessary to change something? Daily routines describing daily activities of the participants + time of execution.

7. Which measures would you like to see introduced or expanded in order for you to continue cycling/make cycling facilities better/start to take public transport, walk, other?

8. Some things the university does not have control over and can only lobby to achieve, but these initiatives are some that the university has control over. Ranking Matrix: Rank according to how they should be prioritized and explain what is biggest problem with the situation as it is now.
   - Cycle parking
   - Automatic hire bicycles
- Video/audio conferencing facilities
- University operated minibus service
- Mobile cycle repair
- Working from home
- Flexible working hours
- Free online car share service
- Showers lockers
- Personalised travel planning advice
- Free cycle training
- Public transport ticket and timetable information

9. Are you going to other university sites during your working time? Which? How?

Now some general questions about some of the initiatives of the sustainability team. It is interesting for the Sustainability Team to know whether staff knows about this.

10. Are you aware of the Business Travel Toolkit?

11. Are you aware of the Sustainable Travel Plan 2008-2012 and its initiatives?

12. Where would it be sensible to inform and increase awareness about it? Any examples?

13. As a part of these toolkits and plans, a number of initiatives have been implemented at Oxford University sites. Which initiatives have especially worked well? How have you experienced changes and initiatives? Do you think it has been done sufficiently?
   - Pool bicycles and equipment for use by staff at work
   - Improve pedestrian and cyclist access and facilities on university sites
   - Provide showers for all new buildings
   - Liaise with local cycle campaign groups
   - Cycle training for staff
   - Increase service of the mobile bicycle repair ‘Bike Doctor’.
   - Expand the University Season Ticket Loan, Bus and Train Schemes, by 5%
   - Introduce an Oxford Bus Company ‘key’ card

14. Do you take advantage of the information about free training in cycling, bus schedules, car sharing scheme at the university’s website? Why not? Is it sufficient?

15. Are you aware of the videoconference facilities the University provide? Good enough?

16. Do you have any questions, complains, suggestions for measurements to be introduced in order to increase options for sustainable modes of travel?
Appendix III: Ranking & Scoring exercise

Ranking of potential initiatives to be implemented by the University in the future:

- Cycle parking
- Automatic hire bicycles
- Video/audio conferencing facilities
- University operated minibus service
- Mobile cycle repair
- Working from home
- Flexible working hours
- Free online car share service
- Showers lockers
- Personalised travel planning advice
- Free cycle training
- Public transport ticket and timetable information
Appendix: IV: Example of sufficient cycle lanes on Marston Road

Photo: Street View, Google Maps
Appendix: V: Example of insufficient cycle lanes on Park Road

Photo: Street View, Google Maps